

**Career Academy Conversation
Educating for Careers/ CPA Conference
Sheraton Hotel, Sacramento**

Sunday, March 2, 2014

This meeting, focused primarily on California, included several presentations.

AB-790 Linked Learning Pilot Project—Darrell Parsons, Consultant, CDE

Director of this project, Darrell explained that it includes 63 districts and 8 county offices of education in 20 sites, each expanding the number of Linked Learning pathways. This was a planning year; 2014-15 will entail implementation. A central objective is to knock down silos, in each site and within the California Department of Education (CDE), where Darrell is working closely with the after-school, Special Ed, ELL, and the curriculum units. Next steps include articulating with the Title 1, Assessment, Data, and Finance units.

Career Pathways Trust Initiative—Kevin Shyne, Consultant, CDE

Kevin, recently brought to California from New Hampshire to help implement this initiative, explained that this \$250 million five-year competitive grant program was designed by the legislature to advance the principles of Career Academies and Linked Learning. It is seeking broad coalitions that include high schools, community colleges, and employers, with grants of \$15M, \$6M, and \$600,000. It is intended to address the issues of a retiring workforce, changing technology, too high dropout rates, wage and skills gaps, and poor college readiness. The CA Workforce Investment Boards, Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and CDE are collaborating on the project, with applications due March 28 and awards expected in early June.

CPA Lighthouse Acads—Susan Tidyman, State/ Regional Director, CCASN

Susan explained that this network, begun six years ago as a mentor program, has morphed into 14 veteran California Partnership Academy (CPA) Lighthouse Academies in current operation. They are designed to help with CPA development in most career sectors and parts of the state. They provide materials, visit other academies, host regional meetings, and make presentations at the annual Educating for Careers/Partnership Academy conference. A list of these is attached.

CPA Advisory Council—Ruthe Ashley, State Bar of California, Chair

Ruthe explained that the CA State Bar is a licensed state agency that oversees the 240,000 lawyers in the CA Bar. Its interest in CPAs is based on the desire to bring more diversity to the legal profession. The CA State Bar is sponsoring 11 Law Academies, with seniors graduating from the first of these this spring. The CPA Advisory Council, comprised largely of industry representatives, has met four times to date. Its purpose is to support the CPA model and staff through information sharing, fundraising, and developing industry-focused implementation and curricular materials.

CPA Industry Sponsorships—Jerry Winthrop, CPA Lead Consultant, CDE

Jerry detailed the growing network of CPAs that are sponsored by industries in CA. He distributed a summary of these (attached), in four fields: law (CA State Bar), energy (PG&E),

agriculture (Paramount Farms), and the trades (CA Labor Federation). The last is offering actual apprenticeships to CPA enrollees, beginning this summer. Two additional industries will hopefully be added to this network over the next year: health; and arts, media & entertainment.

National developments—Betsy Brand, American Youth Policy Forum

While Betsy, AYPF's Executive Director, was unable to attend the meeting, she provided a one-page overview of developments at the national level. To briefly summarize this, little beyond the DOL Youth Career Connect grants is happening there. These awards were scheduled to be announced in early April (and were). [In this regard, NCAC and CCASN were asked to post on their websites abstracts and contact information for the YCC applications DOL was unable to fund (~250), now available both places.]

Individual Organization Updates

NCAC, Steve Casa, Executive Director

Steve, who recently joined NCAC, explained that they would like “to be a trade association for Career Academies”. He discussed the revised Career Academy National Standards of Practice and related updated review process, which parallel in many ways the National Academy Foundation (NAF) and Linked Learning standards and certifications.

ConnectEd CA, Rob Atterbury, Director, Professional Development

Rob reviewed ConnectEd CA's role in supporting the Linked Learning Pathways in CA, and its work with CDE to train the new AB 790 district directors. Active in advancing work-based learning (WBL), he explained that the Linked Learning Alliance has published a continuum of WBL definitions, outcomes, and sample experiences (with assistance from Svetlana Darche from WestEd), while NAF has published a new WBL Toolkit. He also noted that the James Irvine Foundation plans to re-up its investment in Tulare/ Kings County, San Bernardino, Coachella, LA, and San Diego. Discussion followed related to how best to measure career readiness. David Stern, Director of CCASN, felt there was a window of opportunity to create a definition of this, perhaps related to completion of a practicum or a CTE sequence of classes, and that this needed to be shared with the Public School Accountability Advisory Committee and hardwired into any new accountability system.

WestEd, Svetlana Darche, Senior Research Associate

Svetlana discussed efforts elsewhere around the country related to career readiness assessment, including an effort in the Massachusetts Department of Education to include growth in CTE as part of a teacher evaluation system. Tennessee is also interested in this approach. A recent study found that half the involved schools that fostered positive school climates and high academic achievement were career-themed, and often use performance-based assessments and portfolios.

Next Career Academy Conversations

National Academy Foundation Conference, July 9-12, Washington, D.C.

National Career Academy Coalition Conference, October 23-25, Washington, D.C.