

# CAREER ACADEMY CONVERSATION

Educating for Careers/ California Partnership Academy Conference  
Sacramento Grand Sheraton Hotel  
Friday, March 4, 2011

The California Partnership Academies hosted this Conversation. Twenty-four people attended representing 11 organizations. The agenda was largely organized around the four topics for which task forces have been established, reported on below.

## ◆ ACADEMY NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT

The task force for this topic is: David Stern (CASN), Charlie Dayton (CASN), Rob Ivry (MDRC), Kim Green (Natl. Assn. of State Directors of CTE), Gary Hoachlander (ConnectEd CA), Stephen DeWitt (ACTE), plus adjunct members JD Hoye (NAF), Susan Katzman (NCAC), and Betsy Brand (AYPF).

Brad Stam of ConnectEd CA explained that the Judy Chu Linked Learning bill introduced in the House of Representatives last fall is now dead with the new composition of the House. Another similar bill may be introduced this session, but without a request for accompanying funding, just to build awareness.

A bill is making its way through the California legislature to support 44 additional Green Academies, as well as provide continuing support for 45 currently being implemented, sponsored by the President Pro Tem of the California Senate. It has cleared all Senate committees and is now in the CA Assembly. If passed it will become part of the 2011-12 state budget, subject to the governor's approval.

The California Department of Education (CDE) is conducting a competition for 50 new CPA grants. These will be funds for planning and the first year of implementation (2011-12). In other efforts, PG&E has added \$1 million to its support of five Energy Academies, and the California Bar Association plans to support six Law Academies, employing EDC-developed curriculum.

Ilene Kantrov from EDC noted that Massachusetts doesn't really have academies, they still hew to a more traditional view of vocational education, but that information about Linked Learning was beginning to reach Rhode Island. Deanna Hanson added that NAF has seen evidence of this Linked Learning awareness in many states, including Ohio, Illinois, New Jersey, Kentucky, and New York.

## ◆ ACADEMY CURRICULA

The task force for this topic is: Erin Fender (Co-Chair, CASN), Penni Hudis (Co-Chair, ConnectEd CA), Ilene Kantrov (EDC), David Ross (Buck Institute), Cheryl Carrier (FordPAS), and Andy Rothstein (NAF).

Erin Fender reported on progress on this front, sharing a two-page handout that provides a synopsis (attached). Among the points covered:

- Eight industry sectors have been selected to be added over the next year and a half (see handout).
- In five of these Programs of Study will be defined.
- A final version of the upload tool has been completed.
- A system to vet curriculum for quality has been developed, using a jury system similar to that used by professional journals. For curriculum rejected, there will be an option to revise and resubmit it.
- In addition to the many sources of professionally developed curriculum being researched, academies themselves will be encouraged to submit good examples (~150 so far).
- Jay Gonzales noted the need to crosswalk this effort with CBEDS and clarify where some CTE courses fit.

In related work, David Stern reported that "Program Status" for CPA CTE courses has recently been approved by the University of California Office of the President, meaning that any CTE course approved for college entrance credit (the "a-g" courses) in one academy would automatically be approved in any other in the state, assuming the same curriculum and standards were followed.

Deanna Hanson reported that NAF has officially approved health as a fifth career field it will support. NAF too is seeking Program Status for its courses in California.

## ◆ WORKPLACE LEARNING

The task force for this topic is: Rob Atterbury (Chair—ConnectEd CA), Deanna Hanson (NAF), Chris Force (Duval, FL Schools), Svetlana Darsche (WestEd), Wendy Sebranek (Philadelphia Academies), and Michelle Swanson (Swanson and Cosgrave).

Rob Atterbury led this discussion, noting that efforts in this realm have been largely combined across this task force, NAF, and ConnectEd. He shared a Linked Learning Alliance document draft entitled: *Work-Based Learning Career Practicum: Definitions, Quality Criteria, and Student Outcomes* (attached). He and April Treece of the Contra Costa Economic Partnership have been showing this to a variety of Bay Area groups for reactions, and did so at the recent Linked Learning Alliance meeting. Discussion points:

- The word “practicum” isn’t quite right; other options were offered
- David Stern noted that “productive activity” should be part of any WBL definition
- While internships remain important, and a capstone experience, the effort here is to define the whole range of possible work-based (as opposed to work-place) learning options

Svetlana Darsche led a discussion about what defines “career readiness”. She noted that there are two large national projects to develop assessments for “college” and “career” readiness, but there has been little focus on the latter. She shared a one-page graphic showing different ways of viewing the relationship between these. It was noted that ACTE has a useful document addressing career readiness. NAF representatives noted that the International Baccalaureate program (which NAF is in discussions with) may be interested in adding a career certification as part of its program.

## ◆ ACADEMY STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

The task force for this topic is: Mary Visher (Chair—MDRC), David Stern (CASN), Arlene LaPlante (ConnectEd), Charlie Dayton (CASN), Louis Simmons (Duval, FL Schools), Chris Force (Duval, FL Schools), and Angie Grasberger (NCAC).

Mary led this discussion. She reiterated the three goals of this task force: a) to collect and share information regarding current standards (see Tool A, attached) and related databases (Tool B, attached); b) to assess the degree of alignment among these systems; and c) to explore ways to develop a better aligned and more cohesive system. Discussion ranged over several related issues:

- The possibility of obtaining data from state databases (e.g., in Florida, Texas)
- The need to flag academy students in databases to make this possible (as in NAF academies)
- The need to obtain intact databases from districts, rather than asking them to make extractions
- Whether a system could be developed to allow submission of needed data across programs to ease the burden on academies (e.g., CPAs, NAF academies, Linked Learning pathways, SLC grantees)
- A similar need re. certifications where NCAC, LL, NAF, and/or CPAs have such efforts underway

## ◆ WEBSITE CROSS REFERENCING

Charlie Dayton raised the need for better linking and cross referencing our respective websites to improve access from the field. He provided copies of a two-page listing of 16 organizations that support career academies (attached), with a one paragraph sketch of each and link to each website, taken from CASN’s website. Discussion suggested the need for wider information sharing in this regard, and an analysis of what “buckets” such links might fall into beyond broad organization descriptions. A new task force was formed among CASN (Dayton), ConnectEd (Dave Yanofsky), and NAF (TBD), with others invited to join.

## NEXT CONVERSATIONS

- *July 17-19, 2011: National Academy Foundation Conference, San Francisco*
- *November 3-5, 2011: National Career Academy Coalition Conference, Orange County, CA*