**Glossary of Terms Related to College and Career Academies, Linked Learning Pathways, Small Learning Communities and High School**

Please note: Since this glossary is intended for a national audience, most terminology with definitions specific to a particular State has been removed. We are sharing this document in word format as you may wish to add definitions of graduation requirements, high school exit exams, assessments, endorsements, etc. specific to your State, region, or District. This glossary will be updated from time to time. If you have recommendations for specific terms/definitions to add that are valuable for all, please share them with [patricia510@gmail.com](mailto:patricia510@gmail.com?subject=Glossary%20recommendation). Thank you.

**21st-Century Skills** - 21st-Century Skills are the skills students need to succeed in college, careers (the workplace), life-long learning and active citizenship. There are evolving definitions of 21st Century Skills. Tony Wagner, for example, talks about 21st century skills as critical thinking and problem solving; collaboration across networks and leading by influence; agility and adaptability; initiative and entrepreneurship, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, and curiosity and imagination. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has a very useful graphic that represents the various interconnected components of 21st Century Skills as well as the support systems needed for 21st teaching and learning. In addition you can download a full P21 Framework Definition Document. 21st century student outcomes are described in terms of core subjects and 21st century themes; learning and innovation skills (creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration); information, media, and technology skills (information literacy, media literacy, ICT Literacy); and Life and Career skills. 21st Century Support systems include: Standards, Assessment of Skills, Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, and Learning Environments,  [http://www.p21.org](http://www.p21.org/" \t "_blank)

**Academic (& Career-Technical) Teaming*-***Teaming organizes groups of teachers across departments, so they share the same students. Teaming responsibilities include; shared responsibility for curriculum, instruction, evaluation, scheduling, & discipline of a group of 100-150 students. Teaming is a way to personalize the learning community by building a sense of community so students learn more & can meet higher standards (NWREL, 2002).

**Achievement Gap***-*Achievement gap is a persistent, pervasive, and significant disparity in educational achievement and attainment among groups of students as determined by a standardized measure (PSNC, 2007, p. 1).

**Adult Advocate Systems***-*These systems insure that each student has an adult advocate. Many times students report that they do not have an adult figure to go to for advice or assistance, and need the additional support to be successful in school (USDOE, 2001).

**Advisory*-***Advisories offer students an opportunity to meet on a regular basis with an adult to assist with personalizing the high school experience for each student. Advisories usually consist of approximately 20 students to one advisor. The advisory may meet weekly or more often. Advisory curriculum is often written by the campus teachers and designed to meet the needs of their particular students.

**Advisory Board or Advisory Council** - An advisory board is a group of volunteers made up primarily of industry, postsecondary, education, government, and community representatives. (Where appropriate, it may include parent and student representatives.) An advisory board meets regularly to provide advice and support to the academy or pathway. The advisory board builds the foundation for strong and lasting partnerships.  (NOTE: A site and/or the Consortium as a whole might have an Advisory Board or Advisory Council to help guide their SLC work.

**Alternative Scheduling -**This SLC strategy allows for creative student scheduling. This can include block schedules, extended periods, longer days, or increased number of days in a school year (USDOE, 2001).

**Articulation -** Articulation is the practice of aligning curriculum from one educational segment to another to encourage a seamless transition between courses, grades, and/or education institutions. Most commonly, high school courses articulate to community college courses that may allow high school students to earn college credit.

**AVID**(Advancement Via Individual Determination) - “AVID is an elementary through postsecondary college readiness system that is designed to increase schoolwide learning and performance. The AVID system accelerates student learning, uses research based methods of effective instruction, provides meaningful and motivational professional development, and acts as a catalyst for systemic reform and change…Although AVID serves all students, it focuses on the least served students in the academic middle. The formula is simple – raise expectations of students and, with the AVID support system in place, they will rise to the challenge.”  ([http://www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org/))

**AVID Elective** - “AVID middle and high school students are enrolled in their school’s toughest classes, such as honors and Advanced Placement, but also in the AVID elective. For one period a day, they learn organizational and study skills, work on critical thinking and asking probing questions, get academic help from peers and college tutors, and participate in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem attainable.   Middle and senior high school teachers in collaboration developed the AVID curriculum, based on rigorous standards, with college professors. It is driven by the WICR method, which stands for writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading. AVID curriculum is used in AVID elective classes and in content-area classes in AVID schools.”  [http://www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org/)

**Capstone technical course -** A capstone technical course is an 11th- or 12th-grade career and technical education (CTE) course(s) that allows students to “put it all together.” Capstone courses provide students with an opportunity to use their knowledge and skills by integrating the material learned in beginning and intermediate CTE courses. Coursework generally includes advanced, industry-based skills and knowledge, internships, building a portfolio, and problem-/project-based learning.

**Career Academy** (aka College and Career Academy and, in California, California Partnership Academy) A smaller learning community in which a team of teachers works with a group of students over time and prepares them to succeed in college, careers, and citizenship, without need for remediation.  Academies involve college preparatory curriculum integrated around a career theme, a strong sense of family, and industry/community/postsecondary partnerships.  Academies include student opportunities for mentoring, job shadowing, internship, service learning experiences, career/college guidance, and support for academic success.

A Career Academy is:

* A small learning community, comprising a group of students within the larger high school who take classes together for at least two years, taught by a team of teachers from different disciplines;
* A college preparatory curriculum with a career theme, enabling students to see relationships among academic subjects & their application to a broad field of work;
* Partnerships with employers, the community, and local colleges, bringing resources from outside the high school to improve student motivation and achievement.

   -*College and Career Academy Support Network (CCASN)*[Learn more](http://casn.berkeley.edu/resource_files/College-Career-Academy_2.23.14.pdf" \t "_blank)*.*

**Career Academy National Standards of Practice** (NSOP) - The National Standards of Practice for Career Academies were developed by an informal consortium of organizations that actively support career academies. The Standards include ten key elements of successful implementation.  <http://www.casn.berkeley.edu/resource_files/national_standards.pdf>

**Career Clusters/Career Pathways** - A career cluster/career pathway provides schools/districts/ training programs with a way of restructuring curriculum, teaching resources, and how students are grouped. Typically, within a Cluster, students take classes around a particular career-theme as well as academic core classes that are integrated with the sequence of career-technical courses and flavored with the career cluster theme. Students who select a career cluster learn about that particular field as well as the academic core classes within the context of that career field. Ideally, each Cluster builds on student interests and college-and-career motivations. Typically, each Career Cluster has within it several Career Pathways within which numerous career specialties exist. Knowledge and skills acquired are transferrable.

**Career Technical Education (CTE) course sequence** - A multiyear sequence of CTE courses emphasizes technical skills and work-based knowledge while integrating the academic skills and knowledge necessary for the industry sector to provide students with preparation for the workplace and postsecondary education. The sequence typically includes beginning, intermediate, and capstone courses, as well as work-based learning (WBL) experiences.

**Cohort scheduling** - In cohort scheduling, a group of students with a defined educational need or focus are scheduled together in some or all of their classes.

**College and Career Academy (also known as Career Academy or, in California, California Partnership Academy (CPA))**: A smaller learning community in which a team of teachers works with a group of students over time and prepares them to succeed in college, careers, and citizenship, without need for remediation.  Academies involve college preparatory curriculum integrated around a career theme, a strong sense of family, and industry/community/postsecondary partnerships.  Academies include student opportunities for mentoring, job shadowing, internship, service learning experiences, career/college guidance, and support for academic success.

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**Common Core State Standards -** The development of the Common Core State Standards was sponsored by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These K-12 learning standards describe key concepts in English/language arts and mathematics and encourage application of knowledge so that students graduate both college and career ready.  http:www.corestandards.org

**Community of Practice** - Etienne Wagner describes Communities of Practice (CoP) as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”   Typically, the pathway/academy team of teachers forms as a community of practice. Sometimes each grade level interdisciplinary pathway team of teachers functions as a community of practice, collaborating together on curriculum development, pedagogy, support for student learning and success, and key aspects of pathway development.

**Comprehensive Student Support Systems (CSSS)** - The CSSS is a school-based delivery system of supports and services that ensure student achievement. “The CSSS is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Education, the family, and the community that provides resources and assistance so each child will meet the educational standards for his/her grade level. Family members and school officials make decisions that are meaningful to a child’s welfare. The collaborative decision-making process ensures that student support services match the severity, complexity, and frequency of need, and can be delivered in a timely and efficient manner.”

Goals of CSSS include:

* To provide comprehensive and timely supports for students that allow them to achieve in school, to be confident and caring, and to become contributing citizens in their communities.
* To involve families and the community as integral partners in the implementation of the CSSS.
* To integrate human and financial resources of the appropriate public and private agencies to create caring communities at each school.

**Concurrent enrollment** -  Concurrent enrollment is one form of dual enrollment. Concurrent enrollment is defined as “credit hours earned when a high school student is taking a college course for both high school and college credit, during the high school day, on the high school campus taught by a qualified high school teacher” (who may serve as adjunct faculty to the college.)  More broadly, concurrent enrollment can refer to a student taking multiple courses simultaneously at different educational institutions. (See also dual enrollment)

**Curricular integration** - Integrated curriculum is an instructional methodology that breaks down traditional barriers between subjects to make learning more meaningful and engaging to students. Ideally, (in thematic academies/pathways/ SLCs) integrated curriculum includes a combination of various academic and CTE subjects and goes beyond textbook instruction by requiring students to use their skills and knowledge or acquire new learning in order to solve complex, real problems that are often industry-based.

**Deeper Learning** - The skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in a world that is rapidly changing. Deeper learning engages students in mastering core academic content, thinking critically and solving complex problems, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, and learning how to learn (self-directed learning, etc.)  
See <http://www.hewlett.org/deeperlearning> for an expanded definition

**Design Thinking -**Design thinking describes the design-specific cognitive activities that designers apply during the process of designing. Design thinking typically involves the ability to combine empathy for the context of a problem and creativity in the generation of insights and solutions. Increasingly, design thinking is being applied in the fields of engineering, business, and education.

**Differentiated instruction** - Differentiated instruction is an instructional approach in which the teacher adapts the content, process, and product of lessons to match each student’s readiness, learning style, and interests. In differentiated instruction, the learning goals for all students are the same, but the required tasks, instructional approach, and materials used vary according to the needs of the individual students.

**Distributed Leadership** - Distributed leadership is often defined interchangeably with definitions of shared/democratic/team/dispersed/participatory/broad-based or inclusive leadership. It is described as the “practice of governing a school by expanding the number of people involved in making important decisions related to the school’s organization operation, and academics.” (source: Great Schools Partnership) Such descriptions of distributed leadership often involve the model of a school leadership team.

Harvard Professor John Diamond describes a “distributed perspective” According to Diamond, distributed leadership is not a type or style or model of leadership. Rather it is a perspective on leadership. For Diamond, a distributed perspective is a way of thinking about the practice of leadership. In the Linked Learning world, distributed leadership is an element of the pathway, site, district, and community work. As part of the essential elements of pathway quality, distributed leadership as described thusly: “The Linked Learning pathway staff, school site and district leaders, and industry and community partners share responsibility and accountability for the program’s effectiveness and successful student outcomes.”

**Dual enrollment** - Dual enrollment involves students being enrolled in two separate, academically related institutions. Typically, in dual enrollment, high school students enroll in college courses, which may be offered either on the high school or college campus, for which they may earn both college credit as well as credit toward their high school diploma.  *(See also concurrent enrollment)*

**Educational Opportunity Audit***-*The Education Trust – West’s Educational Opportunity Audit and Blueprint Design Toolkit is a comprehensive process to determine student interventions, professional development, staffing, curriculum, facilities, and budget needs. Additionally, Ed Trust West provides support for creating an ongoing public education strategy that results in a Blueprint for preparing all high school students for college and career.  (Source: Education Trust – West)

**Equity (education equity)** - Benitez, Davidson, and Flaxman (2009) define educational equity as “all students have access to all of the experiences, conditions, and support that they need to grow as learners and be prepared for postsecondary options.” Singleton and Linton (2006) say that to be engaged in the pursuit of equitable education for all students means that we are “raising the achievement of all students while narrowing the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students and eliminating the racial (evaluator would add “and economic”) predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories.”

**Habits of Mind** - The Habits of Mind are a collection of 16 attributes people display when they behave intelligently. They were identified by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick to help people develop their critical- and creative-thinking skills to become continuous learners and prepare for school, work, and life in the 21st century.

**House***:*House plans divide students in a large school into groups either by grade level or across grade levels. House arrangements may be yearlong or multiyear. Each house usually has its own extracurricular and social activities (USDOE, 2001).

**Inquiry-based instruction** - Inquiry-based instruction is a student-centered, active learning approach driven more by learners’ questions and critical-thinking and problem-solving skills than by teachers’ lessons. It is associated with the idea “Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand.”

**Integrated Curriculum** - Integrated curriculum is a series of conscious and informed strategies used to connect the content of one or more academic and CTE courses (or two or more academic courses) so that what is learned in one discipline is combined with and reinforced in the other disciplines over an extended period of time.

**Interdisciplinary Teaming** - “Interdisciplinary teaming brings together two to five teachers from different subject areas who collaborate to teach a shared group of students. The most common interdisciplinary team includes math, English, science, and social studies teachers who share 90-150 students. Teachers within the team have a common planning time to coordinate and evaluate curriculum and instruction across academic subject areas, as well as to discuss and address student attendance and behavior issues. Ideally, teacher teams can adjust the daily schedule to regroup students for personalized instruction or team activities. A centerpiece of many high school reform efforts has been a shift away from traditional subject-area departments in favor of interdisciplinary teams.” (School Reform Strategy Toolkit.)

**Linked Learning** - “An approach to education that transforms the traditional high school experience by bringing together strong academics, a demanding technical education, and real-world experience to help students gain an advantage in high school, postsecondary education, and careers. Students can choose among industry-themed pathways in fields such as engineering, arts and media, and biomedicine and health.” (ConnectEd California)

* Four Components of Linked Learning: Rigorous academics, real-world technical skills, work-based learning, and personalized support.

**Looping or Multi-year Groups***:*This strategy involves a group of students who remain with a team of teachers for a period of two or more years. (USDOE, 2001).

**Magnet School***:*A magnet school offers specialized curriculum and usually pulls students from all over the area not just within the schools attendance boundaries.

**Multidisciplinary projects** - When working on multidisciplinary projects, students are charged with finding viable solutions to real problems, or with achieving specific individual or group outcomes, through units of instruction that are horizontally aligned in several discipline.

**Next Generation Science Standards** - Through a collaborative, voluntary, state-led process, these new K–12 science standards, paralleling the common core standards in English and math, are designed to be richer in content and practice, and arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide students an internationally benchmarked science education. They are based on the Framework for K–12 Science Education developed by the National Research Council. [http://www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org/" \t "_blank)

**Ninth Grade Academy***:*The ninth grade academy is a school-within-a-school organized around an interdisciplinary team of (typically) English, math, science, and social studies teachers. Incoming freshmen are connected to a select team of teachers using research proven instructional strategies to teach the curriculum as well as address their students' needs more personally. Teachers work in a collaborative environment and are committed to the learning of the students they share.

**Open access** - All students, without regard to their past educational success, special education designation, socio-economic status, English Language Learner designation, and race/ethnicity, etc., are provided equal access to educational opportunities including honors courses, Advanced Placement, and/or programs such as Small Learning Communities/ academies/pathways. Open access supports increased participation of students in high quality, rigorous education by eliminating barriers and/or other restrictions.

**Pathways/Clusters***:*Pathways or career clusters are broad-based industry areas, which include all careers from technical through professional levels. In high schools, a pathway may provide a structure that organizes students according to their career goals and interests and becomes the foundation for integration of high academic standards, technical skills, and knowledge. Pathways or career clusters identify academic and technical skills needed by students as they transition from high school to postsecondary education and/or employment (adapted slightly from USDOE, 2001).

**Pathway Program of Study** - A prescribed curriculum sequence that includes both academic and technical courses and assures that pathway students graduate both college and career ready. Linked Learning further describes an industry-themed pathway program of study as bringing “coherence to the four core components of Linked Learning: rigorous academic, career-based learning in the classroom, work-based learning, and personalized supports. The program (of study) is designed to ensure that all pathway students are offered the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit, and are prepared for success in the full range of postsecondary options, including a four-year college.” (Source: Essential Elements of a High Quality Linked Learning Pathway)

**Pathway theme** - Pathway themes are generally based on one or more of a state's industry sectors and/or the national career clusters. The theme is used to engage students and focus their learning on career and postsecondary goals.

**Personalization** - Personalization means that each student is known well by at least one adult in the pathway so that his or her learning needs are known and addressed. It also allows a student to choose a pathway theme and make curricular choices that match his or her career interests.

**Personal Transition Plan (PTP) -**One example of a Personal Transition Plan is from Hawaii. The Board of Education Policy 4540, High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement establishes that all students must complete a Personal Transition Plan (PTP) as a requirement toward earning a Hawai’i High School Diploma.  Credit (0.5) is awarded upon completion of the PTP requirements (1st semester of Senior Year) and is based not on hours spent on the PTP but on its content and quality.   The PTP contains elements aimed at customizing a plan of action that will “assist and guide students towards maximizing their high school opportunities for life after graduation. School personnel strive to support students in their post-secondary planning however parents are also an integral part of a child’s personal and academic life. Ultimately, it is each student’s responsibility to complete the components of his/her PTP.

**Postsecondary articulation**  (see Articulation)

**Professional learning community (PLC) or Professional Learning Team (PLT)** - A professional learning community consists of a collegial group of educators who are united in their commitment to student learning, share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and re- view each other’s classrooms, and participate in decision making together. Such a community has several possible benefits: it may reduce the isolation of teachers, lead to better informed and committed teachers, and result in academic gains for students. A professional learning community is seen as a powerful staff development approach and a strategy for school change and improvement. Typically PLCs/PLTs focus on data, apply research and best practices, share and reflect on classroom practices, and improve teamwork and collaboration skills.

**Program of Study** - A Program of Study is a prescribed curriculum sequence in which students are enrolled in a series of courses that ensures that they complete graduation requirements and an identified curriculum. Programs of Study can be designed for three or four years.

**Project-based approach/teaching and learning** - Project- based learning is a systematic teaching methodology that engages students by focusing on a complex question or problem and having them investigate answers to that problem over an extended period of time, often resulting in presentations and products.

**SCANS (Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills)** - In 1990, the U.S. Secretary of Labor appointed a commission (the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) to examine the demands of the workplace and determine the specific skills young people need to succeed there. The commission completed its work in 1992 and issued a report, What Work Requires of School: A SCANS Report for America 2000, now known as the “SCANS Report.”

**Smaller Learning Community** - “An environment in which a core group of teachers and other adults within the school know the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitors each student’s progress, and provides the academic and other support each student needs to succeed.”   -   *United States Department of Education*

“An interdisciplinary team of teachers shares a few hundred or fewer students in common for instruction, assumes responsibility for their educational progress across years of school, and exercises maximum flexibility to act on knowledge of students’ needs.”  
  - *Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories*

**STEM Academies** - “An approach to teaching and lifelong learning that emphasizes the natural connectedness of the four STEM disciplines: science, technology, engineering, and math. The connections are made through collaboration among educators (and result) in related instruction, curriculum, and assessment. Problem solving is emphasized across the STEM disciplines allowing students to discover, explore, and apply critical thinking skills as they learn. STEM Academies may be structured as Career Academies or separate schools.” (Slightly adapted from the “Glossary of Terms Related to Career Academies” that is available on the CCASN web site.)

**Supplemental instruction** - Supplemental instruction provides an avenue for both students who are struggling and students who are excelling so that they can either catch up or expand their knowledge. Strategies may include modified curriculum such as shortened or lengthened assignments, targeted reading assignments, after-school instruction, tutoring, mentoring, reduction of class size, extended school year, summer school, etc.

**Support services/systems** - Support services/systems include various strategies and programs intended to assist students in reaching learning and performance goals and outcomes. These services/systems might include tutoring, academic intervention classes, supplemental instruction, counseling, advisory programs, AVID, credit recovery programs, health services, etc.

**Technical content/component** - Technical content or a technical component delivers industry-based knowledge and skills through a sequence or cluster of three or more CTE courses connected to the pathway’s theme.

**Themed Small School** - “A small high school usually comprised of not more than 500 students in grades 9-12 OR 125 students per grade level, that frames instruction around a theme such as technology, law, business, health, or the arts. Some are situated on a larger high school complex, but each has its own principal, faculty, students, and identity. Examples include: High Tech High ([http://www.hightechhigh.org](http://www.hightechhigh.org/" \t "_blank)), Life Academy of Health and Bioscience ([http://www.lifeacademyhighschool.org](http://www.lifeacademyhighschool.org/" \t "_blank)), and the School of Digital Media and Design ([http://www.sandi.net/kearnydmd](http://www.lifeacademyhighschool.org/" \t "_blank)). (Definition adapted slightly from the “Glossary of Terms Related to Career Academies” that is available on the CCASN web site.)

**Work-based learning (WBL)** - WBL is an educational approach that, by design, links learning in the workplace to learning in the classroom to engage students more fully and to intentionally promote their exposure and access to future educational and career opportunities. WBL includes all interactions with employers from career exploration discussions in the classroom to field trips, mentoring, job shadowing, internships, and actual work experiences.