

Glossary of Terms Related to Career Academies

The definitions below were crafted through a collaboration of the California Department of Education (CDE); ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career; and The College and Career Academy Support Network (CCASN) at UC Berkeley.

This glossary attempts to provide a common understanding for the field of the overlaps and differences among these various delivery models and initiatives. The entries fall into two broad categories: the “how,” or delivery models; and the “what,” the underlying standards and initiatives. The attempt has been to provide substantial definitions of a limited number of terms.

The “How” — Delivery Models

California Partnership Academy – California’s state-funded Career Academies, the California Partnership Academies (CPAs), are defined by *CA Education Code* sections 54690-54699. These three- or four-year programs

based in public comprehensive high schools are intended in part to meet the needs of at-risk students, and require at least 50% at-risk enrollment. Each CPA has a specific industry focus, with a team of academic and career-technical teachers that share a common planning period, integrate instruction across disciplines, and coordinate support systems. Students enter voluntarily and are scheduled as a cohort in three core academic and one career-technical course in grades 10 and 11 (and sometimes grade 9), and at least one core academic and career-technical course in grade 12. www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/cpagen.asp

Career Academy – A school-within-a-school or program with the school that combines academic and career-technical education (CTE) courses framed around a career theme intended to prepare high school students for both college and careers. Career Academies, which operate in

many states and cities, usually in grades 9- or 10-12, use cohort scheduling, create a family-like atmosphere,

have partnerships with employers and the community to provide work-based learning, and have relationships with nearby colleges to provide dual-enrollment courses and post-secondary articulation. Academy teachers usually have common planning time to develop interdisciplinary projects and resolve issues with their shared students. Rigorous evaluations have shown academies to have positive impacts on both school performance and employment. <http://ccasn.berkeley.edu>

Career Pathway – A coherent sequence of rigorous academic and technical courses that allows students to apply academics and develop technical skills in a career field. Career pathways prepare students for completion of state academic and technical standards and more advanced postsecondary course work related to the selected career. www.cord.org/career-pathways/ *The term Career Pathway is sometimes used synonymously with the term Career Academy. Both include a course sequence of career technical courses.*



Linked Learning Pathway – A multi-year, comprehensive high school program of integrated academic and career technical study that is organized around a broad theme, interest area, or industry sector.

All Linked Learning pathways include:

- ✓ A rigorous academic component that includes English, mathematics, science, history, and other pertinent courses.
- ✓ A technical component of three or more courses that help students gain the knowledge and skills that can give them a head start on a successful career.
- ✓ Students engage in job shadowing, apprenticeships, and internships, before they leave high school, helping them to understand all the possible choices available to them.
- ✓ Personalized support services including resume and interview counseling and supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics that help students master critical academic and career-based components of their education.



LINKED LEARNING*

Pathways connect learning with students' interests and career aspirations, preparing them for the full range of post-

graduation options including two- and four-year colleges and universities, apprenticeships, formal employment training, and military service. www.LinkedListLearning.org

Magnet Schools - A magnet program is a program in a public school that usually focuses on a special area of study, such as science, the performing arts, or career education. A magnet school is an entire school with a special focus. These programs and schools are designed to attract students from across a district. Students may choose to attend a magnet school instead of their local school. (www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/mt/)

NAF Academy - NAF academies operate primarily in urban public school districts, but also in many suburban and rural areas, in 39 states. They can take the form of small learning communities within larger schools or as stand-alone public high schools. They are organized around one of five career themes – Finance, Hospitality & Tourism, Information Technology, Health Sciences, or Engineering – viable industries with demonstrated growth and strong potential in the years ahead. In addition to core academic courses, students take industry-specific classes related to these themes and participate in work-based learning activities to put their lessons into action.

www.naf.org



Regional Occupation Centers/Programs (ROC/P) - A California supported system—based in districts, county offices of education, or regional consortia—that prepares students with the skills and competencies needed to enter the workforce and pursue advanced training in postsecondary institutions. ROC courses are open to all secondary students, with students 16-18 years old in grades 11 and 12 having priority. www.carocp.org

Smaller Learning Community - Schools-within-schools that divide large high schools (usually 1000+ students) into smaller, more autonomous units, usually with a small group of shared teachers. SLCs can take several forms: Theme-Based Smaller Learning Communities or Focus Schools; Houses, that may be themed or non-themed, and/or defined by grade level; Career Academies, generally with a three- or four-year structure, with academic instruction framed around a career theme; Freshman Academies, supporting 9th grade students as they begin their high school; Magnet Schools, separate high schools framed around a theme, often with an option of accelerated course-work for Gifted & Talented students. During the 2000s there was a Federal Small Learning Community grant program that awarded grants to local education agencies (LEAs). <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/index.html>

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 resulting 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.

Themed Smaller Learning Communities - See “Smaller Learning Communities” above. They are formed around an academic or career theme, such as Humanities or Health and Medical Science. Sometimes they target a specific population of students such as at-risk or gifted and talented youth, and are sometimes called “academy” or “magnet” schools.

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, or hospitality. Some are situated on the campus of a large high school, but each has its own principal, faculty and identity. Examples of themed small schools are High Tech High (www.hightechhigh.org), Life Academy (www.lifeacademyhighschool.org), and The schools of Digital Media and Design (www.sandi.net/Page/13277).

The “What”— Standards and Initiatives

Career Academy National Standards of Practice -

Developed by an informal consortium of career academy organizations, the NSOP are framed around ten key elements of successful implementation, drawn from many years of research and experience from all parts of the country. http://casn.berkeley.edu/resource_files/national_standards.pdf

Career Technical Education - Career Technical Education (CTE) is an educational strategy designed to provide individuals with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions. High quality CTE responds to the needs of the economy with regard to both industry focus and skills that are taught within a “Program of Study”: a logical multi-year sequence of courses that integrate core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.

Common Core State Standards

- The Common Core State Standards is an initiative that seeks to bring diverse state curricula and standards into alignment with each other by following the principles of standards-based education reform. It is sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Developed by education experts from 45 states, these K-12 learning standards go into key concepts in math and English/ language arts. They require a practical, real-life application of knowledge that prepares students for success in college, work and life. They were developed around the principle that understanding is more important than memorization, and provide the national education community with consistent learning expectations for all students. www.corestandards.org/

Connected Learning - As used in relationship to Career Academies and Pathways, this usually refers to the multiple connections they bring to traditional high school

education, including: among students; between students and their teachers; among teachers; between teachers and students’ parents; between academic and career-technical learning; between high schools and the economy; between high schools and postsecondary institutions; and between students and their futures. The term is also used to refer to the use of online and digital media learning (e.g., by the MacArthur Foundation). www.macfound.org

Deeper Learning - The skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in a world that is rapidly changing. Deeper learning prepares students to:

- ✓ Master core academic content
- ✓ Think critically and solve complex problems
- ✓ Work collaboratively
- ✓ Communicate effectively
- ✓ Learn how to learn (e.g., self-directed learning)

www.hewlett.org/deeperlearning



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. They will be considered for adoption in California in November 2013. www.nextgenscience.org

Project-Based Learning (PBL) - A common form of instruction used in Career Academies and related approaches, John Dewey promoted it initially with the concept of “learning by doing.” It is an alternative to paper-based, rote memorization, teacher-led instruction that often predominates in high schools. Usually students working as a team are given a “driving question” to respond to or answer, then directed to create an artifact to present their gained knowledge. In career academies it often entails showing applications of academic knowledge or skills in a career field. It is supported among others by the Buck Institute for Education. www.bie.org

Program Status - A system that allows courses approved by the University of California for a-g credit in one high school to be used in all (that meet the same standards) within a given program across the state. Examples of programs with this status: Advanced Placement, AVID, ROP, California Partnership Academies, Project Lead The Way, and CDE Agricultural Education. This removes the burden for high schools of having to submit a complete course content description to obtain their own a-g course approval. (www.ucop.edu/agguide/updating-your-course-list/school-program/programs/index.html)

Program of Study - A prescribed curriculum sequence in which students are enrolled in a series of academic and technical courses that ensures that they complete graduation requirements and prepare them for the career area. Programs of study can be designed for 9th-12th grade or 10th-12th grade, and can also include postsecondary courses.

21st Century Skills/ 21st Century Learning - A term intended to encompass the broad move toward deeper and more relevant learning, used by a variety of organizations. The "Partnership for 21st Century Skills" is a national organization that advocates for the integration of skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication into the core academic subjects, using the "four Cs" as guidance: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (and sometimes citizenship). About 20 states have adopted its goals and principles. www.p21.org

Work-based Learning - 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. Work-based Learning includes all interactions with employers from career exploration discussions in the classroom to field trips, mentoring, job shadowing, internships, and actual work experiences.



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