PowerSchool   NAVIANCE
BY POWERSCHOOL

Expanding the Definition of College and Career Readiness

The CCLR Framework®

PowerSchool   NAVIANCE
BY POWERSCHOOL

Contents

Going Beyond College and Career Readiness

Traditionally, college and career readiness (CCR) in schools has been focused around three areas: academic skills, career knowledge, and college knowledge.

With this laser focus, students understand the importance of succeeding in classes and preparing for standardized tests, as well as various aspects of careers. Students also prepare for college by conducting college and scholarship searches, determining their college major, and ultimately applying to college. For some students, this is enough. But in today's world of work, hard skills only take a student so far. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and essential life skills are crucial to future success**, especially when considering equity and the 33% of first-generation students who graduate from high school every year.

With that in mind, it's time to expand the definition of college and career readiness. Although academic, career and college knowledge are vital to a student's future success, **they also need to be equipped with the skills to succeed after high school—whatever path they may choose**. When students understand their strengths, know how

to overcome obstacles, and learn how to set goals effectively, they can carry those skills through to all areas of their life. When they learn successful teamwork skills and know their online presence, they become an effective employee. And when they understand how to make successful transitions, they are equipped for life.

5 Ways to Expand College, Career, and Life Readiness in Schools and Districts

- Make the social-emotional connection
- Collaborate with local workforce
- Focus on transitions early
- Think outside the box
- Make data a consistent focus

Traditional College and Career Readiness

For years, *college* and *career* readiness has been used interchangeably as both a way to define the academic readiness to succeed in a postsecondary institution, as well as an understanding of the skills needed to gain admission to a postsecondary institution or career. Throughout time, college and career readiness has been just that—primarily focused on colleges as a means to career. Career assessments, research, and apprenticeships, along with college searches, visits, and applications, all combine to inform students of the decisions ahead.

Even though we need to expand the approach to college and career readiness, we cannot abandon the roots that lead to life-ready students, including academic skills and college and career knowledge. Instead, it's important to examine how we can expand the lens of CCR to incorporate skills that students not only need to develop for college, but also need to succeed while they are there— or throughout whatever path they choose following high school.

> **Career-ready students need to be able to understand their own strengths and interests and connect them to a career that will allow them to lead a fulfilled, successful life.**

The Value of Career Knowledge

Students who are able to identify their life interests and career aspirations are more likely to connect their current academics to their future aspirations. These students are more likely to graduate from high school, earn more money, and be more involved in their community (Stam, 2011).

Schools can help to create a career-going culture by providing students with the tools necessary to understand careers and clusters, as well as engage in conversations surrounding the structure and value of purposeful, interest-based careers.

Aside from the career search, career knowledge and readiness involves a variety of skills—**from technical and job-specific skills, to employability and academic skills**

(Curry, 2013). Career-ready students need to be able to understand their own strengths and interests and connect them to a career that will allow them to lead a fulfilled, successful life. Gysbers describes a career-ready student as **understanding the skills necessary to have the mental and strategic capacity to understand who they are and how to build toward a career that provides meaning and purpose to their lives** (Gysbers, 2013).

Career knowledge builds on the work that students complete throughout social-emotional exploration. Exploring career clusters, understanding the meaning and structure of various jobs, and undergoing career searches all help students build a base to determine the training they need to reach their future goals. From there, career goal setting and specific career fit conversations can lead into further exploration of college knowledge and transitions.

The Need for College Knowledge

Students who possess skills that contribute to college readiness have an increased likelihood of attending college (Conley, 2012). The term "college readiness" is widely used in education today and is a common measurement that school districts use to ensure schools and districts are meeting common benchmarks. It is often measured by factors such as standardized test scores, graduation rates, and college-going percentages (ACT, 2012).

Definitions of college readiness have a theme of academic, personal, and technical preparation. Students who are college-ready incorporate academic knowledge to enroll in a postsecondary institution while taking credit-bearing courses (ACT, 2012), and they are equipped with the tools to be successful once students actually matriculate to that college (Lombardi, Conley, Seburn, & Downs, 2012).

The amount of college knowledge a student receives at home is dependent on the education level of their family. **Almost two-thirds of K-12 students in the United States are first-generation students** (NCES, 2016). Families of first-generation students likely lack some of the basic college knowledge needed to successfully apply for and enroll in a higher education institution. Topics such as postsecondary opportunities available, college fit, and paying for college must be taught to both

> **Students who possess skills that contribute to college readiness have an increased likelihood of attending college.**

students and parents in order to create an understanding of the options available after high school.

College knowledge is not limited to four-year institutions. Students should be aware of the postsecondary training that best fits their career goals. Certificate programs, military training, apprenticeship opportunities, and community and technical colleges should all be part of the opportunities presented to students within college knowledge.

Placing an Emphasis on Academic Skills

Academic preparation is a topic well-researched in college readiness studies. With the advent of Common Core Standards (Applebee, 2013) and the popularity of topics such as rigor, advanced placement, and literacy, academic preparation is a main topic in the CCLR conversation (Conley, 2011).

Course rigor is a major predictor for indicators such as GPA, standardized test scores, and college enrollment (College Board, 2013). When students push themselves to take more challenging courses, they are more likely to find success in readiness for both college and career. **Underrepresented students who take an AP or IB course in high school are almost 20% more likely to persist in a four-year college** (Klepfer & Hull, 2012)

and **students who have completed an algebra II course in high school are more likely to find success in both college and career** (Achieve, 2008).

Literacy is another consideration in academic readiness, but it is important that students have skills beyond just reading text (Ivey, 2011). **In addition to reading and writing, students need to have skills related to generating new knowledge, investigating problems, and researching to create their own original information.** In addition, students who are first-generation or from underrepresented populations need to develop cognitive strategies that go beyond that of a typical student—including test-taking skills and comprehension strategies. Limited English language skills, financial situations, and family obligations may contribute to a deficit in developing these cognitive strategies for college readiness (Caralee, 2012).

Preparing students academically requires teaching academic knowledge, as well as equipping students with the tools of how to study. Learning styles and study skills are vital to the success of a student (Manochehri & Young, 2006). Students who are confident in how they learn and how they study will carry this into their postsecondary experience and into their career. Test prep, academic goal setting, and course planning round out the academic planning that helps lead to student success.

Redefining CCR

The landscape of CCR is evolving. It is no longer adequate for schools to merely prepare students solely for admission to college. Students need to be prepared for life, and schools and districts must play a part in equipping them with the skills to navigate stressful situations, be successful learners, and to understand how to set goals and drive toward them. Students need to understand the opportunities that are available to them after high school and how those pathways help them achieve their goals in life.

Almost 60% of employers state that graduates are not prepared for the workforce in areas of oral and written communications, as well as work ethic (NACE, 2017). This shows a major gap between the skills employers are looking for in successful employees, and the skills that are currently connected to career readiness in middle and high schools. The typical career search isn't enough any more. When schools prepare students to be successful in their future careers, they need to look beyond just the connection of interests and career profiles. Employers want their incoming employees to be effective communicators, collaborative teammates, and to have a growth mindset (Job Opportunity Network). Although some of these skills are gained throughout post-secondary experience, they are even more effective when instilled at a young age.

Therefore, it is time to expand the definition of college and career readiness. By incorporating *life* readiness into the typical CCR terminology, the industry standard takes on a whole new meaning. No longer are we constrained to just teach students about colleges and careers, but we can now begin to equip them with the essential skills that they will need to be successful, productive adults who are on a path to fulfill their life goals.

When the definition of CCR is expanded, so many of the skills that have been deemed important—21st century skills, non-cognitive skills, and social-emotional learning—can be incorporated into a holistic program that helps both students and educators see that preparing for life doesn't end at college admission. As educators begin to incorporate life-ready skills as early as middle school, students become better able to see their future, set goals to attain, and remain engaged in school and their community.

Connecting Social Emotional Learning with CCLR

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a vital part of a school counselor's job. SEL lessons and activities take place as early as elementary school to teach students how to get along, how to recognize their own strengths, and how to overcome

> **Students with grit and a growth mindset are more likely to overcome failure, have belief in their ability to learn, and to achieve their goals.**

obstacles. SEL evolves through middle and high school to help students develop a growth mindset, persevere, and develop grit to carry them into adulthood.

The benefits of SEL are extensive. According to a meta-analysis by CASEL (2011), SEL skills are connected to an increase in academic performance and graduation rates, and a decrease in behavior referrals.

Instead of one-off lessons for SEL and CCR, these two concepts can be combined with academic, career, college, and transition readiness to best equip students for their future.

Research surrounding growth mindset and grit shows that students who develop these skills are more likely to succeed in their K-12 and postsecondary education and even in their career. Students with grit and a growth mindset are more likely to overcome failure, have belief in their ability to learn, and to achieve their goals (Grant & Dweck, 2003).

As the definition of CCR begins to expand, it is imperative that SEL is integrated into the overall program. The SEL toolbox equips students to successfully transition to college, in their time in the military, or as they enter the world of work. Social and emotional skills are life-long and it is time that they are recognized as part of college, career, and life preparation.

Interpersonal Skills Jumpstart Workplace Success

Deliberately devoting time to interpersonal skills, especially future-ready skills, teamwork, and communication, can help to minimize the gap between the skills students are graduating high school with and the skills needed to successfully enter the workforce. **Collaboration, teamwork, and communication skills are among the most sought-after tool sets that employers look for in employees** (Wagner, 2010).

Interpersonal skills don't need to be taught through individual counseling lessons. When they are integrated into the classroom it improves the learning of these skills. Through working together and communicating, students can imbed the skills they need at an early age and allow them to build a foundation for successful collaboration throughout middle and high school, into postsecondary training, and on to the workplace. Developing teamwork skills through classroom exercises better

prepares students to be productive members of their postsecondary path.

Significant research has been done on the value of caring adults in the lives of students. Teachers who provide encouragement and contribute to a college-going culture within their school can significantly impact the college-going attitude and college choice of students (Muhammad, Smith, & Duncan, 2008). Adult resources in schools, including teachers, counselors, and college access programs, help students make informed decisions and equip them with college search and decision-making skills (Gandara, 2002). **In many underrepresented populations, involving adult support members in the development of a student helps keep the discussion about college readiness moving in daily conversations at school and at home** (Yamamura, Martinez, & Saenz, 2010).

Build Successful Transitions

Discussions on transitions traditionally occur during the senior year of high school and mainly focus on the transition to college. However, students are constantly undergoing transitions as soon as they begin middle school.

Research on engagement and hope finds that these two qualities begin to drop significantly in students as they begin to progress from middle school to high school. An unsuccessful transition, even as early as the change from elementary to middle school, can result in a decline in academic performance, motivation, and self-efficacy (AMLE, 2002). If students have the support they need to make successful transitions, that engagement can be sustained throughout the transition to middle school, into early high school, and carried into high school graduation.

> **If students have the support they need to make successful transitions, that engagement can be sustained throughout the transition to middle school, into early high school, and carried into high school graduation.**

Summer melt is an important concept for schools and districts to be aware of as they send students into their postsecondary experiences. Summer melt, the term used for students who enroll in a postsecondary institution but do not actually make it to campus for their first day of college, has **rates as high as 44%** in some areas (Chewning, Cox, & Page, 2014). Schools and districts need to provide a culture of

helping students navigate and succeed through transitions so that by the time students are on their own, they are prepared to ask questions, live on their own, and persist when facing obstacles.

Various activities and lessons can help students prepare for and navigate through successful transitions. Transition surveys are traditionally the main vehicle for addressing changes in the lives of students. However, by focusing on building a foundation of skills that benefit successful transitions such as self-advocacy, overcoming obstacles, and even budgeting knowledge, students can be prepared with all of the knowledge they need to thrive in the face of change.
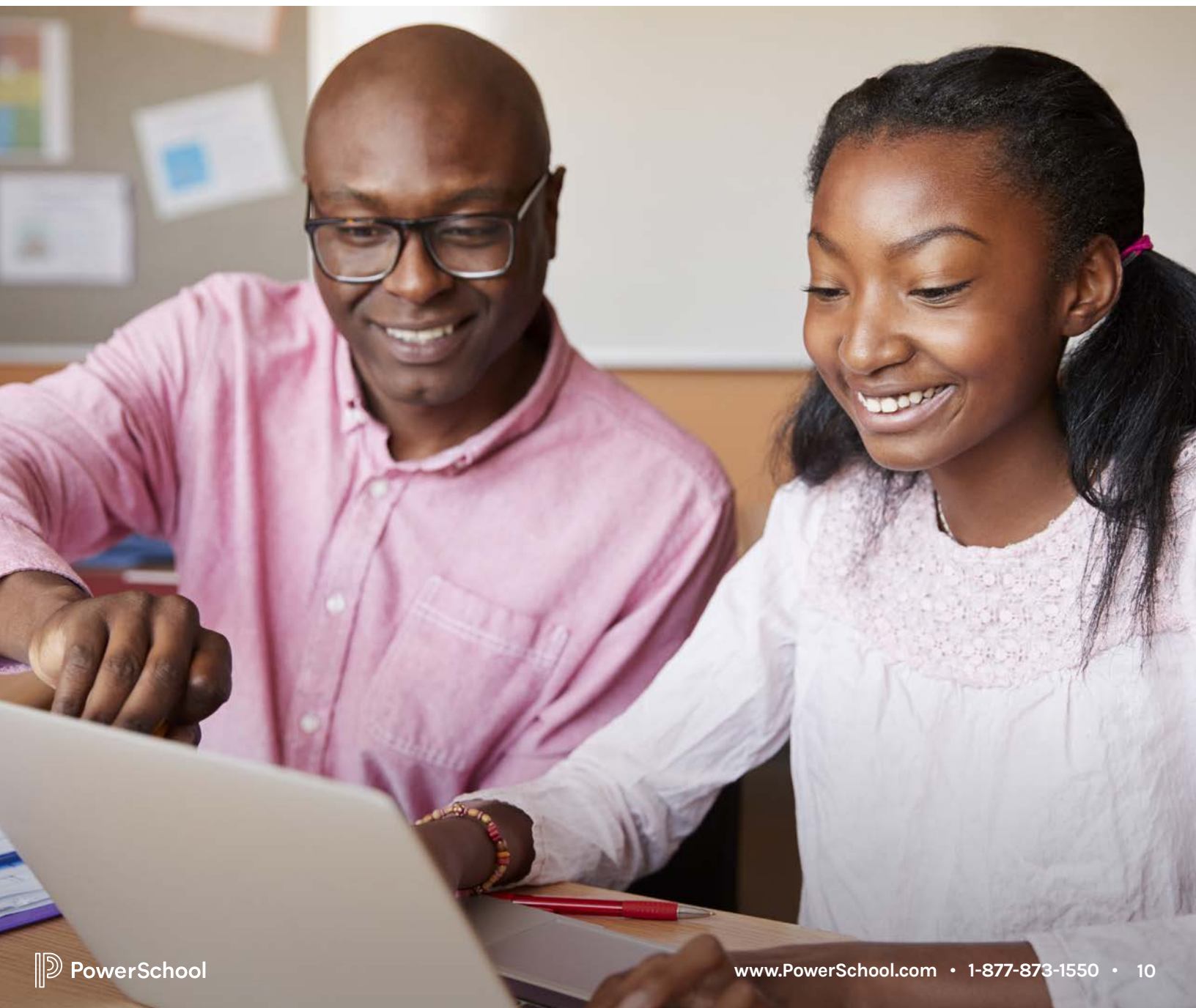
The College, Career, and Life Ready Framework®

The changing needs of students highlighted the need to expand the definition of CCR, and sparked the research behind, and creation of, the College, Career, and Life Ready Framework (CCLR Framework®). This framework acts as a blueprint to prepare middle and high school students for success after graduation. The framework is organized around the crucial competencies that students need to master in order to ensure long-term success after high school: Self-Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Academic Skills, Career Knowledge, College Knowledge, and Transition Skills. When implemented, this practical tool set helps schools and districts of all sizes define, measure, and track success for their college, career, and life readiness initiatives. The result is a purposeful approach to CCLR that drives long-term student engagement and improved outcomes.

Self-Knowledge

Strengths

Interests

Personal Finances

Grit

Self-Awareness

Informed Decisions

Academic Skills

Learning Styles

Study Skills

Test Preparation

Postsecondary Assessment

Academic Goal Setting

Course Planning

Interpersonal Skills

Teamwork

Support Network

Getting Involved

Career Knowledge

Career Clusters

Career Search

Career Fit

College Majors

Career Goal Setting

College Knowledge

Post-Secondary Opportunities

Types of Colleges

College Fit

College Search

College Applications

Paying for College

Transition Skills

School Transitions

Preparing for College

Preparing for Life

Post-Secondary Goal Setting

Summer Melt

CCLR Framework® Methodology

The CCLR Framework® is the product of various inputs. A full review of state-required individualized learning plans, approved ESSA plans, and various school and district scopes and sequences helped to build the primary structure of the framework. Professional standards from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), AASA's Redefining Ready, and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) also informed the framework. Conversations with educators and professionals in the field of school counseling and college and career readiness validated each theme and competency.

15
School and district leaders

31
State ILP plans

15
Approved ESSA plans

3
National models: ASCA, CASEL, Redefining Ready!

16
Field experts

50+
School and district CCLR scopes and sequence implementation plans

30+
Peer-reviewed research studies

10K+
Successful school and district implementations

Millions
Of college, career, and life ready students

CCLR Framework® Implementation

Implementation of the CCLR Framework® is a school or district-wide endeavour. The CCLR Framework® is intended to be a guide as institutions adopt the strategy of preparing all students for life beyond high school graduation, into postsecondary experiences and their eventual career. By undergoing these sequential steps, schools and districts can drive a thoughtful, long-lasting implementation of CCLR-centric programming.
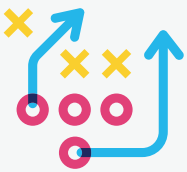
Aligning to the Strategic Plan

94% of district strategic plans include aspects related to college, career, and life readiness (Student Success Research Center, 2018). Ensure that your strategic plan includes preparing students with not just the academic, career, and college knowledge they need to thrive, but also by adding in social and emotional needs and communication and transition skills necessary to help students thrive in life beyond high school.

CCLR Across the District

The CCLR Framework® is designed to incorporate all members of the school and district community. Lessons related to the framework do not need to exist solely in school counselor classroom lessons. Rather, they should be integrated into conversations and curriculum across the school and district. Reports, new initiatives, and strategies should all be aligned to competencies and how they best serve students.
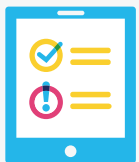
Objectives & Activities

Implementation of the CCLR Framework® should be a deliberate process. A scope and sequence of objectives and activities should be constructed and communicated at the beginning of each school year, and evaluated quarterly and measured and expanded upon at the end of each year.

Measure

Evaluation of data is an iterative process. To create equity it is imperative that every student receive programming related to each of the competencies. Measuring task completion and outcomes can be done throughout implementation. By breaking down data into student groups, proposed pathways, and grade point average, schools and districts can decide the impact of programming on each student and adjust to improve outcomes.
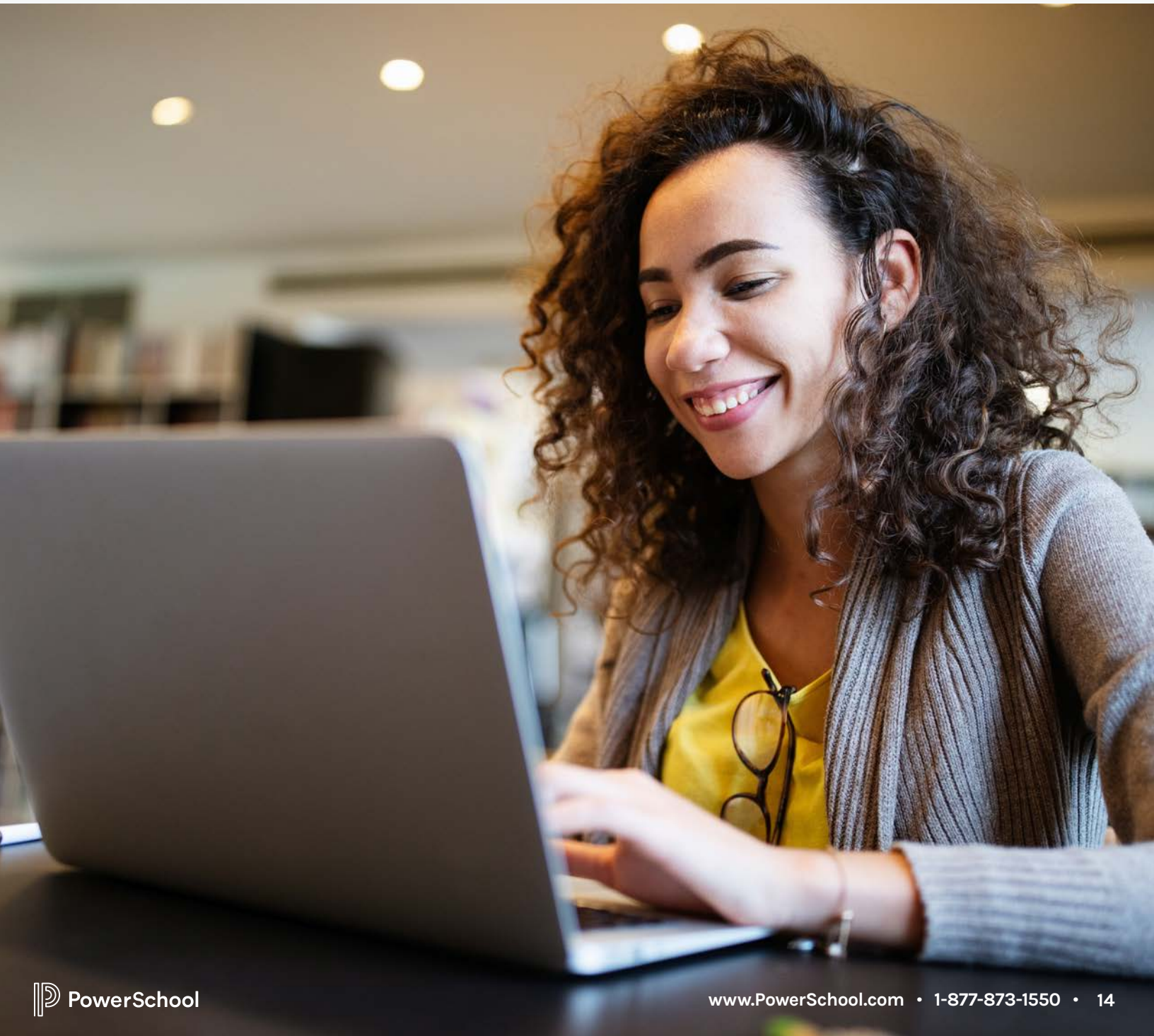
How to Expand the Definition of CCLR in Schools

Make the SEL connection

Deliberately make SEL part of CCLR programming. Connect qualities like grit, perseverance, and growth mindsets to career- and life-readiness skills. Teachers, counselors, administrators, and even local workforce members should share how they overcame obstacles to thrive in their current career. When conducting strengths and other assessments, ask students how they can use their strengths to shape their future.

Collaborate with local workforce

Local businesses are an asset, no matter the size or setting. Invite local businesses to join classrooms to discuss the value of teamwork, to collaborate on apprenticeships, job shadowing, and volunteer opportunities, and to provide career-knowledge insights.

Focus on transitions early

Capture the hope and engagement level of elementary and middle school students by helping them to manage transitions successfully. By assisting students in understanding how to self-advocate, manage change, and adapt to new surroundings, they will be even better prepared to manage transitions after high school and into adulthood.

Think outside the box (or counseling lesson)

College, career, and life readiness is not a segmented set of lessons. The theme of CCLR should carry through into each classroom, advisory period, and after-school activity. Resilience, communication skills, teamwork, and growth mindsets are just an example of competency-related objectives that can be integrated into each strand of the school day. Get everyone involved in the CCLR way of life, and task all adults in the school or district to instill these characteristics into their daily interactions with students.

Make data a consistent focus

Constant improvement can't be measured without data analysis. Task completion is just the beginning of the data that should be collected to show the outcomes of college, career, and life readiness initiatives in schools and districts. Take a deep dive into the data that is driving outcomes such as course rigor, graduation and college enrollment rates, and other indicators important to your school or district. Don't wait until the end of the year to realize a change in course is necessary. Consistently review data at certain points throughout the year (weekly, monthly, or quarterly) and share metrics often with all stakeholders involved in CCLR implementation.

References

Achieve (2008). Achieve Policy Brief: The building blocks of success. Retrieved from: http://www.achieve.org/ files/ BuildingBlocksofSuccess.pdf

ACT. (2012). *The condition of college & career readiness.* Iowa City, IA: ACT.

AMLE (2002). *Supporting Students in Their Transition to Middle School.* Retrieved from: http://www.nppsd.org/ vimages/shared/vnews/ stories/525d81ba96ee9/Tr%20-%20Supporting%20Students%20in%20Their%20 Transition%20to%20Middle%20School.pdf

Applebee, A. N. (2013). Common core state standards: The promise and the peril in a national Palimpsest. English Journal, 103(1), 25-33.

Caralee, J. A. (2012). For many Latino students, college seems out of reach. Education Week, 31(34), 16-19.

Chewning, A., Cox, E., Kathman, B., & Page, L. (2014). Strategies to Address Summer Melt [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from http:// www.collegeaccess.org/images/documents/SummerMelt.pdf

College Board Research & Development (2013). Academic Readiness Indicators: Implications for State Policy. Retrieved from: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED562596.pdf

Conley, D. T., Drumond, K. V., deGonzalez, P., Rooseboom, J., & Stout, O. (2011). *Reaching the goal: The applicability and importance of the common core state standards to college and career readiness.* Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.

Conley, D. T. (2012). *A complete definition of college and career readiness.* Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.

Curry, J., & Milsom, A. (2013). Career Counseling in P-12 Schools. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com. ezproxy2.drake.brockport.edu

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development,* 82(1), 405-432.

Gandara, P. (2002). A Study of High School Puente: What We Have Learned About Preparing Latino Youth for Postsecondary Education. *Educational Policy,* 16(4), 474-495.

Grant, H., & Dweck, C. S. (2003). Clarifying achievement goals and their impact. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 85, 541-553.

Gysbers, N.C. (2013). Career-ready students: a goal of comprehensive school counseling programs. *Career Development Quarterly,* 6 1(3), 283+.

Ivey, G. (2011). Opening up the conversation on literacy, college, and career. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy,* 55(2), 96-99.

Klepfer, K. & Hull, J. (2012). High school rigor and good advice: Setting up students to succeed. Retrieved from: https:// iei.nd.edu/ assets/84273/high_school_rigor_and_good_advice_setting_up_students_to_succeed_full_report.pdf

Lombardi, A. R., Conley, D. T., Seburn, M. A., & Downs, A. M. (2012). College and career readiness assessment: Validation of the key cognitive strategies framework. Assessment for Effective Intervention, 38(3), 163-171.

Muhammad, C. G., Smith, M. J., & Duncan, G. A. (2008). College Choice and College Experiences: Intersections of Race and Gender along the Secondary to Post-Secondary Education Continuum. *Negro Educational Review,* 59 (3/4), 141-146, 237.

NACE (2017, June 14). *Job Outlook: Fall recruiting for the class of 2018.* Retrieved from: https://www.naceweb.org/ jobmarket/trends-and-predictions/job-outlook-fall-recruiting-for-the-class-of-2018/

National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *The condition of education.* Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/ programs/coe/ glossary.asp

Opportunity Job Network (n.d.). *Top 10 Employability Skills.* Retrieved from: http://www.opportunityjobnetwork. com/job-resources/ help/top-10-skills.html

Stam, B. (2011). The power of real-world application. *Leadership* (40)3, 12-15. Student Success Research Center (2018). CCLR Budget Trends 2018.

Wagner, T. (2010). *Overcoming the Global Achievement Gap* [Powerpoint Slides]. Retrieved from: http://www.aypf. org/documents/ Wagner%20Slides%20-%20global%20achievement%20gap%20brief%205-10.pdf

Yamamura, E. K., Martinez, M.A., & Saenz, V.B. (2010). Moving Beyond High School Expectations: Examining Stakeholders' Responsibility for Increasing Latina/o Students' College Readiness. *High School Journal,* 93(3), 126-148.

NAVIANCE
BY POWERSCHOOL

About Naviance

Naviance is the leading college, career, and life readiness (CCLR) platform that enables students to discover their strengths and interests, build critical social and emotional skills, create actionable goals, and find their best-fit path after high school. Naviance helps ensure that all paths students take after high school lead to fulfilling and meaningful careers.

P
PowerSchool
Powering Brighter Futures

At PowerSchool, we believe in the simple truth that every student deserves the best opportunities in life. That's why our mission is to power the education ecosystem with unified technology that helps educators and students realize their potential, in their way. From the office to the classroom to the home, PowerSchool helps schools and districts efficiently manage instruction, learning, grading, attendance, assessment, analytics, state reporting, special education, student registration, talent, finance, and HR. Today, we're proud to be the leading provider of K-12 education application technology supporting over 45 million students in over 90 countries.

www.PowerSchool.com