Planning for Transition using Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs)

"That was an awesome worksheet," said no student ever.

Acknowledgements and Materials For This Presentation
Come from a variety of sources including but not limited to:

- www.beyondclassroom.org
- www.nextsteps-nh.org
- New Hampshire Department of Education
- Lebanon High School
- Pittsfield Middle High School
- Q.E.D. Foundation
- Harvard Family Research Project

Learning Objectives

• Participants will learn about the four aspects of a high quality ELO

• Participants will learn the role of students, families, educators and community partners in developing and implementing ELOs
What is an ELO?
A learning opportunity outside the classroom for which students earns credit

Why ELOs?
✓ Student Engagement
✓ Tapping into passion & interest
✓ Translating it into an ELO
✓ Connection to learning

Benefits of ELOs
• More opportunities to learn in nontraditional ways
• More opportunities to learn about college and career opportunities
• Stronger connections to adults and peers
• Lower drop out rates and higher attendance
• Improved attitude toward school

Making the Connection to Students & Transition Planning

- Not everyone does well sitting in a classroom. Real world learning often works best for students with disabilities and students at risk.
- Community connections and concrete, hands on learning provide support to reach measureable post secondary goals.
- ELOs are a means of assessment.
- ELOs can be part of the course of study.

ELOs

Provide the knowledge and skills learned through instruction or study outside of the traditional classroom - including, but not limited, to:
- Apprenticeships
- Independent study
- Internships
- Private instruction
- Community service
- Online courses
- Performing groups

ELOs can be......
- Individual or group
- Out of school or connected to a class
- Large scale or small scale
- Interdisciplinary or subject specific
- For any student
- In any subject
Components of High Quality ELOs

- Driven by student interest
- Defines the expected learning outcomes
- Involves community partners
- Use of reflection and product to demonstrate what was learned
- Presentation shares knowledge with others

Dana is a 17 yr old junior with a learning disability:

- School is a challenge and she struggles with how fixated her friends are on material items. It’s not something she values.
- Using her interest in yoga, what types of ELOs could be created?

ELO Possibilities

- English- reading/researching yoga
- Career- learning about being a yoga instructor
- Physical Education- yoga class
- Anatomy & Physiology- how muscles move, the effects on breathing and heart rate
- World History- the history of yoga & its significance in different cultures
Identifying the Key Participants

- Student
- ELO Coordinator
- Teacher
- Case Manager
- Community Partner/Mentor
- Family

Community Partners....

- Work with the student, and certified educator to create the ELO.
- Provide the expertise/information.
- Provide assistance on determining the student’s understanding of the subject matter.
- Need a working knowledge of the school insurance policy and the NH Department of Labor rules.

Different aspects of ELOs
**Planning**

- What will the student be learning?
- How often will progress updates occur?
- What will the product and presentation look like?
- Any accommodations to consider?
- Logistics

**Research**

- Identifies what credit the student hopes to earn with the ELO.
- Develops an “Essential Question” to guide the learning.
- Explores where the student will find the information they want to learn.
- Identifies the resources the student needs
  - Community Mentor
  - On line resources
  - College classes

**Examples of Essential Questions**

- What can current politicians learn from previous leaders?
- What are the needs of a depressed high school student?
- How does a leader maximize the effectiveness of a group?
- Does nature or nurture affect human development more?

Source: www.beyondclassroom.org
Reflection

- Provides information on what the student is learning, how they are learning and the connections they are making.
- Allows teachers and community partners the opportunity to evaluate learning and provide feedback.

What Does Reflection Look Like?

Reflection can be:
- A journal
- A blog
- Correspondence
- Weekly narrative

Documents learning and connections between the experience, research, critical thinking and growth.

Product

- The concrete, tangible display of the student’s learning.
- Products (projects) can include:
  - Portfolios
  - Research papers
  - Depending on the ELO it could be a building, website, a manuscript, a video.....the possibilities are endless
- Reflects the goal of the ELO
**Presentation**

- Opportunity for the student to share their ELO - the depth of their learning and grasp of the critical components of their ELO.
- Pulls together all the aspects of the ELO process to demonstrate their learning.
- Involves community partner, ELO Coordinator, educator and family.

**NH- Local Control**

**DOE Guidance on ELOs**

- State requires local school boards to adopt ELO policy
- NH DOE provides guidance on the creation & implementation of ELOs.
- Local schools and school boards define policies.

**District Policies**

- Grading
- Documentation on Transcripts
- Competencies
- Scheduling
- Financial Responsibility
- Transportation
- Capacity
Families

- Learn about your school’s ELO policy
- Talk to a Guidance Counselor to learn more about competencies and ELOs
- Work with your child
- Help identify a potential community partner
- Support and prepare your child to self-advocate
- Communicate about progress and concerns

ELOs & IEPs

- ELOs are for all students
- Case Manager/ELO Coordinator works with the IEP Team
- Accommodations
- Disclosure

Wrap up

- ELOs are for all students
- ELOs can happen in any subject area
- Districts set their own policies around ELOs
- ELOs involve Research, Reflection, Product & Presentation
- Strong ELO programs incorporate students, educators, families and community partners and IEP Teams when appropriate.
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