Learning Outside of the Classroom

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.beyonddclassroom.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 measurable 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

- **Research**: plan for what you expect to learn, adjust your research along the way, use with competency-specific rubrics.
- **Reflection**: communicate your growth, get help from others who know, connect into your learning.
- **Student Learning**: communicate your experience, share your knowledge and skills, connect your learning to your life.
- **Presentation**: plan for what you expect to do, gather & use authentic feedback, make your learning productive.
- **Product**: plan for what you expect to do, gather & use authentic feedback, make your learning productive.

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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.

New Hampshire - The Granite State
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.
The contents of this PowerPoint were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, H323A120003. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Corinne Weidenthal