EMPLOYING THE FUTURE SERIES: CONNECTING LEARNING, SKILLS, AND FUTURE PATHWAYS





Employing the Future is a three-part professional learning series designed to help educators connect academic learning, career-connected learning, durable skills, and student reflection in ways that are practical and transferable across classrooms. The series begins by building a shared understanding of work-based learning and career-connected learning and helping educators identify authentic ways to connect curriculum to the world beyond school. It then uses the Pathsmith Durable Skills framework to help educators translate district Portrait of a Graduate competencies into concrete, developmentally appropriate skills students can practice, demonstrate, receive feedback on, and apply across settings.

Across the three sessions, educators move from identifying meaningful career connections to intentionally designing for durable skills, to using reflection and meaning-making to help students build self-understanding, recognize growth, transfer learning, and explore future possibilities. This progression also supports MyCAP by making career development a shared responsibility across classrooms, grade levels, and disciplines rather than something that sits primarily with counselors. The final session applies learning from the first two sessions through curriculum planning, helping educators intentionally integrate authentic experiences, Pathsmith-aligned durable skills, reflection, and meaningful next steps so students can connect what they are learning now to who they are becoming and where they may want to go next.

REGISTRATION

DETAILS

Cost:

Per Session: $200 /person

3 Day Series: $550 /person

Dates:

ETF 1.0-12/10

ETF 2.0- 1/14

ETF 3.0- 2/18

From 8:30 am-2:30 pm

SESSION PRESENTER



ERIN CONLEY

Executive Director

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EMPLOYING THE FUTURE 1.0

Employing the Future 1.0 establishes the foundation for the series by helping educators develop a shared understanding of work-based learning and career-connected learning across PK–12. Participants examine the ExGen Career-Connected Learning Ecosystem Framework and the progression of CCL from PK-12+, exploring how experiences can move from career awareness and exposure to career-applied learning and work-based learning. Educators consider what meaningful CCL can look like at different grade levels and how classroom learning can be contextualized through authentic careers, industries, community challenges, and real-world applications. The session also examines the role CCL plays in educational equity by helping all students access experiences, relationships, information, and pathways that broaden their understanding of future possibilities. Participants leave with a variety of practical tools, strategies, examples, and resources they can begin using in their classrooms the very next day.

EMPLOYING THE FUTURE 2.0

Employing the Future 2.0 builds from the career connections identified in 1.0 and focuses on the durable skills students need to successfully engage in school, work, and community life. Participants use the Pathsmith Durable Skills Wheel and the PK–16 Durable Skills Development & Application Guide as a common reference point to crosswalk their district Portrait of a Graduate or Portrait of a Learner competencies to a broader durable skills framework. The Pathsmith guide organizes 24 durable skills across four clusters and provides developmental descriptions, look-fors, reflection prompts, design features, and common pitfalls across PK–16. It is designed as a practitioner reference for supporting skill development, not as a grading rubric or assessment tool. Participants then examine how those skills become visible through authentic CCL experiences, identify where students are already practicing them, and determine where instruction, practice, feedback, and reflection can be more intentional. Building from ETF 1.0, educators strengthen an existing lesson or unit by selecting one or two priority durable skills, defining what those skills look like developmentally and in context, and designing opportunities for students to practice, receive feedback, reflect, and transfer the skills into new settings.

EMPLOYING THE FUTURE 3.0

Employing the Future 3.0 brings the first two sessions together by focusing on the role of reflection in transforming experience into learning. Participants examine the difference between simply participating in an experience and intentionally making meaning from it, then explore how structured reflection can help students notice evidence, understand their strengths, interests, values, confidence, and growth, recognize durable skills and relationships, and connect experiences to academic learning and possible futures. Using the TRACE Meaning-Making Cycle, educators experience reflection routines themselves and then integrate appropriate reflection structures into an existing lesson, unit, CCL experience, or work-based learning opportunity. TRACE moves students through Take Part, Record, Ask what it means, Connect, and Explore, helping them turn authentic experiences into self-understanding and purposeful next steps. Participants leave with practical reflection tools, routines, prompts, and planning resources they can use immediately. The session concludes with supported curriculum writing and planning time, allowing educators to bring together the learning from all three sessions and strengthen an existing lesson or unit by intentionally integrating authentic experiences, durable skills, reflection, and meaningful next steps for students.