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Promising Practice Brief **Ohio's Career Development Program**

Program Background

- A total of 89 local career development programs serve all 613 school districts and 1.8 million K-12 students and educators. Every school district is required to be a part of a career development program.
- Career coordinators head each local program, and address the following core functional areas: career information, career assessments, curriculum, staff and activities coordination, community involvement, professional development, and career-related instructional materials.
- Funding comes from a wide variety of sources, including: grant applications for funding from a state line item, Perkins dollars (only at the secondary level), and local in-kind funds and services.

Career Development Activity Highlights

- *Individual Career Plan (ICP)* – a planning document that is initiated by all students by the eighth grade. They are “career scrapbooks” with information that students gather about themselves.
- *Career Passport* – individual exit credential containing formal documents that students use in the next steps after high school. Standard components include a student resume, student identification of career goals and rationale, transcript, copies of diplomas and licenses
- *Curriculum integration* of career activities has been a strong emphasis.
 - While not required, a consistent effort is made to connect the ICP and Career Passports with classroom activities. Most often, the connection is made within English or social studies classes.
 - Each month, career development activity packets are sent to career coordinators to share with local teachers. At the elementary level, packets are thematic with all curriculum areas represented in each packet. For middle grades level, the packets



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typically focus on language arts, social studies, science, or math. The activities are keyed to the Ohio Academic Content Standards.

- The *Ohio Career Information System* is updated twice a year, and contains:
 - computer-based career information regarding occupational and education data, as well as workforce trends specifically in Ohio
 - more than 600 Career Infusion Activities for educators in grades 7 – 12.
- *Ohio's Career Education Association* wrote two information packets and produced a video to provide career ideas and information to parents. The materials stress educational achievement and the importance of course selection to help children reach their career goals.

Evidence of Success

- Each year the career coordinators interview 2% of the state's students in grades 8, 10, and 12 to assess progress on appropriate career development tasks. To date, the results have exceeded expectations.
- Annual reports are required of each career development program at the end of each school year, and each program is visited formally for an evaluation every five years.
- In 2002, the Ohio Career Development Program was named a National Exemplary Program by the U.S. Department of Education through the National Dissemination Center for Career and Technical Education. They were the first state system and the first K-12 program to ever receive the award.

More Information

Additional information regarding the Ohio Career Development Program can be found online at <http://www.ohiocareerdev.org/>

Reference

Gahris, C. (2005). Ohio's career development program: Strengthening academics through career planning. In K. B. Hoyt, *Career Education: History and future* (pp. 105-124). Tulsa, OK: National Career Development Association.

(Would also plan a phone call to confirm information presented here.)

Last updated March 12, 2007. Prepared for Mark Williams, Chair, Illinois Career Development Task Force, Illinois State Board of Education, by Julia Panke Makela and Debra D. Bragg at the Office of Community College Research and Leadership.