

It's Time to Rethink Education

For decades, the U.S. has operated under the premise that universal college completion is an achievable national goal—with the high school diploma representing a ticket to college rather than a signifier of career readiness.

The problem is: for too many students, the traditional track simply doesn't work.

For Every 100 High School Students in the U.S...¹

17 do not graduate with the rest of their class

83 graduate high school

17 do not graduate



And one fourth never enroll in postsecondary education

20 enroll in 2-year college



38 enroll in 4-year college or university



25 do not enroll



Those who do enroll still struggle to earn a degree

2-year college



13 do not earn a degree within 4 years of enrollment

4-year college



7 earn a degree



14 do not earn a degree

24 graduate



And even when students do everything "right," many still struggle to find college-jobs²

14 earn college-job



10 are under-employed



86 students are left behind

=10

Real World Learning Opportunities Help Students Excel

There are many paths to career success, but also many places to get knocked down along the way. Our communities need the talent and contributions of everyone.

Career-Based Learning

45% of students say career-based learning helps them with academic courses. Jobs can also count toward course credit.

Employer-Recognized Skill Sets

Increase opportunities to earn employer-recognized skill sets through internships and entrepreneurial projects.

Industry-Recognized Credentials

Industry-recognized credentials earned in high school enable students to work with purpose in college.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships allow students to gain valuable work experience and access to professional mentors and networks but there aren't enough apprenticeship programs in the U.S. today.

The following data was sourced from the National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2017. ²U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (IPUMS); U.S. Department of Labor, O*NET

It Takes a Community

From the heart of the country, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation is committed to joining the national movement to rethink high school education. By providing funding, building connections with experts and advisors, supporting local organizations that create Real World Learning opportunities, and tracking data on student outcomes after high school, the Kauffman Foundation will strengthen the KC community to support students as they navigate from high school to career.

Every single student deserves an education that equips them for success beyond the classroom.

kauffman.org/RealWorldLearning

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