



Career Development Program Manual
Georgia Career Resources Network
Georgia Department of Education
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Introduction

Career development is a vital part of a student's educational career. It is a process in which an individual defines and re-defines career related choices and outcomes. Students need the tools, resources, skills and knowledge to become a productive citizen in a democratic society and school systems need to provide opportunities for young people to learn about themselves, the world of work and educational opportunities, and to create a viable realistic plan of action. These opportunities should be programmatic, developmental, and systematic in grades K-12 and beyond.

Currently the Georgia DOE has identified three basic assumptions upon which to build a career development program:

- That ALL educators are career developers
- That ALL students are expected to earn a living
- That PARENTS are the greatest influence on their children in the career decision-making process

With these three assumptions in mind, it is clear that school systems are obligated to provide students and their parents with career related information in a systematic and developmental process. This manual was developed to help local school system personnel create, implement, and evaluate such a career development program. It contains a vision statement, a framework, five key components, a delivery system, and an overview of other career development initiatives available to local systems for implementation.

Vision Statement: The Georgia Department of Education's Career Development Initiative provides the necessary tools, knowledge, and resources for all students in grades K-12 to improve educational achievement, preparation, and participation in post-secondary education; promote articulation among levels of education and between education and work; encourage shorter graduation time; and increase graduation and promotion rates.

Framework: The National Career Development Guidelines in Section I provide the national standards and competencies upon which to build a program.

The **Key Components** addressed in Section II are outlined below.

1. **Career Assessment** opportunities help students learn about themselves by identifying interest, aptitudes, and values; increasing or narrowing employment options to consider; and supporting their decision-making ability in the career planning process.
2. **Local School GO Centers (aka Career Centers)** send a clear message to all stakeholders that the educational system is interested in the future of their students. Educational institutions provide the training ground for future workers. With a centralized location for career-related information and resources at the middle and high schools, GO Centers provide the opportunity for young people, their parents, school staff, and others in the community to participate in the process.
3. **Life-long Portfolios** help all students know who they are, where they are going, and how to get there. They motivate students to achieve higher standards, develop skills in the planning process, establish positive career and educational goals, expand career and postsecondary options, and ensure equity. Life-long portfolios are now available on the internet through the Georgia Career Information System (GCIS), at <http://www.gcic.peachnet.edu>.
4. **Work-based Learning (WBL)** provides students the opportunity to know what they like to do and do NOT want to do. WBL provides students with realistic work experiences,

the opportunity to develop work skills and personal qualities, and to explore the world-of-work directly linked to their career interests.

5. **Six-Year Individual Career Plan (ICP)**, developed collaboratively by the student, parents, and school staff, is initiated in the 8th grade and based on systematic career investigation and exploration in middle school. An ICP is based on the student's career focus and does not end with graduation, but focuses on the future by addressing postsecondary planning and encouraging students to perform at the highest levels of achievement.

The **Delivery System** is addressed in Section III and includes learning activities for grades 6-12 and parent workshops for grades 6-11. The **Teacher as Advisor Program (TAP)** provides one-on-one guidance to ALL students with one-on-one encouragement to take higher-level academic courses to address the need for educational training beyond high school. Students gain a clear focus on the future and develop a plan based on their goals. TAP provides consistent encouragement for students who are experiencing problems and fosters more parental involvement. TAP provides teachers a better understanding of the activity and student opportunities within the local system, along with the prospect of developing strong bonds with their advisees. A power point presentation about TAP can be found at <http://www.GeorgiaCRN.org>.

