Students have always benefited from performance feedback, mentors, advisors, counselors, and strong support systems. The exponential growth of learning options creates new opportunity, while adding new demands on student guidance systems. The shift to blended learning signals the potential for a more robust blended and distributed student guidance system.

What if EVERY SECONDARY STUDENT had access to tools and support that helped them to successfully navigate the transition from high school to college and career?

WHY NOW?

COMMON CORE: We’re all reconsidering curriculum & instruction.

MINDSET MATTERS: Success is more than mastering the 3Rs.

BLENDED MODELS: New structures and staffing compel guidance planning.

ONLINE LEARNING: Increased course choice requires complementing guidance.

INVESTING IN INNOVATION: We’ll get what we ask for.

David Conley, author of “Getting Ready for College, Careers, and the Common Core” and founder of the Education Policy and Improvement Center (EPIC), has defined 4 keys for College & Career Readiness. Next-Gen guidance functions align with and contribute to all of them as shown in overlay model.

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DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR NEXT-GEN STUDENT GUIDANCE

NEW TOOLS WILL...

- provide better information to students and parents, they create a stronger sense of purpose for school;
- give students more supported responsibility for setting goals and tracking progress toward college and career readiness;
- provide a better early warning system and stronger academic and social safety net;
- support better choices during and after high school;
- facilitate better home-school partnerships; and
- equalize opportunity in order to provide access for all students.

In practice, the best student guidance systems are blended, leveraging technology; distributed, leveraging staff members beyond counselors; and scheduled, utilizing an advisory period to make effective, easy implementation and attainment of outcomes. They must connect academic preparation, thought patterns, interests, and learning to students’ college and career aspirations.

10 BENEFITS THAT SECONDARY STUDENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM SCHOOL:

1. ENVIRONMENT. Be known, respected, and safe at school.
2. ADVOCATE. Have an advocate who knows the student’s goals and aspirations and helps to navigate school.
3. OPTIONS. Have the choice of several relevant, rigorous courses of study to align goals and academic decisions.
4. ACADEMIC SUPPORT. Receive the time and attention needed for any subject at any time.
5. CAREER AWARENESS. Have the opportunity to learn about the range of career options and experience a wide range of work settings.
6. POSTSECONDARY DECISION SUPPORT. Be provided guidance that results in the best possible choice of post secondary learning opportunities.
7. PREP & AID. Be prepared for entrance exams and supported in application for financial aid.
8. SUPPORT SERVICES. Feel supported by a web of youth and family services.
9. MENTORS AND ROLE MODELS. Have the opportunity to be around adults they can imagine themselves becoming.
10. FULL EXPRESSION. Participate in the arts and extracurricular activities, use current technologies, and serve the community.

Student guidance isn’t a fix all for all problems, nor will it alone fulfill all readiness keys or guarantee that all students meet the rigorous college and career-ready standards. However, strong guidance systems will take on a more comprehensive and integrated approach than they traditionally have, and will contribute to all four of the key areas of college and career readiness.