

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS TO ENABLE DEEPER LEARNING

Today's highly competitive job market demands employees who can communicate effectively, solve problems, work well in teams, prioritize tasks and understand the value of hard

work. Deeper Learning—the delivery of core content in innovative ways—gives students opportunities to develop these skills and graduate college- and career-ready. A teacher's role in facilitating Deeper Learning is critical—but can be challenging. Teachers have to probe students with thought-provoking questions, move the focus from the front of the room to actively engage students throughout the classroom and incorporate technology and new media into lessons to accommodate unique learning styles. Teachers also need to connect what is learned in the classroom with the needs and expectations of colleges and employers, which teachers must clearly understand themselves. In cities around the country, the business community is stepping in to give teachers professional development support to help them tie academics to the real world and the jobs of the 21st century.

A STEM Curriculum for Teachers—Dayton, OH. In addition to supporting the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce also works closely with partners to make sure that Dayton continues to be a center for Science, Technology, Engineering, Manufacturing and Mathematics (STEMM) education.

- Understanding the importance of engaging teachers in support of this effort, the Chamber worked in partnership with Learn to Earn Dayton and key community stakeholders to create the STEM Center and the STEM Fellows program to serve teachers throughout the region.
- Key leaders within the defense community made their teams of engineers and scientists available to work directly with teachers and students.
- Through the program, more than 900 teachers were trained in STEM-specific curricula and instruction, representing 92 school districts statewide.

Educating the Educators About Industry Needs—Spokane, WA. Noticing a gap between what students were learning and what employers needed—especially in industries such as manufacturing, aerospace and health care—Greater Spokane Incorporated (GSI) Education & Workforce Department has created partnerships between industry sectors, businesses and the education community to promote greater career awareness.

What can your Chamber do?

- Learn about teachers' needs and concerns through a roundtable, town hall, meeting or survey.
- Reach out to businesses with simple ways that they can bring Deeper Learning opportunities to local classrooms.
- Develop programs and tools that make it easy for teachers to introduce interactive, technologically-enhanced lessons to their classrooms.
- Make parallels between education and career as immersive as possible by hosting engaging workshops for both students and educators.
- Give educators a voice by inviting them to participate in workforce committees or in program oversight.

- [Business AfterSchool](#) is a series of weeklong industry workshops for students, educators, parents and community organizations that provide on-site awareness of careers in Spokane's high-demand industries, which include health care, manufacturing and computer science.
- [Teaching The Teachers Workshops](#) give educators the chance to experience what future work and education opportunities await their students. Workshops usually tour both a local business and a higher education facility, so that teachers can learn how to teach students to see connections between what goes on in the classroom and what future careers could entail. In 2013, GSI organized eight Teaching The Teachers workshops, serving teachers from 12 school districts that reach approximately 4,325 students.

Deeper Learning Tools for the Classroom—New Jersey. The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation developed a series of products that can be purchased or accessed by schools to make it easier for teachers to bring Deeper Learning into the classroom. These award-winning products, the “LearnDoEarn Student Achievement System,” are currently in use in over 500 schools in New Jersey and other states.

- [The LearnDoEarn Student Achievement System](#) presents data about the competitive worlds of college admissions and job acquisition and is designed to inspire teens to work harder. The program includes engaging classroom presentations, online games, parent videos, worksheets and reward credentials. It focuses on three main areas: the importance of academic achievement, how to remain employable, and financial literacy.
- NJCCF hosts eight workshops each year for teachers to learn about workforce trends. Following the workshops, teachers return to their classrooms with Deeper Learning products, such as the LearnDoEarn materials.
- An eighth grade math teacher explained, “We teachers always tell students to work hard. But LearnDoEarn presents students with a statistical rationale for why they have no choice but to work hard.”

Giving Educators Support and a Voice—Tulsa, OK. The Tulsa Regional Chamber is committed to providing access to Deeper Learning opportunities by working collaboratively with educators, community leaders, students and parents to create a supportive environment for education.

- [Partners In Education](#), a collaboration between the Tulsa Regional Chamber and Tulsa Public Schools, was established in 1983, and connects schools with corporate, education, volunteer, government and civic leaders who serve as career coaches for high school students. Having mentors and role models within the community is important for helping students understand the needs and expectations of 21st century jobs and explore future fulfilling career paths.
- The Tulsa Regional Chamber also organizes quarterly meetings with area superintendents and with presidents of higher-education institutions to discuss current issues impacting education in Tulsa, ranging from funding to policy and curriculum.

Practical Tips for Engaging Educators

- Think of educators as your partners – if you can increase their understanding of why a certain lesson or skill is important to employers, they will be better able to communicate that to their students.
- Public school teachers are trying to do a lot with limited resources – find ways to offer simple and scalable programs that they can easily incorporate into their lessons.
- Collaborate with schools to track and measure results, to make the case for ongoing support.
- Make sure your education and workforce efforts benefit from the educator perspective – whether on committees, panels, councils or even your Board of Trustees.

Deeper Learning uses interactive techniques such as project-based learning and real-world application to engage students in core academics and build the skills they need for success in college and career. Your Chamber can help students become the innovative, collaborative and flexible employees that employers are looking for by partnering with schools to provide deeper learning opportunities.

Visit www.ACCE.org/Divisions/DeeperLearning to learn more.