

MEPRI Briefings Oct 2021

Extended Learning Opportunities

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Extended Learning Opportunities

- **Purpose of the study**
- **Key findings**
- **Policy implications**
- **Next steps**

Purpose of study

- Proposed budget initiative in FY2020
- Increased attention as programs emerge; “buzzword”
- Chart the landscape - goals, scope, structures, funding, assessment practices and perceived impacts
- Case study approach to capture variation, with focus groups and interviews for the big picture
- Opportunity to capture and describe in an early phase of development!

Key Findings: Definition

- 1. No single definition. “ELOs” are defined by each program.**
- 2. Shared:**
 - Outside of traditional classroom
 - That’s it.
- 1. Commonly:**
 - Expand opportunities equitably
 - Individual student needs and interests
 - Workforce / career emphasis
 - Tied to an overarching school or district vision

Key Findings: Variation

- Ties to MLR Life and Career Ready standards (yes/no)
- Credit bearing (yes/no)
- Ties to core academic curricula (e.g credit recovery)
- Intensity (job shadow to internship)
- Goals -- dispositions, career exploration, enrichment
- Target populations & participation rate
- Role of community partners & employers, inc. JMG
- Staffing, and School vs district-level

Key Findings: State landscape

Evolving structures and supports

- C3: Community Coordinators' Collective
- Ad hoc working group at MDOE (CTE, learning team, district reps)
- Emerging questions about need for policy, guidelines (state vs. local control)

Key Findings: Infrastructure

- **Essential need for dedicated staff support.** Coordinates with others, but need a leader
- ELO coordinator plays a variety of roles - school ambassador to district, student advocate, accountability backstop
- Funding sources vary.

Conclusions & Policy Implications

Widespread perception of positive outcomes:

- *Equity* of opportunities
- Student engagement
- Improves chances for graduation for students at risk of drop-out
- Real-world preparation for post-graduate life
- Latitude for innovation, exploration

Conclusions & Policy Implications, cont.

Resource needs & Challenges

- Dedicated staff
- Transportation
- Access to variety of industries in rural areas

Next steps

- Maturing from scattered and grassroots to more widespread and structured programs
- Tradeoff of local autonomy and flexibility vs. need for state policy (e.g. regulatory guidelines like for CTE)
- Research on student outcomes
- Learn from the variety of implementations
- Continue to support state collaborations and targeted funding