

New Report Reveals Value of Career-Connected Learning

New Hampshire Learning Initiative and Gallup find that nearly half of New Hampshire high school students learn about new jobs through career-connected learning.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – September 17, 2024 – The New Hampshire Learning Initiative and Gallup have released a new report, [Voices of New Hampshire Students: Career-Connected Learning's Role in Building Bright Futures](#), that demonstrates the positive impact career-connected learning (CCL) has on career awareness, future plans, school engagement and hope among New Hampshire students.

The vast majority of students in grades five through 12 across the state (90%) have participated in at least one CCL activity. Among these, 42% of middle school students and almost half (47%) of high school students surveyed say they learned about jobs or careers they hadn't previously heard of while at school this year.

That said, nearly six in 10 students (59%) express a desire for more CCL opportunities, particularly those aligned with their specific interests in jobs and careers. Just under half (48%) of high school students and only one in four middle school students (25%) report that their school's CCL offerings include the careers they are interested in.

Impactful CCL opportunities can range from content taught in core classes and electives to career fairs, job shadows, internships and volunteering. Overall, one-third (34%) of students say their CCL activities have informed their plans after high school. However, students who engage with the community beyond school walls are more likely to agree that their CCL experiences have informed what they plan to do after graduation. Over half of students who have participated in an internship/externship (57%), registered apprenticeship (54%), job shadowing (51%) or a volunteer position related to a job or career (51%) say CCL activities have impacted their post-high-school plans.

Student participation in CCL opportunities is also linked to higher levels of engagement and hope. Engagement, defined as students' level of involvement and enthusiasm for school, is higher among students who participate in CCL than those who do not. Fifteen percent of students who did not participate in any CCL are engaged, compared to 26% of those who have participated in at least one CCL opportunity. Notably, greater participation in CCL activities leads to even higher levels of engagement: 45% of students who participated in 10 or more activities are engaged, compared to 22% among those who have participated in one to four. Hope, defined as the ideas and energy students have for the future, is also higher among students participating in at least one CCL than among those who did not participate in any (32% vs. 23%, respectively).

Additionally, mentorship plays a significant role in engagement and hope. Students with mentors who support their development are more engaged than their peers (36% vs. 16%). Students with mentors are more likely to be hopeful about their futures than those without mentors (39% vs. 24%).

"The NHLI-Gallup survey has been a game-changer for districts, providing data that underscores how important career-connected learning is to student engagement and mindset about the future. The data could not have come at a better time," said NHLI's Executive Director Ellen Hume-Howard.

Survey Methodology

Results for the Gallup-NHLI student poll are based on a web-based survey conducted from May 1 through June 7, 2024. The survey was available in English and Spanish and administered to students during the school day. The sample comprises 8,634 middle school and high school student respondents from 13 districts and 25 schools throughout New Hampshire. NHLI invited schools and districts they had existing partnerships with to participate in the study, and schools were given the opportunity to opt in. The results from this survey represent the second year of a multiyear commitment to this study. The study was designed in accordance with RSA 186:11, IX-d, New Hampshire's policy governing the administration of non-academic surveys or questionnaires, which includes all surveys, questionnaires or other documents designed to elicit information about a student's social behavior, family life, religion, politics, sexual orientation, sexual activity, drug use or any other information not related to a student's academics. Additionally, the research protocol and survey were reviewed by Gallup's Institutional Review Board.

About New Hampshire Learning Initiative

The New Hampshire Learning Initiative, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is dedicated to advancing student-centered, personalized learning and providing all students with accessible learning pathways to college, career and life success. Through partnerships and research-backed initiatives, NHLI supports schools in delivering impactful learning experiences that help every student reach their full potential. For more information, visit nhlearninginitiative.org.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.