



Editorial: Opportunities Abound

by Nicole Adrian

Thinking back to my high school's career center, I don't remember having the opportunity to spend a lot of time in the office, learning about colleges, courses and possible careers. I also don't remember there being many exploratory programs, projects—even conversations—about what my future post-secondary education and careers prospects might be. I chose my university, and, ultimately, my career path, by doing my own leg work and research.

I'm sure not every high school was like this, but I imagine quite a few were. And I'm sure many high school students still use the same avenues I used to figure out their futures. With so many high school and college graduates clamoring for employment positions—and being up against students and workers from all over the world—however, it's necessary to develop additional post-secondary education and career planning opportunities and courses in the K-12 program. School districts are coming up with creative programs to introduce careers and opportunities to students earlier and in greater detail.

Two articles in this issue outline the work of Metro Nashville Public Schools' Academies of Nashville. The academies offer personalized learning communities that engage students and bring relevance to the curriculum. They also let students explore careers and colleges while learning skills that prepare them for their futures. The academies partner with local businesses, community organizations and post-secondary schools to provide additional, helpful experiences in and out of the classroom. As Chelsea Parker writes in her article, "Starting early with career-based college prep helps students reap maximum benefit from high school and college."

Some states have begun mandating that public-school students have educational and career planning opportunities and create individual career and academic plans. Colorado and Georgia are two of those states. One article in this issue details the Georgia legislation—what it entails and what programs schools are implementing to teach students about future opportunities. Another article describes the Colorado legislation and how an online charter school helps students develop and implement career and academic plans.

These are just a few examples of what schools, districts—even states—are doing to help students learn about post-secondary school opportunities as well as career prospects. Does your district have a plan in place for career planning? How does your district provide students



with information about colleges and other post-secondary opportunities? Share your ideas with the *Primary and Secondary Education Brief* readership by [emailing me](#).