**Helpful Terms to Inform Conversations About**

**Education and Career Action Plans (ECAP)**

**for Arizona Students**

**Arizona Career Information System (AzCIS)** is a free, online, planning resource available to all students. The system provides comprehensive educational, career, and occupational information to help users make informed career and educational decisions. Tools support self-assessment, exploration, research, goal setting, and decisionmaking. A portfolio portal enables students to develop and update their Educational Career Action Plans.

**Career and Technical Education (CTE)** is a term applied to programs that specialize in the skilled trades, applied sciences, modern technologies, and career preparation. CTE programs frequently offer both academic and career-oriented courses, and many provide students with opportunities to gain work experience through internships, job shadowing, on-the-job training, and industry-certification opportunities.

**Career Counseling** refers to an individual or group process which emphasizes self-exploration and understanding, and facilitates persons to develop a satisfying and meaningful life/work direction as a basis to guide learning, work, and transition decisions, as well as to manage responses to changing work and learning environments over the lifespan.

**Career Literacy** develops gradually over an individual’s lifetime beginning early in elementary school and progressing through postsecondary studies and workplace experience. Well-designed processes help individuals examine various careers and the education and training needed to attain them; discover their talents and passions; identify satisfying and meaningful life/work pathways; guide learning, employment, and transition decisions; and manage responses to changing work and learning environments.

**Career Pathway** is a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical courses, commencing in the ninth grade and leading to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, industry recognized certificate, and/or licensure.

**Career Readiness** includes three major skill areas: *core academic skills* and the ability to apply those skills to concrete situations in routine daily activities and the workplace; *employability skills* such as critical thinking and responsibility; and *technical, job-specific skills* related to a particular career pathway. Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the knowledge, skills, and attributes needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career.

**Certification** is the process of documenting the competence of an individual who meets the qualifications or performance standards of an association, industry group, or agency. Certifications are commonly sponsored and administered by industry trade organizations and are voluntary for an individual to acquire in conjunction with a designated role, trade, occupation, or profession. Certification is required for certain forms of legal licensure.

**College/Postsecondary Education** refers to programs of study beyond high school including one-year certificate programs; two-year associate or technical degree programs; and four-year or more programs that result in bachelor’s, graduate, and/or professional degrees. In other words, “College means 1, 2, 4 or more years of postsecondary study and experience leading to certification, licensure, and/or a degree.”

**College Readiness** means that a student is prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience, including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e. a certificate, license, Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree).  Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework.

**Credentialing** refers to the granting of a diploma, certificate, or license in recognition that an individual has mastered defined objectives and successfully completed a program or defined body of work (i.e., test results and/or work experience) required for employment in certain occupations or professions or for legal licensure.

**Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP)** is both a documented plan and a personalized process that students use with support from school counselors, teachers, and parents to clarify their career goals and to refine their postsecondary plans. It helps guide their decisions about the courses and activities they choose throughout high school and helps develop career literacy.

**Joint Technical Education District (JTED)** is a school district that offers high school career and technical education programs to partner school districts. The concept was created in 1990 and there are 13 JTED districts in Arizona.

**Licensure** refers to the granting of permission to practice a particular occupation or profession, usually by a state (though often the process is operated by a professional accreditation board).  States/legal licensing bodies often rely on the credentialing developed by professional associations— usually requiring passage of a test plus specified experience.

**Pre-ECAP** is a basic and simplified form of ECAP that introduces elementary students to the individualized learning plan process and prepares them for the full ECAP process.

**Rigorous Program of Study** is a comprehensive, structured approach for delivering academic, career, and technical education that prepares students for postsecondary learning and career success utilizing a framework of ten supporting elements viewed as instrumental for creating and implementing a high quality, comprehensive program of study.

**Supports** are affirming, respective, ongoing relationships through which young people become connected to caring adults and other community resources. Supports can be motivational, emotional, and strategic. They are most powerful when offered by a variety of people, such as parents and close relatives, community social networks, teachers, youth workers, employers, health providers, and peers who are involved in the lives of young people. Mentoring, for example, is one form of support involving a learning partnership between a more experienced and less experienced individual. Mentoring involves a trusting relationship formalized into a program of structured activities that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.

**Work-Based Learning** is a coherent sequence of job training and work experience that connects classroom learning to workplace activities. Work-Based Learning provides students with opportunities to learn a variety of skills by expanding learning environments beyond the classroom. Through work-based learning individuals acquire and construct the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to obtain, maintain, and increase meaningful employment. Examples are described below:

**Apprenticeship** is a system of training that combines learning about theory in classrooms with practical “hands-on” learning at the worksite, so that apprentices know how a given task is performed and why it is done that way.

**Co-op Education** refers to “Cooperative Education” and is a program that integrates work experience in a student’s field along with academic studies. The term reflects the cooperative relationship between students, schools, and employers that allows students to alternate periods of study with periods of employment.

**Internship/Externship** refers to a temporary, project-oriented, supervised, work-based learning experience in which an intern has specific learning goals. Internships and externships may be paid or unpaid, and normally result in academic credit.

**Job Shadowing** is a work experience option where students learn about a job by walking through the work day as a shadow to a competent worker. The job shadowing experience is a temporary, unpaid exposure to the workplace in an occupational area of interest to the student. Job shadowing is limited in that it allows students to observe only; direct work experience, responsibility, and skills are not acquired.

**On-the-Job Training (OJT)** refers to human resource development or ongoing training for workers on the job. It includes ongoing staff development in business and can cover everything from literacy training to management training.

**Service-Learning** is a method by which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet community needs and are coordinated with the school and community.

**Workplace Employability Skills** refer to the attributes and dispositions other than basic knowledge and technical skills that are valued by employers and necessary for acquiring, maintaining, and performing well in a job. These qualitative skills are generic in nature rather than job specific and cut across industry types, business sizes, and job levels. They include personal management, interpersonal, and leadership skills. Examples include good work habits and attitudes, dressing appropriately, the ability to communicate and collaborate.