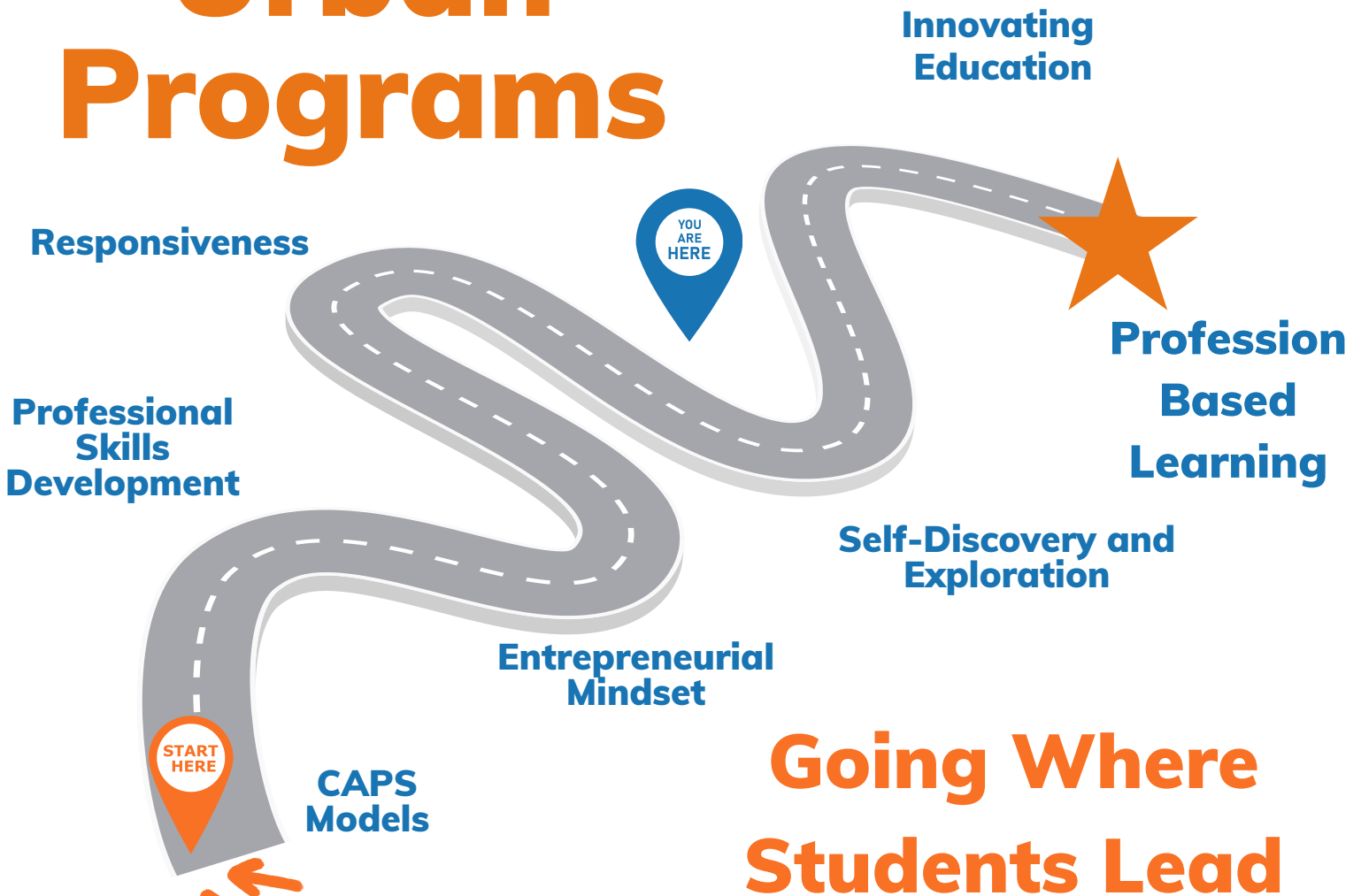




capsnetwork
collaborate · innovate · educate

Pathway to Purpose

Urban Programs



ABOUT

The CAPS Network is comprised of over 100 affiliate profession-based learning programs across 21 states and four countries. We are like-minded educators focused on building potential pathways for students to find their passion and develop skills that will support their future careers.

The CAPS education model is an innovative approach to education with pedagogy, content, and tools focused on preparing students with the skills necessary for life after high school. The following are steps, insights and tools intended to offer guidance in designing learning situations and experiences that require students to execute the various skills, competencies and character qualities deemed necessary for success regardless of their career path or the types of jobs they may hold in the future.

GOING WHERE STUDENTS LEAD

CAPS Network programs span from coast to coast, and include a growing cohort of international affiliates. We serve tens of thousands of students across the CAPS Network. Our longest tenured program and the original CAPS model, Blue Valley CAPS, has been pioneering profession-based learning (Pro-BL) for well over a decade.

CAPS leads the nation in the development and adoption of Pro-BL at scale, and has experienced a steady trendline of growth as communities and districts work together to demand a better learning practice that is future-proof, student-centered, and puts young people on their path to potential - no matter where they start or where they want to go.

To prepare students for jobs that haven't been created yet, we need to teach them how to be great problem solvers so they'll be ready for anything.

Snap the code to hear how the CAPS Network empowers students!



CAPS Core Values

*There are **FIVE CORE VALUES** that guide the design and implementation of each CAPS Program. Each principle must be built into each strand for it to achieve the goals of the innovation.*

- 1 PROFESSION-BASED LEARNING** – Instructors develop real-world, project-based learning strategies through collaborations with business and community partners. These interactions enhance the learning experience, preparing students for college and career.
- 2 PROFESSIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT** – Unique experiences allow students to cultivate transformative professional skills such as understanding expectations, time management and other essential business values. These skills are critical to providing students a competitive advantage in their post-secondary education and professional careers.
- 3 SELF-DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION** – Students realize their strengths and passions by exploring and experiencing potential professions. This allows them to make informed decisions about their future, while learning to exhibit leadership.
- 4 ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET** – Instructors create an environment where creative thinking and problem solving is encouraged. An innovative culture is key to fostering entrepreneurial learning and design thinking.
- 5 RESPONSIVENESS** – CAPS supports high-skill, high-demand careers through ongoing innovation in curriculum development, programs and services based on local business and community needs.

WHY CAPS

The power of the CAPS Network is vast - providing access to a diverse community of practice, a deep and established well of relationships and connections to professional partners, post-secondary institutions, teachers and students, and a robust knowledge base in the contemporary Pro-BL pedagogy, including future trends aligned to market factors, workforce demand, and student choice.

Profession-Based Learning (Pro-BL) complements college preparation by adding a dimension of career focus that supports students finding their

passions and strengths and matching them to opportunities in the market.

Every part of K-12 education needs to redesign its approach and outcomes through the integration of real-world learning to prepare our customers - the students - for that future.

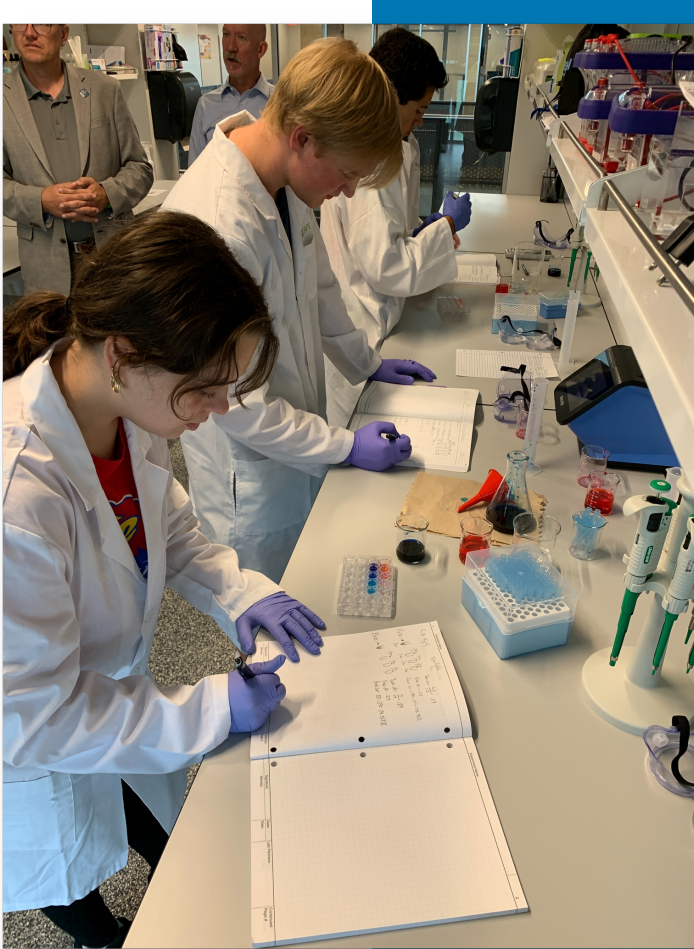
Pro-BL is the highest form of experiential learning. Instructors design real-world learning experiences through collaborations with industry partners. These personalized learning experiences will challenge the student to apply technical and essential skills in an authentic professional situation to develop outcomes that satisfy real needs.



"[The] best part of CAPS was gaining the real-world experience, connecting with professionals, and growing as a student/person professionally."

- CAPS Student

CAPS REIMAGINES EDUCATION...



...where the community is the classroom.

Where students master academic knowledge and skills by diving into challenging projects in partnership with local businesses, tech institutions, civic organizations, and nonprofits.

...with a clear focus on students.

Where students have ownership in—and responsibility for—how they learn. Where learning is based on each student's needs.

...where all students are prepared for college and careers.

Where students actively explore their personal and career interests early on and participate in high-quality, real-world internships and apprenticeships.

CAPS is at the center of an ecosystem in which industry, high school, community partners and post secondary options work together for economic and future ready work force development.

CAPS MODELS



CAPS has established archetype models to help you envision how to get started with Pro-BL.

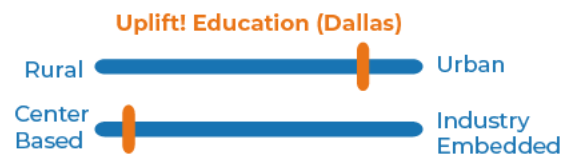
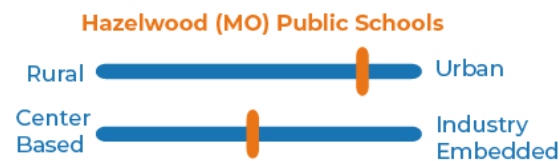
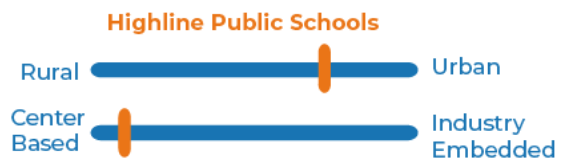
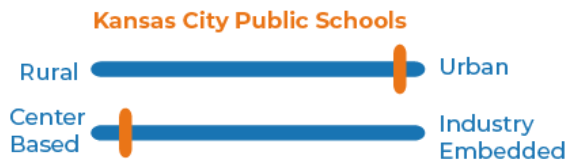
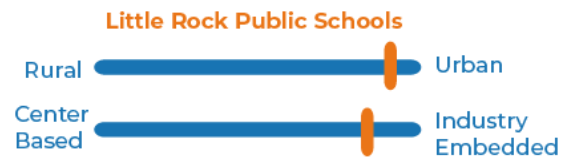
CAPS is not a one-size-fits-all system, and most affiliates (schools/districts) take a modular and hyper-personalized approach based on local assets, shared goals and circumstantial drivers.

Programs fall along two spectrums: Rural to Urban and Center-based to Industry-Embedded.

Archetype Drivers:

- student density and mobility
- industry density and engagement
- where Pro-BL happens
- available school resources

URBAN AFFILIATES



**Center Based" includes programs embedded in a high school.

** Not a complete list of all urban CAPS programs

URBAN MODEL

The urban model is a program modality that leverages existing resources for quicker and cost effective start up. This modality of Pro-BL is innately flexible allowing schools to elevate existing CTE offerings, embed Pro-BL into core curriculum and expand to new community based learning opportunities.

Urban programs thrive because of motivated community support. Community partnerships help create student to career pathways that benefit both employer and employee. The power of Pro-BL in this model is in maximizing and expanding the social capital of students. This model is ideal for new programs ready to elevate students' path to potential.

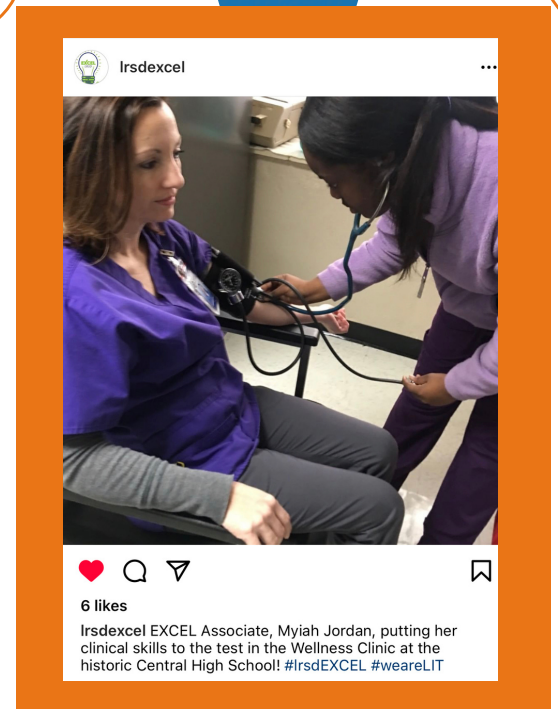


URBAN MODEL KEY FACTORS

Your community has a unique set of stakeholders and concerns that influence the CAPS model you create. Your format depends upon community, school resources, school size, existing programs and more. We have gathered stories that speak to common factors experienced by current CAPS programs during their start up phase.

"It will never work."

Mike Poore, then superintendent, heard this when he proposed bringing CAPS to Little Rock Public Schools. The students of Metro CAPS are here to tell you it absolutely works! Metro alumna Nekeethia Jordan said, "Without [Metro] I wouldn't know where to begin my path to become a teacher." Mr. Poore overcame the doubt by clearly and consistently articulating the vision for career connected learning. Through the use of transparent communication and active, student-centered social media, Metro gained strong support from the community.



Transportation

Transportation is a key reason many of our urban affiliates are based in the traditional high school and CTE center. This alleviates the need for daily travel, but also encourages intentional invitations to mentors and business partners to engage within the program's physical space - literally bringing business into the classroom. On the other hand, Little Rock's Metro CAPS solved this problem by negotiating 24/7/365 bus passes with the Little Rock transit authority.

Financial Commitment

CAPS programs across the country have found funding through grants and employer support. Leveraging federal funding like Perkins Grants, CTE funding and ESSER can support the cost of starting and sustaining a program. CAPS has also found support by approaching local businesses for either financial or in-kind support.

"The best part of CAPS is being able to network and work with businesses on projects that will affect a group of people. Seeing the project come to light through communication, meetings, and presentations." - CAPS Student

Leadership Transitions

CAPS programs rely on the support of multiple stakeholders to sustain programming. Find multiple champions, both inside and outside of the district, to uplift the work as you get started. You will have a program that will thrive through change in staffing and leadership if you have a network of supporters.

Community and Industry involvement is another way to preserve the energy and commitment to your CAPS program. This looks like regular interactions between students and industry mentors and robust industry driven client projects in an established program. Early commitment to an industry advisory board is a great way to establish industry buy-in during the design process. Creating advisory boards for your strands is also a best practice.

Looking for more guidance on building community partnerships?



Get the "Building & Growing Community Partnerships" Playbook.

Socio-Economic Barriers



Developing a professional culture with a professional dress code is one way CAPS programs distinguish themselves from the traditional high school setting. Professional dress - clothing outside of a teenager's normal wardrobe - can be a barrier to entry. Several CAPS programs have created clothing closets or provided an alternative to students in need of assistance. For example, in a medicine and healthcare strand, CAPS can provide one set of scrubs to each student providing the student with a professional uniform. This is an excellent opportunity to partner with a local business for in-kind donations.

Clothing closets are a great way for CAPS students to "pass down" resources for future students who might need assistance.

SPOTLIGHT: TOPEKA CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEARNING AND CAREERS

CAPS SHAPSHOT



Founded in 2017

Students - 326*

High Schools - 3

Pathways

- Teaching as a Profession
- Medical Professions
- Building and Construction Trades
- Web & Digital Communications
- Engineering & Applied Math
- Baking & Pastry Arts Management
- Sports Medicine
- Law & Public Safety
- Animal Science

Innovating Profession-Based Learning

Topeka Center for Advanced Learning and Careers (TCALC) has evolved from a one high school experiment to being a regional shining star of profession based learning. Administrators at Highland Park High School in Topeka Public Schools began exploring pathways that could expose students to future careers. Administrators quickly understood that this was an opportunity that needed to be extended to students from the other 2 high schools in the district.

The urban school district began to build a strategy for expansion. A mill levy allowed the district to build a new facility, but this did not eliminate the primary challenges to building TCALC in the community. Early concerns were transportation for students, equipment acquisition, staffing and community awareness.

Most students in Topeka Public Schools rely on city bus or family members for transportation making it difficult to access facilities away from their assigned high school. TCALC plans their building schedule around this issue. TCALC programs start later and end earlier. This allows buses to pick students up and drop off at the high school. They can participate in pre-/post-school activities and use city transportation as a result.



SPOTLIGHT: TCALC

TCALC capitalized on local businesses doubling down on talent development and acquisition. Two area institutions - Stormont Vail Hospital and the Topeka Police Department - became TCALC's biggest supporters. Conversations between hospital leadership and TCALC resulted in the hospital system donating supplies and equipment to create a full simulation lab for both the Medical Professions and Sports Medicine pathways.

Additionally, these partnerships have grown to include Topeka PD and Stormont Vail providing the instructors for their respective TCALC pathways alleviating some of the financial concerns around starting these strands.

With strong business partnerships TCALC needed to make sure the community understood the benefit it offered. By opening the space for tours, direct communication with counselors, parents and students TCALC has built the reputation as the place to be.



Key Factors

- Instructors with the right mindset
- Community and District buy in
- Transportation for students
- Intentionally developing reputation

Tips

- Go where students lead
- Look for every opportunity to say "Yes."
- Provide space to all
- Build intentional connections
- Be the pride of your community
- Hire well and consider mindsets as a top priority

"They are proud to be TCALC students."

- Jessica Jonston, TCALC Associate Principal



Get Started

Are you ready to start a CAPS program in your community? Use these action items to get started.

□ Contact CAPS Network

- The best place to start is by talking with a member of our team.
- Find CAPS Affiliates local to you. You can find a map of our affiliates on our home page.

□ Visit a CAPS Affiliate

- We encourage you to visit one or more CAPS affiliates when exploring the model. We can help identify programs to visit.
- When choosing which affiliates to visit, consider which visit might be most like and unlike your community.
- When visiting make sure to travel with community stakeholders: superintendent, principals, students, community business partners and others.

□ Define Your Goal for Implementation

- Why do you want to bring CAPS to your community?
- Spend time envisioning the future: What will your community look like in 5 or 10 years because of your CAPS program?

"The best part of CAPS was being able to get hands on experience in aerospace engineering by building a plane. The challenges I faced along the way tested the limits of my problem solving and taught me a lot of lessons about the real world. Also hearing about the business aspects of engineering through our mentor helped me gain a lot of perspective about the industry." - CAPS Student

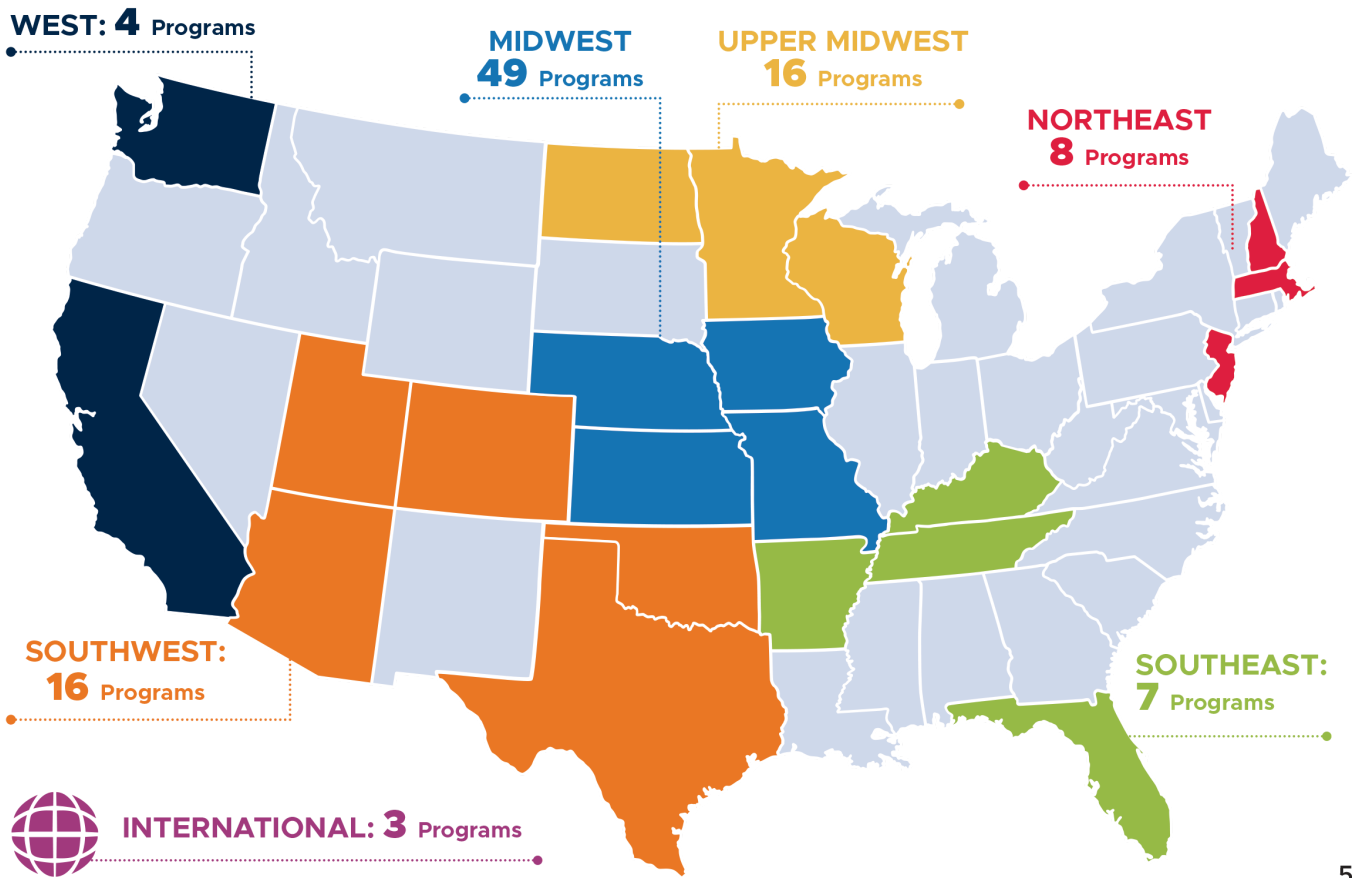
□ Identify Key Stakeholders

- Stakeholders are the people who will interact with and have a vested interest in your CAPS program.
- Identify people within the school district who are ready to support your CAPS program. Who will advocate to teachers, parents and school board members?
- Research and identify business partners who will become mentors, clients and advocates for your program.
- Use the [Building and Growing Community Partnerships](#) playbook for complete guide to identifying and engaging your community partnerships.

□ Explore CAPS Resources

- Visit our website for [videos](#) and resources to help you learn more about how the CAPS Network can help you get started.
- Look over the CAPS Playbooks: "Diving Into Profession-Based Learning," "Building & Growing Community Partnerships," and "Innovating Education for Careers of the Future."
- Listen to our [podcasts: The Network and The CAPS Playbook](#).
- [Sign up for Network Connect](#) our monthly newsletter, on our website.





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CAPS AFFILIATES

101 Programs
170+ School Districts
21 States
4 Countries

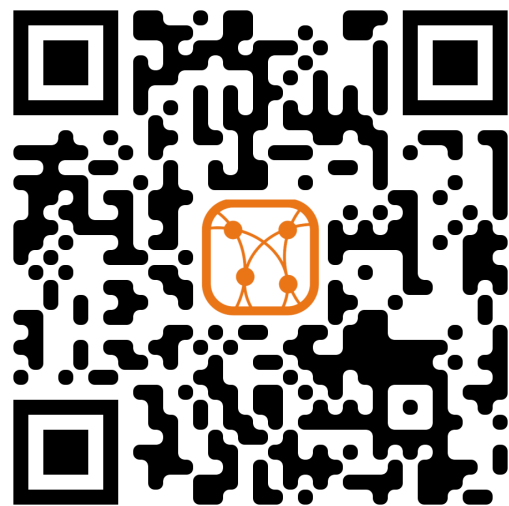
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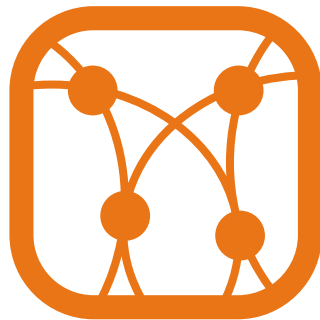


JOIN THE NETWORK.

WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

- Review our Playbooks
- Listen to *The Network* podcast
- Screen our documentary *Where Students Lead*
- Contact us to get started with your CAPS experience!





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