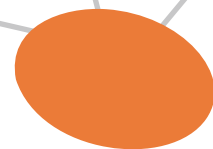


A Network Ready for **WHAT'S NEXT**



capsnetwork

www.yourcapsnetwork.org



ABOUT CAPS

The CAPS Network is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and global community of educators and partners advancing profession-based learning. The Network connects and supports affiliate programs to share best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and celebrate as new innovations emerge that provide students with authentic experiences that drive self discovery.

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LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Across the country and around the world, educators and industry leaders are asking the same question:

How can we better prepare students for a future that is changing faster than ever before?

For the CAPS Network, that question has guided more than a decade of experimentation, partnership, and learning. This year marks an important milestone in that journey with the publication of our first Annual Report.

What began as a bold idea—that learning becomes transformational when students are trusted with real work that matters—has grown from its founding as a program of the Blue Valley School District in Overland Park, Kansas, into a global network of educators, schools, and industry partners advancing profession-based learning. Across diverse communities and learning environments, our affiliates demonstrate every day that when students engage with authentic projects and professional mentors, they do far more than build resumes. They discover who they are, what they care about, and how they can contribute.

The results speak for themselves.

Our network continues to expand across states, countries, and community contexts. Alumni report higher confidence, stronger professional skills, and career outcomes that exceed national benchmarks. But behind every data point is something even more meaningful: a young person who now sees their future with greater clarity and possibility.

This report captures both progress and momentum. It reflects the collective effort of educators reimagining what school can be, industry partners opening their doors to students, and communities that believe young people deserve opportunities to lead and contribute today. After all, our students are not only our future, they are our present.

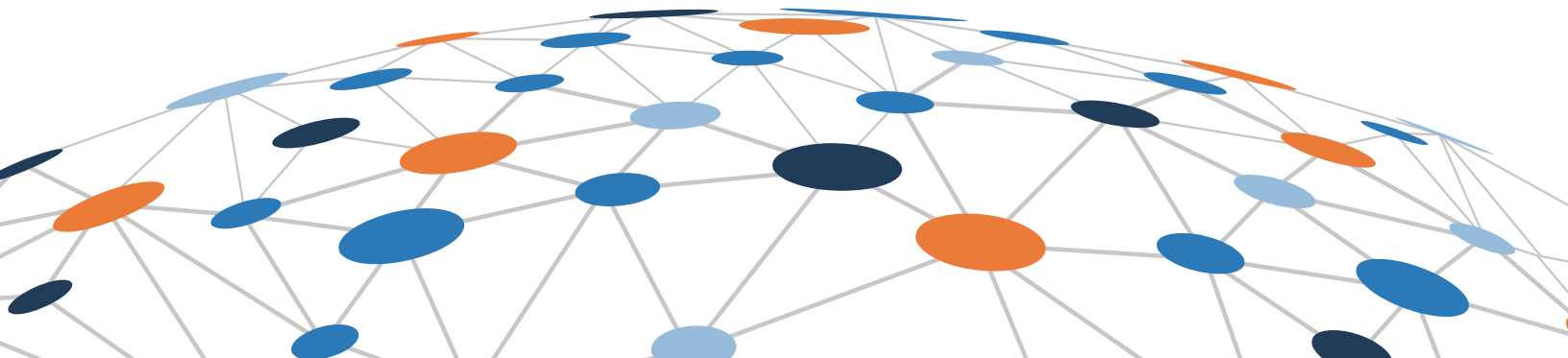
Thank you for driving this work.

Thank you for pushing the envelope on what is possible.

Thank you for always going where students lead!



Corey E. Mohn
President & Executive Director



THE CAPS NETWORK

Whether you're new to us or an existing school, industry or community partner, or student, we're grateful to connect with you. CAPS exists to help every student discover who they are—what they love to do, what they're good at, and where their strengths can make a meaningful impact. The CAPS model uses profession-based learning as the vehicle for this self-discovery, engaging students in authentic, real-world projects that mirror professional practice. By working alongside industry and community partners, students test their interests, develop professional skills, and gain clarity about their best next steps. CAPS makes learning personal, purposeful, and connected in a way that makes a difference beyond the classroom.

The CAPS Network is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and global community of educators, schools, and partners advancing profession-based learning. The Network connects and supports affiliate programs through shared learning, professional development, and peer collaboration, creating space to exchange best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and learn from one another in real time. By convening like-minded educators and engaging industry and post-secondary partners, the CAPS Network accelerates innovation across diverse contexts. Together, affiliates strengthen authentic learning experiences that drive student self-discovery and prepare young people to apply their strengths and interests in meaningful ways.

The true power of the CAPS Network extends far beyond learning how to implement an educational model. As a connected community of innovative educators and partners, the Network accelerates continuous improvement by creating a ripple effect with exposure to new ideas, models, and mindsets. Affiliates learn not only from shared successes, but from real-time experiments happening across diverse contexts, allowing them to mitigate risk by learning from others who are testing, iterating, and refining in parallel. By seeing what's possible from many angles and modes of operation, educators can thoughtfully adapt the model to best fit their community, discard what doesn't, and move forward with greater confidence and clarity.



PROFESSION-BASED LEARNING

Profession-based learning (Pro-BL) is the highest form of experiential learning. Instructors collaborate with local industry partners to design real-world learning experiences. Personalized projects challenge students, as they apply technical and durable skills to produce tangible solutions.

Employers are struggling to find team members with the essential and durable skills necessary to hit the ground running and be adaptive to the needs of today's workplace and beyond.

Research shows that a clear mismatch exists between the skills employers seek and the skillsets of both current workers and new entrants to the workforce.

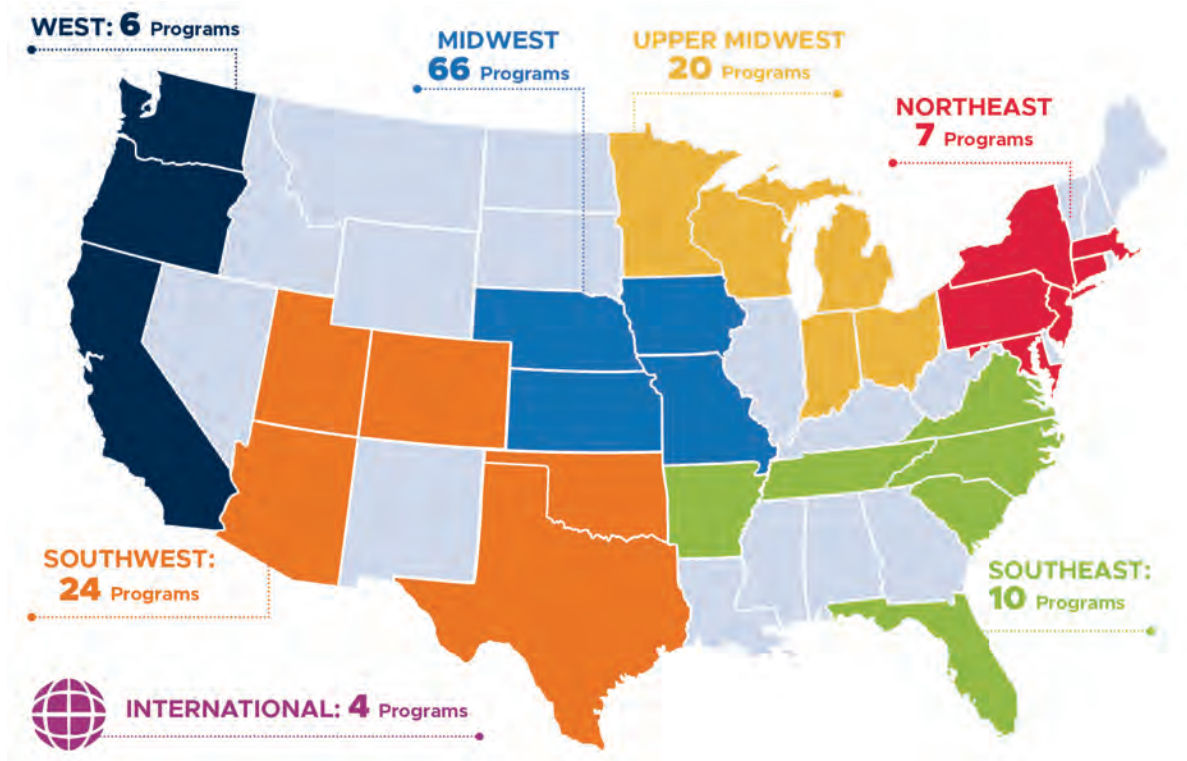
Industry has recognized that passively waiting on each new crop of graduates is not a winning strategy. All organizations must become actively engaged to provide for the needs of business as well as the greater community.

2025 STATE OF THE NETWORK

Across the CAPS Network, affiliated programs reflect a powerful diversity of place, structure, and community context, which demonstrates that profession-based learning is both scalable and adaptable without sacrificing integrity to its core values. In 2025, our affiliates educate students and meet industry needs in urban centers, suburban districts, rural communities, and international locations— including through virtual school delivery. Our network includes public, private, and charter institutions united by a shared commitment to authentic, career-connected learning and meaningful industry engagement.

Implementation models are equally diverse. Some affiliates operate center-based programs in dedicated, profession-inspired facilities designed to foster collaboration across disciplines. Others implement community-embedded models, situating student learning directly within partner storefronts, hospitals, engineering firms, and nonprofit organizations. Many adopt school-based approaches, integrating profession-based learning within existing high school structures or pathways. This flexibility enables each community to align implementation with local workforce ecosystems and student needs while maintaining integrity to the CAPS framework.

Together, this geographic and structural diversity illustrates the strength of the CAPS Network: distinct communities, unified by a common belief that students thrive when entrusted with authentic work, connected to professionals, and empowered to lead.



IN 2025, WE EXPANDED OUR NETWORK TO:

Serve more students.

We now have **137 Affiliate programs** at the high school level in **29 states and four countries.**

Reach students sooner.

We now have **16 Affiliate programs** with a CAPS presence in middle schools.

Serve more students in rural communities.

In 2025, CAPS **doubled its number of affiliates** in rural Kansas alone.

In early 2026, we released an **Alumni Impact Study** that measured our work through 2025. The financial outcomes alone tell a remarkable story:



Alumni earn **50% more** than national peers



17.2% already make six figures, which is **3 to 4 times** the national rate



Nearly 60% are enrolled in degree programs, concentrated in fields facing the greatest workforce shortages

But the real story is in the growth, and recognition of the importance, of durable skills that prepare students:

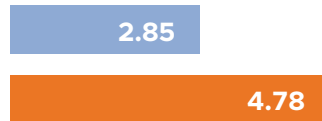
Skills confidence level rated on a scale of 1 - 5

- Before CAPS
- After CAPS

OVERALL CONFIDENCE



PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATION SKILLS



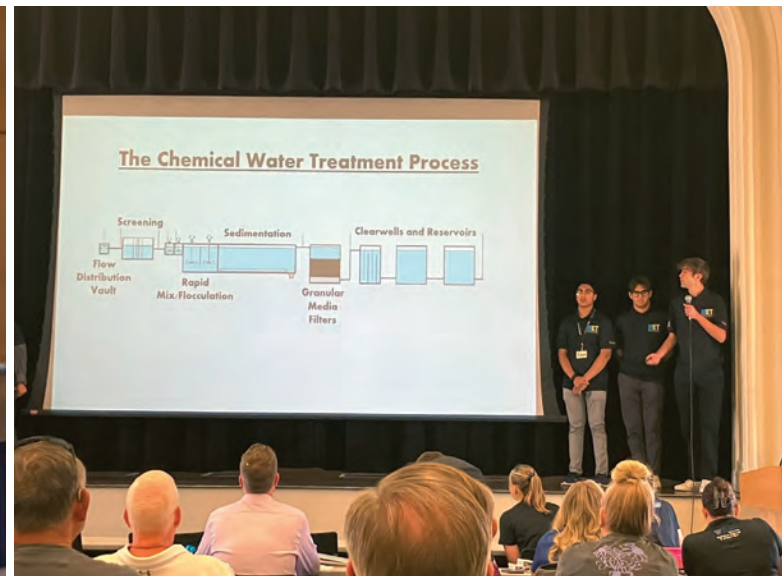
RESPONDING POSITIVELY TO MISTAKES



These aren't incremental gains. They're transformational shifts in how young people see themselves and their capacity to contribute.

Real projects with real partners develop real confidence. And when students are trusted with authentic work, they don't just meet standards, they challenge stereotypes.

The need is urgent and the scale is immense. Every student deserves the opportunity to prepare themselves for what's next, no matter where they live.



AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT

Ignite Professional Studies

Bentonville, Ark.

Before beginning her role as the Global Business teacher for the Ignite Professional Studies program in Bentonville, Arkansas, Jessica Imel—now Principal of Ignite—attended a three-day Summer Huddle hosted by the CAPS Network in 2017.

Imel, a former Walmart associate, said the event gave her direct connections to educators who had already launched their own professional studies programs.

“From there on I knew that CAPS was the model,” Imel said. “I spent two hours with the Global Business teacher from Overland Park, who told me what had worked for them and what they wished they had done differently. That conversation informed how I approached our industry partner, and gave me the confidence to talk to them.”

The Ignite program started with 16 students in 2015 and has grown to 600 students across 10 career strands and five locations around Bentonville. Imel now serves as a resource for other educators launching similar programs.

“Through the CAPS Network, we have access to a national ecosystem of ideas, tools, support, and encouragement,” she said.

“They are part of why we have an aviation program here. When I took it to my local leadership, it helped to say we wouldn’t be the first, even though it wasn’t happening anywhere else in Arkansas or in our region.”

“The network has helped them stay nimble and responsive to local workforce needs,” Imel said.

“We can be responsive to our stakeholders, which means listening to our students, their parents, and, most importantly, what’s needed for our workforce,” she said. “We ask, ‘are we preparing our students for whatever’s next?’ We want to make sure that what we are proposing is a valuable use of everyone’s time.”

A strength of the CAPS Network is its flexibility, Imel said. Instead of delivering a step-by-step playbook to implement a program, the Network offers tailored resources and support to those who have determined what’s most important to their local communities.

“Becoming part of this community of a group of educators who are committed to reimagining education, who have a willingness to share resources and connect us with other affiliates, has been so empowering for a school to be able to execute on this with practical guidance,” she said. “To know that you have others who are cheering you on is very empowering.”



Through the CAPS Network, we have access to a national ecosystem of ideas, tools, support, and encouragement.”

– Jessica Imel
Principal, Ignite Professional Studies



INDUSTRY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



BLACK & VEATCH

Black & Veatch

The relationship between the CAPS Network and Black & Veatch has produced results that are far-reaching and mutually beneficial to students, schools, and the company's bottom line.

Black & Veatch, an international engineering firm specializing in infrastructure projects, was an early supporter of the CAPS Model and the CAPS Network. Clinton O. Robinson, P.E, FACEC, an Associate Vice President for State & Local Affairs for the firm, supported the creation of the CAPS program in the Blue Valley School District in Overland Park, Kansas, when he served on that district's board of education in 2008.

By 2026, the company had made connections with CAPS Network Affiliates in nine U.S. cities that house Black & Veatch's regional offices, and is exploring profession-based learning opportunities in an additional five cities where the company has a presence.

Robinson said he initially believed in connecting students with meaningful learning opportunities, but also saw the program as a way to help businesses be more productive, recruit and retain employees, and cement the company as a strong community supporter in ways that go beyond donations for local fundraisers or resources for career fairs.

"We're always either spending money or we're just asking kids to watch us do what we do," Robinson said. "What if we actually did something that was meaningful for a business, something that they needed to get done but they weren't getting done?"

Students participating in programs with Black & Veatch work on a parallel track alongside professional engineers. Some students, for instance, learn how to analyze and use water quality data, a skill that a professional team would use to design a water or wastewater treatment plant. Students also have provided opinions and insight to help inform strategic decisions about future projects.

Osai Robinson, P.E., a Regional Office Engagement Leader and Associate Vice President in Black & Veatch's Phoenix office, said the CAPS Network has helped reduce barriers to working with CAPS Affiliate schools.

"That support is really valuable," he said.

Osai Robinson said that CAPS Network has the potential to address what's coming next in terms of future workforce pipeline shortages, particularly in sectors projected to lose employees to retirement, such as the water, wastewater, and power distribution sectors. But he also underscored the benefit to the company's current workforce.

"The largest demographic at Black & Veatch is Millennials," he said. "Community involvement is important to that age group. If I make the decision to leave Black & Veatch, I'm not only leaving an employer, I'm leaving a community. I'm leaving that CAPS student that I support. That's valuable to us as well."

“

We're always either spending money or we're just asking kids to watch us do what we do. What if we actually did something that was meaningful for a business, something that they needed to get done but they weren't getting done?"

– Clinton O. Robinson, P.E, FACEC
Associate Vice President for State &
Local Affairs, Black & Veatch

FUNDERS & CHAMPIONS

Our community champions believe in the power of going where students lead. They empower young people to take the driver's seat in their own journey through authentic, real-world experiences. The organizations recognized here help bring that vision to life. Through their generosity and partnership, they invest in profession-based learning that connects students with real professionals, real challenges, and meaningful opportunities to grow. Their support expands the reach of the CAPS model, enabling more students to explore who they are, what they love, and how their strengths can make a meaningful impact. We are deeply grateful for these partners whose leadership and belief in students help open doors to possibility across the CAPS Network.



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CAPS NETWORK ON-RAMPS

The CAPS Network is flexible, open, and accessible. We can help at any point of a school's journey to improve their offerings for profession-based learning with technical and practical support. Whether you're beginning to look for ways to offer profession-based learning opportunities, or are ready to expand what you do, here are some ways we can help:



FINANCIALS AND A CALL TO ACTION

Our work is possible through a mix of grants, donations, industry support and earned revenue. We are grateful for the opportunity to support students and network affiliates with these funds.

Fiscal Year 2025:



TOTAL ASSETS:
\$1,922,610



TOTAL REVENUE:
\$2,162,753



TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$1,146,500



**GET IN TOUCH,
KEEP IN TOUCH**

.....

If you want to be part of what comes next for profession-based learning, or share with us your success stories, contact [▶ Kate Parsons](#), CAPS Chief Strategy Officer for more information.



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