Maximizing your Strategic Planning to Improve Outcomes for Students and Youth with Disabilities: STEM-ECO at the Student, School, and Community Level

NTACT:C's Capacity Building Institute
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Introductions & Acknowledgements

Matthew Bell, Co-PI, University of Oregon

Kinder to College
CORBETT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Cathy Noles – Transition Specialist
- Zach Goude – Gen Ed.- CTE
- Bill Harlow – SPED
- Chris Holden – Community Member

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Intended Outcomes

Participants will:

- Learn strategies used by the Corbett STEM team at student, school, and community- levels to help students who experience disability access STEM/CTE career pathways.
- Learn supports that help school staff implement changes

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STEM-ECO SYSTEMS

Science Technology Engineering Mathematics – developing Education and Career Opportunity systems

To develop, test, integrate, and disseminate new strategies and online tools to increase awareness of and engagement in STEM career pathways for high school students with disabilities.

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TWO STEM ECONOMIES

PROFESSIONAL STEM ECONOMY	HIDDEN STEM ECONOMY
Graduate school	High school
Links to research	Vocational schools
Corporate sector	Community colleges

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Oregon Career Information System

- Commercial, online career information delivery system
- Developed and integrated new strategies and tools into CIS
  - STEM Occupation/Career Filter
  - Career Plans
  - Custom forms & tools for activities
  - STEM Assessment Report
  - Interest Profiler & Work Importance Locator
  - My Action Plan (MAP) & MAP Report

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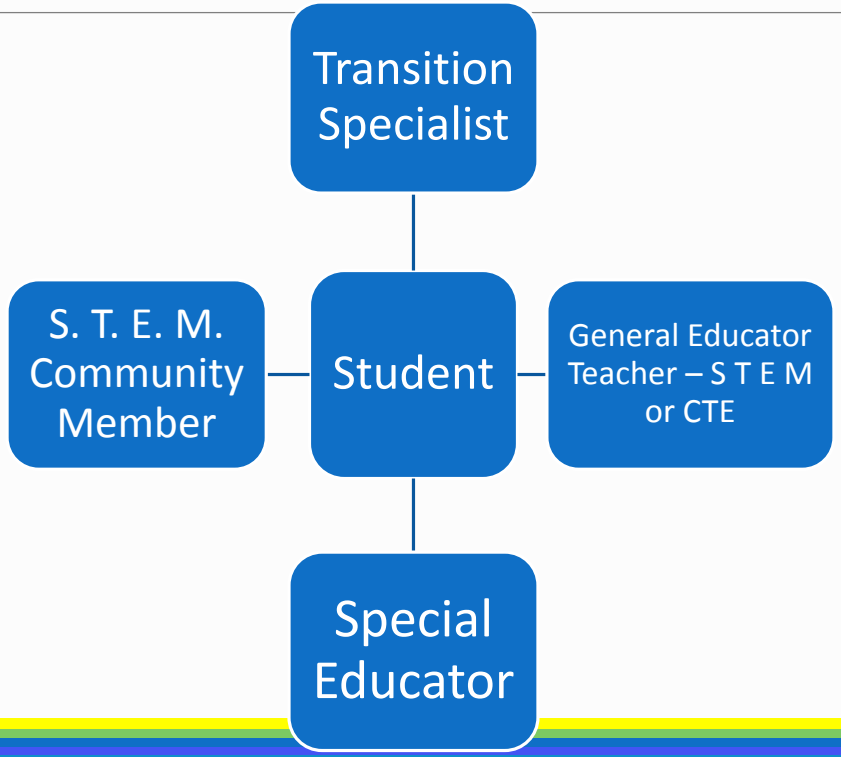
STEM Team



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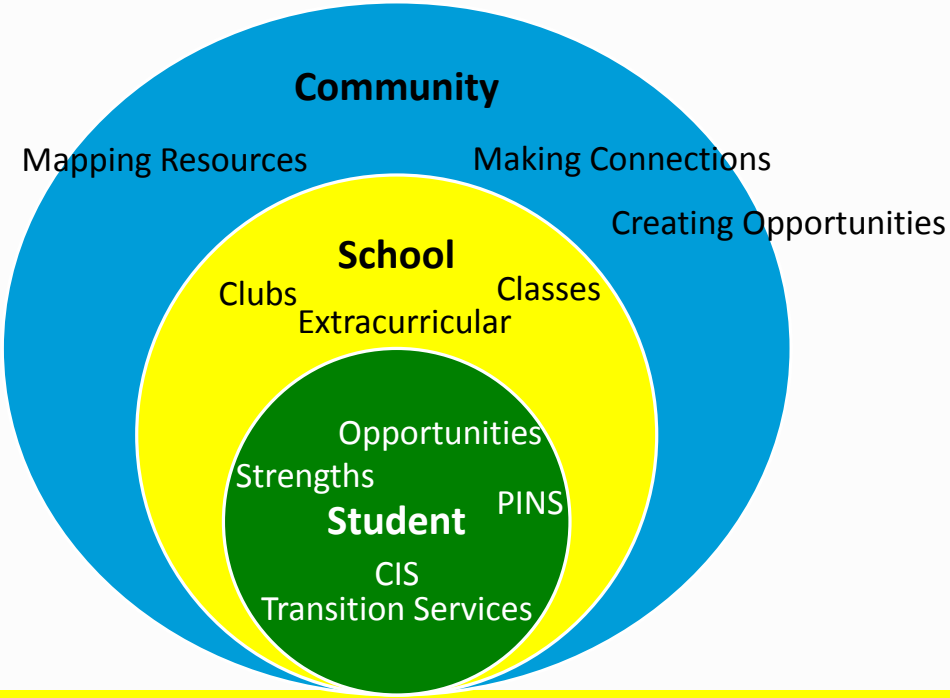

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A Brief History of Corbett with STEM-ECO

- **Uniqueness! A small, rural school district right on the edge of a large metropolitan area**
  - Small school district
  - AP “for all” - Excellence is attractive and attractiveness is survival

- **Currently:**
  - Awarded CTE Revitalization grant
  - Manufacturing CTE program
  - Woodworking
  - Expansion of Computer Science

- SIgnificant changes in district administration
- Met almost all of our goals developed in participation with STEM-ECO

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Participation in STEM-ECO

STEM-ECO is about supporting students who experience disabilities access STEM career pathways

- Offered the opportunity to participate in the 2018-19 school year
- We were an alternate after another school could not participate
- Started a little behind, but created specific goals around these three areas:

Student **School** **Community**

- All of our strategies developed were with these goals in mind
- Our goals evolved over time with our participation in STEM- ECO
  - This came from re-assessing progress/needs
  - Changing school environment

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Student Strategies

- **Support students identifying existing knowledge and interests in STEM activities**
  - Conversations with college and career counselors, Homeroom teachers, and Transition Specialists
  - Use interest inventories and other age-appropriate transition assessments, (e.g., Oregon CIS assessments) to help students identify their interests and preferences, as well as how those may connect to STEM careers
- **Provide students with the opportunity to explore, research, discuss, and plan for STEM career activities and development (e.g., Oregon CIS)**
  - Career assessments drive students' plan for success after high school
  - Interview community members in STEM and Trade careers for students interested in the individual fields

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Student Strategies

- **Encourage students to explore a variety of STEM career areas to broaden their awareness of opportunities that will pay them a living wage.**
  - Summer Works Program- Pre-Employment Transition Services via WIOA
- **Build Leadership Skills**
  - Support students on developing their own field trips, guest speakers, industry tours, hands-on projects, and activities related to STEM careers both in their local community as well as more global options.

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School Strategies

- **Inform and engage school faculty**– explain hidden STEM economy and jobs; show linkages between academic content areas to career fields/occupations
  - Participated in Accessing Union Apprenticeships (AUA) during 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. AUA outlined how high school classes teach hidden STEM qualifications that create paths into CTE and trades.
- **Build infrastructure** - Use a structured career awareness program – Oregon CIS used in all homerooms; students are accessed and assisted in developing a plan of classes to help them achieve their goals post-high school.

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School Strategies

- **Make STEM opportunities visible** - hang posters in the school linking career areas to the offerings available in school; set-up a bulletin board area with pamphlets, training opportunities, STEM education, webinars, workshops, jobs and apprenticeship and employment opportunities.
- **Dream Big** -What would you plan for if you knew you couldn't fail? In 2021-2022 Corbett High School applied for and was awarded a CTE grant to expand our STEM and CTE courses offered. A makerspace design will be implemented on campus to increase student options in CTE and STEM opportunities.

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Community Strategies

Expand career exploration into implementation with internships, work experiences, and paid employment

Visit STEM businesses and industries

- AutoBlast – visited 6 different auto related businesses and the STEM jobs they offer
- Farm to Table- during the summer students followed the process that food travels through from farm to table at community farms and area restaurants

Visit local training and education opportunities related to STEM

- Community college - STEM and Trade programs offered at Mt. Hood Community college, Auto, Wielding, IT, Mech-tronics and Integrated Metals and Tools.

Develop partnerships

- Community college

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Why did these strategies work?

Small school environment

- Staff wear “many hats”
- Collaborative environment

CIS

- A BIG part in fulfilling our student goals
- Has been adopted school wide

Blurred lines between gen ed and sped

- Gen ed teacher and transition specialist working side by side
- Able to extend benefits and opportunities to all students

Shifting focus

- FROM Student → School → Community
- TO Community → School → Student

Open minded and engaged administration

- bucking the status quo

Bottom up initiatives

- Staff makes it happen
  - Ideas initiated, THEN informing admin what supports and change is needed
- With great trust comes great results

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Small school environment

- Staff wear “many hats”
- Collaborative environment

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Oregon CIS

- A BIG part in fulfilling our student goals
- Has been adopted school wide

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Blurred lines between general and special education

- Opportunities for the team to work together
- Gen ed teacher and transition specialist working side by side
- Able to extend benefits and opportunities to all students

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Shifting focus

- FROM Student → School → Community
- TO Community → School → Student

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Don’t be afraid to change to system

Open minded and engaged administration

- bucking the status quo

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Bottom-up initiatives

- Staff makes it happen
- Ideas initiated, THEN informing admin what supports and change is needed
- **With great trust comes great results**

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Questions

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