



Industry-Connected Classroom Learning

Participating Hubs

Central Oregon STEM Hub
Greater Oregon STEM Hub
Oregon Coast STEM Hub
South Metro Salem STEM Partnership
Southern Oregon STEM Hub
Umpqua Valley STEAM Hub

Goals

- Centralized staff person to aid in efficiency of the project and products
- Suite of recommendations for industry connections to enhance the experience for students and teachers
- Increased teacher expertise in building connections with industry partners
- Increased teacher expertise in delivering career-connected content to students
- Increased student awareness of the connection between STEM fields and careers
- Increased student engagement and participation in STEM fields in the future

Grant Overview

By the time they graduate, far too few of our students know what they are interested in and what career opportunities lie before them. Students aspire to what they know. This truth disproportionately impacts the life choices of students in poverty, students of color, and students who grow up in rural areas. This is a simplification of the idea that career-readiness skills are necessary, but not sufficient, to ensure

transition to meaningful, fulfilling, high-wage, high-demand career pathways. Yet, most school-based strategies for career-readiness remain almost exclusively focused on skill-building.

Career success stands on three pillars:

- Social Capital: Who you know
- Occupational Identity: What you believe you can be
- Skills: What you know how to do

As part of a broader initiative to improve Industry-Connecting Learning across the state (2021-2023 Innovation Grant: Industry-Connected Learning), South Metro Salem STEM Partnership and partnering Hubs have been developing a number of strategies to address barriers for engagement across educators, students, and industry partners. With ongoing developments surrounding access, evaluation, and retention into high-wage, impactful CTE pathways across the state and emerging statewide resources to support this development, our Hub network is committed to better understand the needs of our regions, and how to leverage these resources.

One primary strategy that this project actively employed is the use of Oregon Connections, an online platform powered by Pathful, to address the interconnected challenges posed by the first two pillars: Building Social Capital and Occupational Identity.

As originally proposed, the Industry-Connected Classroom Learning (ICCL) project aimed to capitalize on growing engagement with the online platform. Usage metrics saw a three-fold increase in the 2020-2021 school year, “due in large part to

the accessibility of a virtual interface during distance learning”. The intention of the project was to leverage that potential momentum and establish a centralized staff role to support the execution of Oregon Connections events, strengthening connections across participating STEM Hubs with a more unified and strategic approach to engaging both educators and industry professionals.

Addressing Equity

It is unclear from the data collected whether sessions provided met the equity goals of this project; data were not explicitly collected regarding student demographics for those attending Oregon Connections sessions, and there is not explicit documentation regarding recruitment of diverse industry professionals to serve as presenters.

Efforts were made during the 2021-2022 fiscal year to engage AVID educators and local program managers, with the purpose of more effectively reaching underserved student populations, in alignment with intended grant goals. Due to change in staff, results of those efforts were not documented in a way that could be interpreted.

Across the Network

Key Strategies by Region

- **South Metro-Salem:** Used regional site license to support integration of Oregon Connections into AVID programming (MS, HS) to target underserved students’ career choices.
- More purposefully and intentionally-connected programming designed to address the inspiration gaps.
- Modified to include Regional Needs Assessment pilot project.

- **Umpqua Valley:** leveraged regional site license to implement a variety of usage models, including development of Oregon Connections-embedded curricula at elementary
 - Virtual site visits aligned with community college programs of study
 - Out-of-school usage with non-profits and student career clubs.
- **Southern Oregon:** established whole-school and whole-district usage approaches.
- **GO-STEM:** utilized regional site license to introduce Oregon Connections in the region for the first time; key emphasis on strategies for rural use.
- **Oregon Coast:** Provide all partnering educators with licensure through regional site license; leveraged AVID, Juntos, ASPIRE, and TRIO programs to increase career exploration for BIPOC and rural students on the coast.
- **Central Oregon:** Utilized existing investments in educator licenses to support targeted usage by educators in the region.

