

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **National High School Center Details Strategies to Support Successful Postsecondary Pathways**

Washington, D.C. — Too often today, high school students’ instructional training and experiences in the classroom do not adequately prepare them for what is expected in postsecondary education and the workforce. This notion is supported time and again by various survey responses from employers and academics reiterating the level of remediation and lack of preparation and flexibility in higher-level thinking skills required to succeed in today’s competitive global market, but not being mastered by large numbers of recent graduates.

To address this national challenge, the National High School Center examined the core elements and educational interventions currently facilitating successful transitions out of high school, and today released a suite of products looking at effective means to increase students’ preparation for life following high school. The publications, authored by Michael Bangser and Thomas J. Smith of MDRC, a partner of the National High School Center, include:

- [“Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment”](#)— an issue brief highlighting lessons from selected policies and programs designed to improve students’ preparation for postsecondary pathways. The publication summarizes core characteristics of popular interventions in a user-friendly chart, poses overarching implementation questions and challenges, and includes considerations for students with disabilities. The brief notes that a number of promising approaches are available to improve transitions out of high school, but cautions that effective implementation is key.
- [“Striking the Balance: Career Academies Combine Academic Rigor and Workplace Relevance”](#)— a snapshot taking a closer look at implementation of the Career Academy model, an innovative approach to infuse life relevancy and critical thinking skills into the academic curriculum, in a high school in Oakland, California. Painting a picture of one high school’s experience, the resource documents the mechanics of the program, how it prepares students for college, and the challenges encountered along the way.
- [“Evaluating the Impact of Interventions That Promote Successful Transitions from High School”](#)— a research brief examining the challenges and opportunities presented in evaluating whether an intervention achieves defined goals of increasing students’ educational attainment, employment, and earnings after high school.

“Being able to identify, examine, and replicate core characteristics of effective interventions designed to help *all* students be adequately prepared for postsecondary education, work, and life is critical,” commented Joseph R. Harris, Ph.D., Director of the National High School Center at the American Institutes for Research. “We hope this series can inform the national conversation and provide considerations and strategies to promote a solid foundation for high school graduates’ postsecondary pathways.”

The suite of products is available free-of-charge on the National High School Center’s [Web site](#).

**About the National High School Center**

The National High School Center ([www.betterhighschools.org](http://www.betterhighschools.org)), established in 2005, serves as a central source of expertise on high school-related issues for the Regional Comprehensive Centers, a national network developed by the U.S. Department of Education. The National High School Center is housed at the American Institutes for Research, located in Washington, D.C. Subcontractors include Learning Point Associates, MDRC, the National Center for Educational Accountability, and WestEd.

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