How do you see Credit Flexibility working for you? What opportunities exist?

Shape the local level policy by initiating a conversation with your feeder schools/districts about how you can help them improve their accountability by helping more students demonstrate college and career readiness …

- Providing interest-based education that motivates, engages and is relevant;
- Helping students achieve the benefits of simultaneously earning both academic and career technical credit;
- Supporting students at the critical transitions points into high school , through graduation and beyond high school;
- Strengthening instruction in addition to raising course taking expectations (Ohio Core and Tech Prep for All engage more students in a high-expectations, default curriculum aimed at college and career readiness); and,
- Engaging parents and business and community partners in a long term relationship focused on purposeful connections in education, community, and economic development.

Why? Credit Flex increases achievement by enhancing individual engagement and motivation. These strategies help to re-design the system around our students and their needs.

How? Be at the table to shape the local level policy in meaningful ways. Don't wait for someone else to define "what's possible" and whether or not you/CTE can "play." The bullets above list things CTE already does and thus, works from our collective strengths. Below are some reflective questions you can use to identify high leverage areas for immediate implementation.

Questions:

Simultaneously Earned Credit: Have you put in place a process for granting equivalency credits or mechanisms for students to simultaneously earn both academic and technical credit? In what courses, programs of study or sequences? What percentage of your students is engaged in dual credit or articulated pathways to postsecondary education? Do you market these courses as a beneficial time savings to students (enabling them to fit additional electives/experiences into their schedules)? Have you marketed this opportunity as beneficial to academic teachers and leaders (as a way to help students stay engaged, and improve achievement and accountability)? How many agreements does your institution have with postsecondary partners to ensure students can easily transfer (core) credit and access educational pathways (with little hassle, delay or remediation, saving them time and money)?

PD Simultaneously Earned or Credit: Are academic and CTE teachers collaborating to co-plan, co-deliver and/or co-assess instruction in courses? Is there an opportunity for academic teachers to have externships through regional businesses or through your business advisory partnerships? Is there an opportunity for CTE teachers to access cutting edge information about content disciplines and/or college preparation? Is technology supporting the dialog and sharing of instructional resources among collaborating teachers (across institutions and including postsecondary)?

Personalized College and Career Readiness Planning: Does every student have and use a personalized planning tool (such as the OCIS/IACP) to chart their pathway to graduation and beyond? Are parents aware and engaged in this process? Do they understand all the necessary steps and how to access help at the local level? Do instructors use these tools as part of classroom learning, coaching & advising, or to help facilitate/manage out of school learning (internships) and college & career transition planning?

Focus on the Critical Transitions: Do you and/or your sending schools offer organized events and experiences to support students at the critical transitions?

- **Into college and careers/grades 12-13-14:** Do you target postsecondary transition supports to first generation, post-secondary students or students from low-income families? This could include: college visits, panel talks with recent graduates, pairing middle grades students with high school students, and high school students with post-secondary students? It may also include workshops and on-line resources in application and financial aid planning, or programs that would help students adjust to the cultures and norms operating in post-secondary and workplace environments.

- **Engagement through grades 10-11-12:** students who pass the OGT are well positioned to access more electives, interest-based coursework and dual credit. How well are students engaged in this coursework and preparing for the transition beyond high school? Are students taking challenging coursework that keeps their skills up through what would otherwise be the senior slump?

- **From middle school to high school/grades 7-8-9:** Do you expose students earlier to the expectations of high school content and coursework? Do you access student performance data from the sending school? Do you offer a summer bridge program, career academy or orientation that explicitly exposes student to the cultural norms and expectations in high school? Do you invite students to observe and learn about the 16 career clusters, regional growth industries, cool industry jobs (not well known- biotech), or related career exploration opportunities? Can students access this information on-line or through a community partners like scouts, recreation centers, or community events. Do you offer to join regular classroom teachers in talks about 21st century skills and globally competitive employment trends?

Vary Time and Teaching Style: Do you offer a variety of instructional methodologies to meet students' needs? What percentage of students can access extra time if needed or accelerate and condense coursework when appropriate? Do you partner with other districts or centers to offer on-line coursework? What percentage of students can access independent study options? How difficult is it? Can they access it for core content coursework? Do you help organize any learning opportunities or partnerships with regional and or community groups? Do you utilize the kinds of technology tools for learning that students would use in today's workplace or in their free time (networking, wikis, blogs, databases, internet sites, video archives, or creative tools)?

Re-entry and Completion: Do you offer ways for student to recover credit for portions of learning or standards they have not yet mastered (without having to re-take everything)? Can students get help without being disadvantaged or limited in the flexibility of course taking and scheduling? Can over-aged and under-credited student s earn a diploma or GED in an adult setting, in an on-line or hybrid format and without jeopardizing current employment obligations?

Whole Child- Academic and Emotional Intelligence: Do you offer advisory, small communities, career academies or CTSOs? Do you offer character education? How are extracurricular and outside school opportunities viewed by teachers and school district policies? Are they encouraged? Is learning tied inside and outside the school setting? Are big picture learning themes embedded and aligned with content or technical standards? Can students easily earn credit for these experiences? Do extended learning opportunities teach soft skill development such as leadership, teamwork, project management, public speaking, risk taking? What percentage of students is engaged in extended learning opportunities? How do you know that these opportunities are of good quality and are serving students well?

Demonstration Assessments: What percentage of your students Is engaged in performance based assessment (measured against the standards) including: portfolios, public presentation or client engagement, end of course exam, skills based competitions, internships, senior projects, self and peer assessment using rubrics, and /or a community showcase?