

# Lamoille Union High School: Using Engaged Days to Reflect Flexible Pathways

## Vermont Stories Discussion Guide

### Overview

Every school is a laboratory in Vermont. Districts use their best thinking to develop practices and structures that enact Act 77's call for flexible pathways for students and more work based experiences to prepare Vermont students for post-secondary life. At Lamoille Union High School, students created 25 career interest groups for areas as diverse as cosmetology, medical fields, construction, and dance. In weekly collaborative groups students explored these interests, often with experts joining them. These efforts culminated in an all-school Engaged Day, during which every student spent time on site or in teams "actually doing the thing" (to quote one student) that they were trying to learn about. The value of the day itself – listen to the student voices in the video – is matched by the message sent as the school gives a full day over to flexible pathways.

### Definitions

**Act 77:** A policy passed by Vermont in 2013 to encourage flexible pathways to secondary school completion. It is intended (1) to encourage and support the creativity of school districts as they develop and expand high-quality educational experiences that are an integral part of secondary education in the evolving 21st Century classroom; (2) to promote opportunities for Vermont students to achieve postsecondary readiness through high-quality educational experiences that acknowledge individual goals, learning styles, and abilities; and (3) to increase the rates of secondary school completion and postsecondary continuation in Vermont.

**Work Based Learning (WBL):** Not mentioned by name in the video, but this is an excellent example of it. WBL is learning that happens in the workplace – whether an internship, independent study, or less formal arrangement – and which is "captured" by the school so that students receive credit or recognition for demonstrated learning.

### Discussion Questions

- What impressed you about the Engaged Day plan and its execution as shown in the video?
- What needs are served by the Engaged Day program? Why is it important that these needs be served?



## Lamoille Union High School: Using Engaged Days to Reflect Flexible Pathways Vermont Stories Discussion Guide

- Consider the voices that spoke in the video. How do the perspectives of the students, teachers, and administrators differ? What do they share?
- Does your school or district have any informal or formal Work Based Learning efforts? What makes them work (or not work)?
- When does every student and faculty member into a single activity for a full day, it communicates a priority for the school? Does your school do similar activities? If not, should they? What priorities are being communicated, and what priorities should be communicated?

