



The Leading Network for Innovation at Independent Schools

Santa Monica, CA. For Immediate Release to OESIS Network Schools, June 11th, 2023

There is a gap in the nation's education infrastructure. That need is for an independent non-profit accreditation body, free of governmental, College, or K-12 control, that provides real exchangeable currency value to the courses of a College-level taken by high school students. For such a currency of credit for student achievement to evolve, (just as modern financial credit [relied](#) on regulated infrastructure for FICO scores, data transfer, and credit bureau interactions), there is a need for a **High School College Credit Board (HSCCB)**.

What are the drivers of this opportunity?

1. A Move to Honors. Schools both private and public are developing their own Honors content that is College equivalent. In our independent school community, this is well underway as schools abandon AP classes to gain more control over the pacing, sequence, and assessment of courses, and to deliver more inter-disciplinary content. This movement dovetails with the larger thrust across the nation toward competency-based assessment.
2. Dual enrollment solutions are starting to proliferate driven by the difficulty of building, affording, and staffing inter-disciplinary courses or Advanced level courses (particularly in poorly funded school districts). In public schools, many districts are partnering with local Colleges for similar purposes, such as staffing gaps.
3. A New Publishing Opportunity. Colleges that have invested significantly in online course content are looking to monetize that content by providing it to high schools for alternate pathways delivered at the high school itself. By licensing the content from Colleges (like deep digital textbooks) schools can deliver College-level classes with depth, rather than simply attaching seminar or independent study labels to shallow explorations.

What will the High School College Credit Board actually do?

A number of organizations accredit high school courses for quality like the NCAA and the University of California through its (a)-(g) standards. They do so for admission qualification purposes not for transfer. The HSCCB will be an accreditation organization whose client focus will be the student. That will be the core of its mission so its evolution is student-centered: unlike the whole school accreditation agencies of the 20th century that self-regulate their own constituencies, there will be not be a race to the lowest common denominator and an avoidance of student outcomes as part of the evaluation. Here is an overview:

1. On the input side, the HSCCB will provide the human, professional, and digital infrastructure to validate high school courses claiming to be College level, looking at course content, syllabus, and outcomes: to replace the external standardized exam as the benchmark of validity, there would be strategies like random assessment auditing in the vein of the AP readers.
2. On the output side, the HSCCB would enter into what are called "articulation agreements" with Colleges so that HSCCB course evaluations would have a transfer value that saves the students the cost of having to repeat the course.

Registrar offices rather than Admissions offices will be the primary interface for HSCCB to gain transfer value. Colleges licensing course content to high schools will be recruited to be supportive of the process.

As the space narrows between high school and College (even high school and employment), the HSCCB's entrance into the arena will be timely. College-level course equivalence has been the domain of the standardized examiners, the AP and the IB, but their fungibility at Colleges is diminishing and uneven. Some APs like AP Seminar are even moving away from summative standardized exams. Credentials of all sorts are looking to create real value, worthy of a currency of exchange.

Who have we tested this with and who is interested in participating?

As the value of College comes under scrutiny, high schools offering real College credit carrying courses, and Colleges accepting them, will position themselves much better than their competitors. We have been working on this vision since we first wrote about this idea two years ago: ([Will K-12 Transcripts develop like credit scores](#)) and more recently ([How it all ends for the College Board](#)). We have approached leading Colleges and their general response has been that this is a route for them "with merit" and they have suggested a process to get them involved (we will elaborate in Boston). We also see good prospects to enlist the help of public school networks and leading technology companies, so that this is not perceived as a private school initiative. We offer some quotes below from some of our collaborators with direct access to schools and Colleges, who have looked deeply at the opportunity:

David Ruff, Executive Director of the [Great Schools Partnership](#) that coordinates networking for over 150 public and charter schools, and leads the [New England Secondary Schools Consortium](#), said the following:

"Creating the HSCCB makes sound sense to me. Such a structure would increase learning opportunities for students that both prepare them for college and give them a credit advantage once enrolled in college. This clearly supports our commitment to deeper and more equitable learning for all students. We are excited to share these opportunities with our schools and encourage their participation. I look forward to being at OESIS Boston to engage further on this exciting venture."

Melissa Loble, Chief Customer Experience Officer at the public company [Instructure](#), whose LMS Canvas serves 7,000 Colleges and schools (also Board Chair of [1EdTech Consortium](#), the leading educational member-based non-profit accelerating digital transformation and interoperability), said the following:

"We are fully supportive of engaging our global Canvas customer base to see how this could best serve them. We are also excited to participate in OESIS Boston to help mature this from an idea into a reality. Addressing the three forces at play that Sanje has identified is critical to ensuring equitable and accessible opportunities for students across the lifelong learning spectrum, a key principle in our vision for the future of education."

If this vision and pre-announcement to our network resonates and you have something to contribute, please reach out as we put flesh on the plans in 2023-2024, recruit management, and secure funding partners. We will present the emerging plans at [OESIS Boston](#). Join us as we pry open together a path through entrenched systems to innovation and equity for our students.