



Smart Kids Virginia Career Coaching

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Registered Middle School Parents,

First, let me thank you for agreeing to participate in this innovative pilot program. Next, by way of introduction, my name is Robert Melvin. I am a father of two adult children. One is an architectural engineer and the other is a certified registered nurse serving in the US Army. My most important job continues to be that of a dad as well as their personal career coach, a relationship that began at home and exists to this very day. I became their personal career coach, not because I wanted to but because I had to. In the end, these are MY children. I was the one responsible for ensuring that they were being empowered with the knowledge and experience needed to succeed. Professionally, I am a physical scientist working with the federal government. As a servant leader and certified professional career coach, I serve on Prince William County School's Education Foundation executive board. I share this information with you because in each of these capacities as a parent, industry professional, certified career coach and executive board member, one thing is very obvious to me. There are not enough resources devoted to empowering us as parents about the career readiness process regardless of the school district. Well, the Commonwealth of Virginia has changed that. And parent engagement is key.

Background: During School Year (SY) 2015-2016, a handful of concerned parents initiated what end up being a 4-year pilot program that evaluated an after school and weekend career coaching process involving middle school students. Despite the unprecedented results, one key finding was that there needed to be a more extensive formal training course for middle school students other than the one class period dedicated to such an important part of their career planning process. During SY2019-2020, that is exactly what the Virginia Department of Education did through the implementation of the 7th Grade Career Investigations Course. As a parent, this course is truly a game changer.

Pilot Program's Goals: As parents, we must remain engaged in helping our children be the best that they can at whatever career path they choose. In order to do so, we need effective tools that empower us to help our children navigate the uncertainties of preparing them for a career. According to the course description such tools are now available to your children. However, in order to fully realize the potential of this course, **PARENTS** must be involved in the process as their children go through the process of developing these tools. And that is what this pilot program is all about. *How do we use these invaluable tools to help parents become personal career coaches for their own children? How do we take these basic tools beyond the classroom and transform them into career management tools that will guide students beyond high school and into their careers?*

Kick-off Meeting: On **December 7, 2019 from 9am to noon at Benton Middle School**, we will kick off our pilot program **WITH PARENTS ONLY** to begin finding the answers to these questions and many more like *"What is the impact of this course on empowering underrepresented students interested in the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) industry? On under-resourced students? First generation college students? Military-connected students? Students of incarcerated parents? Students in foster care? Mental wellness of students?"* Each student has a particular need for career readiness and this course has the potential to meet every need regardless of the student's career path. Registration is required to participate in this pilot program. **The deadline is November 1, 2019.** Register at www.SmartKidsVirginia.com. Remember, the ideal parent for this pilot program is the one whose child has **NOT** taken the course yet. This will allow us ample time to share coaching tips with parents prior to students beginning the course.

Once again, welcome to a life-changing opportunity.

RMelvin

Robert N. Melvin, PhD

Certified Professional Career Coach/Founder



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AGENDA

8:45am-9:00am – Check-in

9:00am – Welcome and Introductions

9:05am – Workshop #1 (middle school and high school parents): The adverse effect of the old process and why the state realized that a change was needed.

In this workshop, a visual representation will be used to help both middle school and high school parents understand the career readiness process and how it is often confused with the academic readiness process.

Note: This workshop is also open to our current high school parents only. High school parents should have access to their students' on-line Academic and Career Plans. High school parents should register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sk-va-high-school-parents-orientation-tickets-79086230043> in order to attend. Please note that there will absolutely be no on-site registration.

9:45am – Break for middle school parents and break-out session for high school parents

- Please bring a breakfast item to share

10:00am – Workshop #2 (middle school parents): A Career Coaching Process for Parents

In this workshop, parents will learn the career coaching process that was designed based on best practices and lessons learned from the previous pilot programs conducted within PWCS.

10:45am – Break

11:00am – Workshop #3 (middle school parents): Transforming the Tools from the Career Investigations Course into Career Management Tools for High School and Beyond

In this workshop, parents will learn proven coaching tips to use while their children are going through the Career Investigations Course.

11:30am – Workshop #4 (middle school parents): After the Course, Now What?

In this workshop, parents will be challenged to answer this question. They will participate in developing a timeline for any subsequent career coaching workshops focused on actually applying the tools that they developed.

11:50am – Breakdown and close out

All workshops will be conducted in Rm 1322. The scheduled breakout session for high school parents will be in the library.

NOTE: This is the only orientation scheduled for this semester (although there may be another one scheduled for next semester depending on the needs of parents). **Attendance is required to participate in the pilot program!!**



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Career Investigations Course Description

This course allows students to explore career options and begin investigating career opportunities. Students assess their roles in society, identify their roles as workers, (1) **analyze their personal assets**, (2) **complete a basic exploration of career clusters**, (3) **select career pathways or occupations for further study**, and (4) **create an Academic and Career Plan based on their academic and career interests**. This course also helps students (5) **identify and demonstrate the workplace skills that employers desire in their future employees**.