How to Make College Learning More Relevant

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As I help more students prepare for college, I am learning that my students need more opportunities for project-based learning experiences that help a child better understand the relevance of academic subjects to real life problem-solving. I am also learning that most students in other countries take a break from school to participate in a summer abroad program or even an internship during high school summers or before starting college to increase the background knowledge required for academic success.

Once a student starts college, it is essential for her to take a break as needed to explore and understand how the academic requirements of a specific career goal are relevant and apply to specific careers. Hands on learning can include:

- Engaging in research activities that include data collection, analysis, and generating reports or a published journal article
- Creating an innovative project that solves a daily problem
- Participating in a summer enrichment program that support a community need
- Studying abroad and learning about a different culture, economy, and international business practices
- Learning about conservation, ecology, or other scientific discoveries

Participating in a college exchange program within a specific college system or another college system
Shadowing another professional in a corporation and research project and assisting with daily work activities
Completing a summer or semester internship in business, research, or performing arts

I am rethinking the value of educational paths after working in charter schools for 28 years. Timeouts and redirecting learning to project-based activities are essential to gain meaningful learning experiences to achieve academic success. We also seeing the fruits of our labor by helping our students overcome learning challenges. Our teachers continue to provide meaningful learning experiences for students each day.

Much success on your learning journeys!

Yvette