



**Connecting Activities – Career Readiness Models
Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Inc.**

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WHAT IS CONNECTING ACTIVITIES?

Connecting Activities (CA) is a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) initiative that leverages a statewide infrastructure to support "college and career readiness" for all students. The CA line item in the state budget establishes public-private partnerships through the 16 local workforce investment boards to connect schools and businesses by providing **structured work-based learning experiences** for students that support both their academic and employability skill attainment.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/cde/>
www.massconnecting.org

MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER BEFORE!

The nation and state is experiencing critical levels of youth unemployment;

50% of the nation's college graduates are un/underemployed

The 'skills gap' continues to expand due to our youth not being equipped with the necessary skill sets and knowledge for success in today's industry sectors – employers are in need of skilled workers!



Connecting Activities has been deemed by the state of Massachusetts as one of seven College & Career Readiness initiatives by which these critical issues can be addressed and remedied! This is outlined in the **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Integration of College and Career Readiness Task Force Report (2012):**

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2012/2012-06/item1.html>



Career Awareness, Exploration & Immersion is essential for all youth!

**Berkshire County Accomplishments
1998 – 2018***

Student Internships / Structured Work Experiences	9,637
Employer Participants	5,504
Career Awareness, Exploration & Immersion Activities	32,956
Teacher Externships	224

*BCREB implemented the School-to-Work statewide initiative in partnership with the school districts beginning in 1991; School-to-Work became known as Connecting Activities in 1998 that initiated expanding integration within the educational system *

- **All 11 public school districts / 12 high schools in the region participate**
- **All educational year-round programs with integrated Career Readiness components fall under CA umbrella**
- **Schools continuously developing College & Career Centers, teams and strengthening partnerships with businesses and community agencies in providing career readiness opportunities to ALL youth**
- **Continuous Employer Engagement – over 250 new employers engaged since 2013!**
- **Partnerships with Berkshire Works, the Reconnect Center / BCAC in offering work readiness training**

