



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Digital Learning Now Releases Smart Series Guide to Next-Gen Advising *White Paper Provides Guidance on Supporting Individual Student Success Through Advising and Guidance Systems*

WASHINGTON (May 29, 2014) – [Digital Learning Now](#) (DLN), a national initiative of the Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd), in association with [Getting Smart](#), today released the 11th white paper in the DLN Smart Series. Titled “[Core & More: Guiding and Personalizing College & Career Readiness](#),” the paper features the expertise of Getting Smart authors Dr. Carri Schneider and Tom Vander Ark and co-author Mary Ryerse, who brings a background in college and career readiness to the project. A complementary infographic, “[A College and Career Readiness GPS For Every Student](#),” was released on Tuesday.

Implementing higher and more-clear common expectations in core subjects is a big step forward for American education, but it will require more robust guidance and support services to ensure individual student success. Students have always benefited from performance feedback, mentors, advisors, counselors, and strong support systems. The shift to higher standards creates an opportunity to further customize and better support students, and enhance the student-mentor relationship, through:

- Motivation – building sustained relationships with students, exploring areas of interest and related careers, addressing barriers to school attendance;
- Customization – helping students set short- and long-term goals, track progress and experience success in class, in job settings and in community services;
- Equalization – broadening exposure to college and career options, providing high touch/high tech decision support for postsecondary planning for all students.

“The intent of the paper is to clarify the central mission of student guidance systems, sketch the architecture of information systems, and encourage aggregated demand in the hope it will lead to more investment and innovation in next-generation guidance systems,” said Dr. Schneider, Director of Policy and Research at Getting Smart.

This latest Smart Series white paper offers details on processes, existing tools and current examples of best practices for creating a next-generation system of student guidance and support. The authors describe the opportunities and challenges, and explain how more robust guidance systems can play a critical role in tracking progress, boosting college and career readiness, and empowering better choices.

“Strong guidance systems can take on a more integrated and comprehensive role in supporting academic and career readiness,” said Vander Ark, CEO of Getting Smart. “Better student guidance isn’t a fix for all problems, nor will it fulfill all readiness needs or guarantee that all students meet the rigorous Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It will provide much needed support to students and increase their rate of success.”



Thousands of secondary schools have incorporated guidance systems in the last 15 years; however, these practices and structures have not become the norm, in part, because of a lack of curriculum and information systems. Most teachers were not trained to participate in distributed guidance, and many teachers introduced to advisory structures find the multiple missions and lack of support systems confusing and frustrating. Advisory structures allow for college guidance, career guidance, homework help, academic monitoring, and other guidance functions to be delivered in an integrated manner.

“In practice, the best student advisory systems are blended, distributed and scheduled to ensure effective implementation and attainment of outcomes,” said Ryerse, education consultant with over 15 years of college and career readiness leadership experience at the district, state, and national level. “The systems must enable students to connect their academic preparation, strengths, mindset, and learning to their college and career aspirations.”

With rapidly expanding online choices, better guidance systems will be critical to ensuring that self-blends and customized pathways add up to better preparation—a key to equity and excellence, and a necessity if we are to graduate a new generation of students equipped to thrive in college and career.

Digital Learning Now is active on Facebook at [Facebook.com/DigitalLearningNow](https://www.facebook.com/DigitalLearningNow) and Twitter at @DigLearningNow. Using the hashtags #SmartSeries, #CCR and #DigLN, readers can join the discussion on Twitter and Facebook.

[Learn more or to download the full paper.](#)

MEDIA CONTACT

Jennifer Aalgaard at (206) 291-7190 or jennifer@gettingsmart.com

About Digital Learning Now

[Digital Learning Now](#) is a national initiative under ExcelinEd, with the goal of advancing state policies that create a high-quality digital learning environment to better equip all students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in this 21st century economy. The policy framework stems from the belief that access to high-quality, customized learning experiences should be available to all students, unbounded by geography or artificial policy constraints.

About Getting Smart

[Getting Smart®](#) is an advocacy firm passionate about innovations in learning. We help education organizations construct cohesive and forward-thinking strategies for branding, awareness, advancement and communication, and public and media relations. We are advocates for better K-12 education as well as early, post-secondary and informal learning opportunities for all students. We attempt to accelerate and improve the shift to digital learning. On GettingSmart.com we cover important events, trends, products, books and reports.