Intro: This panel of graduated students was pulled together to discuss what knowledge and skills did they need after high school and in what ways did their experience in high school prepare them? The panel represented a cross-section of high school students. Some students attended a four-year college, some went straight into a career and others were enrolled in a community college.

First Question: How does your relationship with your teacher affect your learning?

Student 01 (male grey & white shirt): I could have a class that I hated but the teacher could be amazing and it makes me want to, you know when I see a teacher going and trying to implement something new in their class and they're not trying to steer into this like I got to just put this in their minds and hope they can keep it and they can just pass the class. When they actually really try to connect with the students and implement new things every year or however often.

Student 02 (male grey shirt): I think also ‘cause it makes you feel wanted if you do have that kind of connection with the teacher and it makes you want to go to class, want to learn better, want ask questions, get involved with activities, other sort of things.

Student 01 (male grey & white shirt): For me personally, it made me want to almost, you know they're trying so hard for their students. I need to give my part back and be interested in what they're teaching, which generally would always happen.

Student 03 (female scarf): Some teachers make it seem like you're not smart enough for me to pick on you. For me to bring you to get the answer (other student adds, “some teachers don’t even bother”. Everyone laughs in agreement.). They'll just look the other way even if your trying answer the question, maybe it’s your first time doing it and they'll be oh, just go to the next student. So them just trying to connect with all of the students even if it’s just personal, just get their feedback.

Student 02 (male grey shirt): Getting called on or getting to know the teacher on a personal level or even on a small little level. It makes me want to go to their class, get up everyday-wake up, and not say “ah I don't want to go to school today cause of this teacher or cause of that”. I think just getting the attention from the teacher is what is important.
Student 03 (female scarf): The teacher is just being personal with you, trying to see why your failing or why your not putting so much passion into school. Just them trying to get more into your mind and I think that helped me.

Second Question: What experience prepared you for life after high school?

Student 05 (male blue shirt): I mean a cool experience for me was working with fellow classmates. You know today you have to work with colleagues in the office or in the field area or what not. A lot of the elective classes that I enjoyed personally, they would break into groups. The meaningful experience for me was getting to work with other students as a group.

Student 02 (male grey shirt): I think no matter what you learn in high school, everything after high school your going to be working in a group environment like how we are right now. It’s not just going to be just you, this individual. It’s going to be you and everyone else that’s around you. That’s one thing that everything everyone needs to learn at a young age or else they will never be able to top for society, success when they’re older.

Third Question: What do you wish adults at you high school knew about your learning experiences?

Administrator 01 (male suit): I just feel like there’s too many assignments because they’re trying to fill this grade book where instead of focusing on certain areas and just giving less assignments and trying to make sure that those one’s are perfected and polished.

Admin. 06 (female striped shirt): You learn to memorize stuff but not to know it. You learn to memorize these certain dates or certain things that happened in time or whatever. But you don’t engage with it and you don’t actually know, you just know to remember until the day of the test. Okay, forget about this. Rewind and then now we’re going to learn something new, ’cause you know your not going to really need it again so what’s the point?

Student 02 (male grey shirt): What would help with the learning outcome of the student, asking them for ideas. What can we do for you guys to better understand? Ask how many students actually understand it and how many don’t? ‘Cause right now in college the professors sometimes ask, what can we do or what else can I do in order to get you guys more involved. Asking the
student’s input and implementing it into the learning not just asking and forgetting about it.

Administrator 01 (male suit): Problem solving definitely was one of the biggest ones, so I think that’s one of the one’s that needs to be taught. Especially in our district, a lot. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, I think the perseverance is going to come from those two things. When teachers put on movies in class that’s when you lose all connection with your students. They fall asleep right away and it turns into, “alright I have a 45 minute nap now”.

Admin. 06 (female stripe shirt): I always try to look at both sides and I get it, you know. We don’t always have the best students. You know but also, you know like the smallest connection, you know like the eye contact. You know how you have that one corner that you probably try to avoid because that’s where the bad students are, so you look over but you don’t really look over on the other side. Or you look at the really smart students, so I think there’s always someone always missing out and so you know like the eye connection cause your engaged to them too. Because your talking to a whole class not just the people sitting in front or the middle and then you kind of just leave everything else out. I think even that would just make the biggest difference.

Fourth Question: What did you value most about your learning experiences in high school?

Student 07 (male pink shirt): You tell me to do something, you show me how to do it and I’ll do it. You don’t show me how to do it, I won’t do it. I don’t have a clue how to do it? That’s where I got where I am right now, people have shown me the path. I think if I have keep someone showing me how to do it, I’ll learn. Like a vacuum, I’ll suck it all up and show others.