



ISSUE PAPER: CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

The Big Picture – Preparing Today’s Students for Tomorrow’s Opportunities

A fundamental problem for career technical education (CTE) is that it is not widely perceived by parents, students, educators, or the public as a “goal” of high school. The three generally recognized goals are to successfully pass the California High School Exit Exam, to obtain a high school diploma, and to meet the (a)-(g) requirements for admission to the University of California.

The Governor has done much to validate another goal for high school, which is to successfully complete a CTE program that leads to industry certification, either at the end of high school or after completion of a program at the community college level. He can continue to advance this agenda through his speeches and the work and priorities of the Secretary for Education and the State Board of Education. All of these activities can help validate CTE as a goal for high school.

At the same time, it must be recognized that many of the needed improvements require additional state funding to build the capacity to serve more students through quality career technical education programs.

Grades Six through Eight

Many in the Regional Occupational Center and Program (ROCP) community believe that discussion of a CTE pathway must begin in the middle schools or junior high schools. A serious problem for CTE is that the focus on career technical education has all but disappeared from middle schools. *One remedy would be continued support for counseling services at the middle school level and requiring the development of an individual career plan for every student by the end of 8th grade.*

Grades Nine and Ten

Given the evidence that involvement in a CTE program in grades nine and ten helps keep some students in school, *it is important to expand the support for career pathways and for the Governor to continue to press the University of California to recognize CTE programs as meeting some of the (a)-(g) requirements.* This would allow students to take courses they feel are relevant, while at the same time keeping their options open to pursue a specific CTE certification or completion of the (a)-(g) sequence of courses.

Grades Eleven and Twelve

The primary function of ROCPs as part of a comprehensive CTE system is to provide higher level courses for students in grades eleven through twelve that lead to industry certification or to articulation to a community college sequence of courses that results in industry certification and an associate’s degree.

During the next few years the state will have a unique opportunity to expand career technical education programs during a period of little or no enrollment growth at the high school level. Growth funding in the past for ROCPs has only kept pace with high school enrollment growth; it has not allowed ROCPs to expand services. During the next five years, providing additional growth funding to ROCPs will result in increased access for high school students to career technical education programs.

Post Secondary

To reflect the diversity of needs throughout the state, services to adults are provided by a variety of agencies. For ROCPs there is a focus on providing a sequence of courses required to obtain industry certification. This is distinct from an emphasis on short term job training that frequently is provided by adult education or through workforce development agencies. Community colleges are the agencies that provide students with the option to pursue CTE, while at the same time completing the coursework that will allow them to transition into a four-year college, if that is their preference.

For students, it is critical that agreements exist among agencies that successful completion of a sequence of courses will result in the desired certification or degree. In too many cases, these agreements are dependent on the individual teachers involved, and the loss of one teacher can result in a new teacher declining to honor the validity of the sequence for that student. To be effective, *the state should seek changes in community college procedures and regulations such that the articulation of programs across agencies is between the agencies, not between the instructors, and is portable from one area of the state to another.*

Tracking

Many have expressed concerns that a comprehensive system must not result in students being tracked into one system or another. This appears to mean that students would always have the option of changing their plans, either from a UC-bound system or a workforce bound system. Specific ideas concerning this issue might include the following:

1. Require all students upon the completion of eighth grade to have developed an individual education plan that clearly identifies for the parents and students the coursework required to provide opportunities for the students to pursue careers of interest to them.
2. In ninth and tenth grade, a primary focus of high school counseling should be to help students enroll in courses that allow them to keep open both options of moving towards a career pathway certification or completion of the (a)-(g) sequence of courses.
3. By eleventh and twelfth grades it becomes extremely difficult to keep both options fully available to all students. By this time, it should be recognized that students are selecting higher-level courses that lead either to career technical certification, or completion of the (a)-(g) sequence of courses. By specifically recognizing this limitation, the state would also be encouraging students and schools to take more seriously the enrollment options selected in grades nine and ten. The state would not, however, be closing out options for students. It is important to recognize that students once again have a wide range of options available to them upon enrolling in the community colleges. A student in a pathway toward CTE certification could shift at the community college level to completion of the course work required for admission to a UC or CSU in their junior and senior years. Alternatively, community college students intent on admission to a UC campus may decide that their interests are better served by shifting to a career pathway that leads to industry certification.

A specific idea that might make it easier for students to pursue both CTE and the (a)-(g) curriculum within the high school schedule would be to increase the cap for K-12 core academic summer school by 2 percent of high school enrollment for schools that have a formal CTE pathway.

Accountability

A major problem with the current school accountability system is that it provides no validation for CTE. One measure of accountability should be that CTE coursework reflects business and industry certification standards, as validated by business and industry advisory committees. Another recommended change might be to direct the State Board of Education and Secretary of Education to develop indicators for inclusion in the Academic Performance Index of student performance on state adopted career technical education standards.

Facilities

A major issue for career technical education is the need for larger and more current classroom facilities. The Governor should be applauded for his leadership in including funding for such facilities in the state school facilities bond issue. This commitment should be continued in future bond issues and should be available to all high schools and ROCPs. *For ROCPs, deferred maintenance funding should be made available to Joint Powers of Authority ROCPs.*

Instructional Materials

The public hearing requirement for school districts regarding the adequacy of instructional materials should be expanded to include a determination on the adequacy of instructional materials for career technical education programs in grades seven through twelve.

ROCP ADA should generate state instructional materials funding and those funds should be earmarked for use in ROCP classrooms.

Teacher and Administrator Quality

Career technical education teachers should have full access to professional development activities. For example:

** new ROCP teachers should be able to participate in the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program.*

** All ROCPs should receive funding under the Professional Development Block.*

** The AB 430 Principal Training Program should be modified for middle school and high school administrators to include a focus on career technical education.*

A tax credit should be provided to business and industry to “loan” their employees to the public schools to teach industry specific career technical education classes and the flexibility must be maintained to employ experts from business and industry as part-time teachers.

Equipment

As one-time funding is allocated to the public schools, a portion of those funds should be earmarked to ROCPs and community colleges for the purchase of equipment necessary to implement courses that are part of a sequence leading to career technical education certification.



ROCP FACTS

2005-2006



AT A GLANCE

carocp.org

MISSION

The mission of the California Association of Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (CAROCP) is to promote and support ROCPs in providing exemplary career education, career development, and workforce preparation that contribute to student academic and career success and to the economic development of California.

FUNDING

- ✓ ROCPs are primarily state-funded, based on average daily attendance (ADA) generated by students.
- ✓ ROCP's budget is \$420,674,000 for the 2005-2006 school year.

WHO BENEFITS?

Business and industry are provided a pool of highly trained, productive individuals.

Students receive necessary technical and workplace skills that translate into rewarding careers.

ORGANIZATION

- ✓ Regional Occupational Centers and Programs originated in 1967.
- ✓ There are 74 ROCPs in California that serve almost 520,000 high school students and adults annually.
- ✓ ROCPs operate under three different governing formats:
 - ✓ Joint Power Agreements comprised of two or more school districts (25 ROCPs)
 - ✓ County Board of Education (43 ROCPs)
 - ✓ Single Districts (6 ROCPs)
- ✓ ROCPs are designed to serve the state's interests in providing quality career preparation and technical education.
- ✓ ROCPs demonstrate effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students. (*California Ed. Code 52302.3*)

PROGRAM

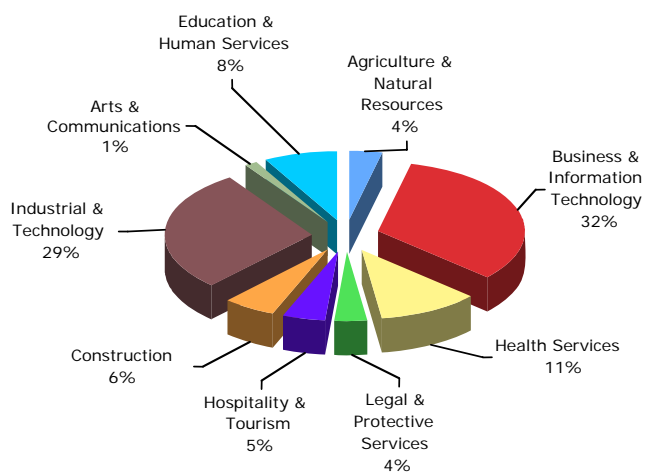
- ✓ More than 300 different ROCP career technical education courses are offered in areas such as information technology, agriculture, business, culinary arts, healthcare, construction, and auto technology.
- ✓ ROCPs offer tuition-free courses.
- ✓ ROCP course offerings are based upon current and future local labor market demands.
- ✓ ROCP teachers are fully credentialed by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- ✓ ROCP teachers utilize their industry experience to prepare students for a competitive job market.

REGIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

ENROLLMENT

375,462 High School Students
143,559 Adults
519,021 Total Students (2004/05 School Year)

ROCP Enrollment Distribution



BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

"Of my ten employees, eight of them are ROP graduates. I'm the real winner in this situation."

- Lawrence Kosmin, D.V.M.

Tustin Avenue Veterinary Hospital, Orange

STUDENT SUCCESS HIGHLIGHT

"Through ROP in high school I got my first exposure to medicine. Not just the theoretical, but the on-the-job training got me excited and focused on going into the medical field."

- Jeffrey Krebs, MD

Kaiser Permanente, San Diego

ROCPs respond to the economy of today and of the future by providing students with career technical education that meets both high academic standards and industry certification standards.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

COLLABORATION

- ✓ ROCPs provide sequenced courses leading to post-secondary training. ROCP is an essential partner with Tech Prep and High Tech High School programs as well as career academics and partnership academies.
- ✓ ROCPs have more than 630 courses that are articulated for college credit with community colleges and universities.
- ✓ ROCPs provide services to individuals with special needs through collaborations with support service agencies such as: the Employment Development Department (EDD), Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), State Department of Rehabilitation, and State Department of Social Services (DSS).
- ✓ ROCP courses meet academic content standards through rigorous and relevant instruction, which applies academic content.

PARTNERSHIPS

- ✓ **53,000** businesses serve as ROCP partners across the state.

Of these:

- ✓ **35,000** businesses offer worksite experiences (internships) providing ROCP students with hands-on training using state-of-the-art equipment in a realistic work environment.
- ✓ **18,000** business leaders participate on local Advisory Committees to ensure ROCP curriculum meets current labor market demands.