
Report of the Career and Technical Education Collaboration Task Force

Executive Summary of
the Report and
Recommendations to the
Oregon Legislative
Assembly

September 2010

House Bill 2732: 2010 Career and Technical Education Collaboration Task Force Executive Summary

“Oregon’s new governor and legislature must implement a broad, coherent, and well integrated strategy to change the way we grow jobs, careers, and skills of the workforce. This will require bold action, difficult prioritization and long term vision.”

Oregon Workforce Partnership, 2010

The Problem

Oregon is facing high education costs in a time of:

- Economic recession and budget cuts;
- Low graduation rates and high costs to society for drop outs; and
- An aging workforce and consequently, a need to build a workforce for the future.

The 2010 Career and Technical Education Collaboration Task Force Challenges

Today’s economy requires leveraging of resources to provide the best education possible for Oregon students. In House Bill 2732, the 2009 Oregon Legislature created a Career & Technical Education (CTE) Task Force to ask:

- *To what extent are collaboration and partnerships being used to support the delivery of CTE instruction in Oregon?*
- *Where are the examples of collaboration which could be replicated?*
- *What are the elements of a plan that incentivizes partnerships between education and business and industry, and leverages the use of existing facilities to prepare students for employment in a highly-skilled, highly paid, sustainable workforce?*

The 2010 Career and Technical Education Collaboration Task Force Recommendations

In response to a legislative mandate, a CTE Task Force composed of members from education, business, industry and other organizations developed the following recommendations to help solve some of Oregon’s education and workforce challenges:

- **Investment in CTE Programs of Study (CTE POS)**
Oregon must adopt a long-term commitment to CTE Programs of Study (CTE POS) in schools around the state, and plan to invest in those programs as well as partner with local business and industry for advice and support.
- **Regional/Area “Centers” of Excellence**
Oregon must adopt a long-term commitment to create CTE regional centers of excellence (e.g., Sabin-Schellenberg, ACE Academy, and other models of innovation) that would be partnerships among various entities (districts, colleges, unions, industry, etc.) with the goal of every student in Oregon having access to a regional center in person and/or through distance learning.
- **CTE Learning Continuum**
Oregon must adopt a long-term commitment to articulated accelerated learning options (e.g. Dual Credit, Expanded Options, College Now) to create a pipeline for students, and partnerships (among high schools, community colleges, universities and/or labor and industry) that allows students to move seamlessly from high school to advanced education/training and successful entry into the skilled workforce.
- **Extended CTE Learning Opportunities with Multiple Partners**
Oregon must adopt a long-term commitment to wrap-around programs such as industry mentorships, internships, summer programs, after-school programs, career-based student leadership organizations, etc., which would also involve partnerships with a variety of entities, along with summer professional development programs for current and future CTE faculty.
- **Awareness of CTE as a Viable, Successful Education Strategy**
Oregon must support the creation of public/private partnerships to raise awareness of Career and Technical Education among students, parents, teachers, counselors, policy-makers, and the general public. These partnerships will communicate the way that CTE leads to success both in school and at work, and demonstrates the positive return on the investment in CTE.

Underlying all of the above is an ongoing commitment to high standards and proficiency-based integrated (academic + technical) problem based learning, along with a recognition that today’s CTE is not a “lower track”, rather, CTE students must achieve the same level of proficiency as those in traditional college-prep programs with the added benefit of learning within a career area that prepares them for high wage, and high demand employment.

Background and Findings

Oregon's Career & Technical Education (CTE) Delivery System

In Oregon, approximately 860 (secondary) CTE programs are offered in collaboration with approximately 600 community college programs; while there is a range in size and scope, all programs fall under [six broad career areas](#). Even though collaboration exists around the alignment of standards and instruction, the expected outcomes for students are different. At the secondary level, high schools are expected to provide for, at a minimum, the attainment of foundational or fundamental skills for students' next steps which may require further education or training, while community colleges focus on preparing students for entry into further education and/or directly into employment.

Partnerships and Collaboration: Regional/Area Centers of Excellence

Oregon has never fully developed the regional/area CTE center concept. Concerns expressed in relationship to centers include: the lack of state categorical or weighted funding for CTE; the feasibility and financial impact of enrolling students across district lines; the social and fiscal impact of transporting students away from their home school and peers; and the pedagogical debate around the separating of academic content and instruction from technical content and instruction. Additionally, it may not be feasible to build new or even establish facility based regional centers in Oregon's rural areas. However, it is important to encourage new and different models of innovation which could include: utilizing existing community college or industry facilities; virtual or distance education opportunities; hybrid instructional models; mobile teaching units; and traveling teachers.

Oregon has three secondary regional/area centers: [Sabin-Schellenberg](#) (North Clackamas School District), [R-Tech \(Lane Community College and area high schools\)](#) and [ACE Academy](#) (Portland); each of these programs has a different delivery format. Since Sabin-Schellenberg students are contained within one district, the [student performance](#) rate is accessible and demonstrates that students can be successful across the academic and technical content areas; this center graduates 99% of their CTE students. Additionally, Sabin-Schellenberg's programs are CTE Programs of Study which address both the academic and technical content.

Benefits of CTE

➤ **Return on Investment of Oregon Education Dollars**

Return on Investment (ROI), is a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment, or to compare the efficiency of different investments. While Oregon does not have a state ROI study, Washington State completed a study in 2006. The report states that for every dollar invested in secondary CTE programs, the state earns \$7.1 in additional tax revenues.

➤ **Increasing the Graduation Rate, Decreasing Costs of Oregon Dropouts**

The Foundation for Educational Choice and the Cascade Policy Institute concluded in March 2010, that dropouts reduce Oregon's tax revenue by \$173 million per year, have higher Medicaid costs by nearly \$219 million per year, and the cost of incarceration(2008) was \$48.9 million, for a total of approximately \$440 million.¹ There is no doubt that the best outcome for every Oregon student is to achieve a diploma and Oregon CTE supports this with a 97% graduation rate.

So, what does CTE mean to Oregon?

Today, Career & Technical Education (CTE) is a part of the solution to Oregon's education, economic, and workforce problems including: low high school graduation rates; a weakened economy; global competitiveness; and an aging workforce. The impending deficit of well-trained workers calls for policymakers and educators to develop systemic educational responses to ensure that students are attaining the skills needed to be successful in the workplace, and that students are trained for the workforce needs of the future. Research suggests that today's CTE offers students relevant learning experiences that helps answer the age-old question "Why do I have to learn this?" while at the same time enhancing students' academic achievement and meeting industry needs. CTE has become a leader in ensuring flexible, relevant learning opportunities to engage students and provide a real-world, career-oriented curriculum.

"If the United States truly wants to secure its global leadership in technology innovation, we must, as a nation, commit to a strategy for innovation excellence...I believe this strategy must place top priority on achieving the fundamental goal of strengthening educational opportunities, so that America's students and workers have the skills they need to succeed in the technology-and information-driven economy of today and tomorrow."²

The complete 2010 Career and Technical Education Collaboration Taskforce Report is accessed at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3138>

¹ Foundation for Educational Choice and Cascade Policy Institute.(March 10, 2010) Accessed at http://cascadepolicy.org/pdf/edref/2010_03_ORdropout.pdf

² Gates, Bill. U.S. House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee Hearing (March 2008)