

North Central Texas Focus Group Project

Final Report

Prepared by North Central Texas InterLink, Inc.



Sponsored by:

North Central Texas InterLink and the North Texas Commission

In Partnership with:

**Area Health Education Center
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Air Conditioning Contractors of America
Colleyville Area Chamber of Commerce
Collin County Community College District
Construction Education Foundation
Corsicana Chamber of Commerce
Corsicana Industrial Foundation
Dallas County Community College District
De Soto Chamber of Commerce
Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
Frisco Chamber of Commerce
Garland Chamber of Commerce
Greater Dallas Chamber
Greater Fort Worth Manufacturing
Association
Hurst Euless Bedford Chamber of
Commerce
Irving-Las Colinas Chamber**

**Navarro College
North Central Texas InterLink, Inc.
North
Central Texas Tech Prep Consortium
North Dallas Chamber of Commerce
North Central Texas Workforce
Development Board
Northeast Tarrant Chamber
North Texas Commission
Tarrant County College
The Health Industry Council of
Dallas-Fort Worth
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Inc.
"President's Promise" Project
Weatherford Chamber of Commerce
Weatherford College
Work Advantage ~ Tarrant County
Workforce Development Board
Work Source ~ Dallas County
Workforce Development Board**

Acknowledgements

The following individuals and organizations are gratefully acknowledged for giving the time, knowledge, and resources to make the North Central Texas Focus Group Project a success.

Task Force Members:

Chairperson: John Scovil - Harris Methodist Health Plan, **Linda Anderson** - Birdville ISD, **Donna Barlow** - Construction Education Foundation, **Melissa Cook** - Greater Dallas Chamber, **Barbara Eubanks** - Collin County Community College District, **Bob Ferguson** – TDIndustries, **Ed Foster** - Birdville ISD, **Jon Gustafson** - Lockheed Martin Tactical Aircraft Systems, **Bob Hughes** - TDIndustries, **Jack Koenig** - NOKIA, **Karen Krumme** - Irving ISD, **Tasa Lefler** -Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, **Tom Morton** - North Lake College, **Arturo Salazar** - Dallas Public Schools, **Candy Slocum** - InterLink, **Rodney Wetterskog** - North Central Texas Tech Prep

Facilitators:

Bob Ferguson – TD Industries, **Brandy O'Quinn** - Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, **John Scovil** – Harris Methodist Health Services, **Dan Zechmeister** - J.C. Penney Co., Inc.

Focus Group Facilitator Assistants:

Donna Barlow - Construction Education Foundation, **Barbara Biebuyck** - Dallas Public Schools, **Melissa Cook** - Greater Dallas Chamber, **Ed Foster** - Birdville ISD, **Bob Hughes** - TDIndustries, **Karen Krumme** – Irving ISD, **Tasa Lefler** - Fort Worth Chamber, **Tom Morrison** - North Lake College, **Arturo Salazar** - Dallas Public Schools, **Candy Slocum** - InterLink, **Rodney Wetterskog** - North Central Texas Tech Prep Consortium, **Ron Winkleman**, Plano ISD

Phase I. ~ Business Focus Group Participants:

Group 1 ~ Hosted by TDIndustries: Joe Beaudette - Austin Commercial, **Linda Davis** - North Central Texas Workforce Development Board, **Diva Garza** - ITC Personnel Services, **Jane Hanna** - Construction Education Foundation, **Terry Kile** - Deloitte & Touche LLP, **Jessie McCain** - TDIndustries, **Candice Mallard** - Goodwill Industries, **Dan Petty** - North Texas Commission, **Jim Reid** - Southern Dallas Development Corporation, **Jennifer Roberts** - North Central Texas Workforce Development Board, **Dan Ruehs** - Texas Air Systems, Inc., **Karen Walston** - DeVry Institute of Technology, **Randy Williams** - McKinney Chamber of Commerce

Group 2 ~ Hosted by Arlington Chamber of Commerce: Stephen Ashley - City of Mansfield, **Susan Bonesteel** - Arlington ISD, **Bill Brown** - Texas Instruments and Dallas Urban League, Inc. - **Eadie Ferretti** - Nations Bank, **Tom Mullen** - United Parcel Service, **Christina Nolan** - Lucent Technologies, **Jesse Stephens** - Lucent Technologies, **Kevin Stewart** - Lucent Technologies, **Sid Underwood** - Texas Utilities

Group 3 ~ Hosted by Fort Worth Chamber: Leonard Bade - Worthington Hotel, **George Berger** - Tandy Corporation, **Matt Byars** - Fort Worth Star Telegram, **Sharon Carrell** - TTI, Inc., **Rob Franks** - Corsicana Chamber and Corsicana Business Foundation, **Mary Frazier** - HEB Chamber of Commerce, **Peggy Freeby** - Freese & Nichols, Inc., **Carl Hecht** - North Texas Commission, **Kevin Isbell** - Norwest Bank Texas, NA, **Jodie Konvicka** - Sprint, **Karen Krumme** - Irving ISD, **Gayle Lacerda** - DFW International Airport Board, **Hal Leeds** - Morrow Technical Services LLC, PCS, **Henri Migala** - University of North Texas Health Science Center, **Shawna Quinlan** - Witherspoon & Associates, **W.J. Winter** - North Central Texas Workforce Development Board

Group 4 ~ Hosted by North Dallas Chamber: Linda Ballard - North Dallas Bank, **Barbara Biebuyck** - Dallas Public Schools, **Howard Bloom** - Interim Legal Services, **Ralph Diaz** - Irving ISD, **Peg Hall** - Locke, Purnell, Rain, **Harrell, K. Jonas** - Richardson ISD, **Joe Jordan** - Jordan Development Group, **Sherry Alton McKenzie**- Bristol Hotels and Resorts, **Beverly Miles** - Power Leadership, **Rosemary Morice** - Dallas Public Schools, **Georgie Rayner** - Sunset High School, **Carol Short** - North Dallas Chamber, **Warren Soble** - Retriever Payment Systems, **Kim Soto** - Bristol Hotels and Resorts ~ Harvey Hotel DFW, **Steve Taylor** - North Dallas Chamber, **Adam Thorne** - Southwestern Bell Telephone

Group 5 ~ Hosted by J.C. Penney Corporation, Inc.: Audie Adkins - Frisco Chamber of Commerce, **John Anselmi** - Sunbelt Plastics, **Roni Barber** - Banc One, **Jennifer Boland** - Experian, **Max Davis** - Raytheon Systems Co., **Mary Alice Garza** - Geo-Marine, Inc., **Jack B. Gray** - Collin County Community College District, Susan **Hackett** - Alliance for Higher Education, **Edward Ingram III** - APAC TeleServices, Inc., **Linda S. Lessner** - Texas Business and Education Coalition, **Gray Mayes** - Texas Instruments, **Debrah Mutio** - Federal Express, **Martha Rangel** - Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber, **Karen Ranker** - Hotel Adolphus, **James F. Reder** - Occidental Chemical Corporation, **Tom Rodgers** - Collin County Community College – Preston Ridge Campus, **Jack Swindle** - Texas Instruments, **Evelyn VanDyke** - Intercom Inc., **Pam Wheat** - TU Electric, **Susan Williams** - WCCW, Inc, **Doug Willis** - North Central Texas College

Group 6 ~ Hosted by InterLink Board of Directors: Donna Barlow - CEF, **Susan Bonesteel** - Arlington ISD, **Mitch Bowen** - The John Deere Company, **Melissa Cook** - Greater Dallas Chamber, **Carl Hecht** – NTC, **LaTasha Hooks** - Work Force, **Bob Hughes** - TDIndustries, **Art Lacy**, Tasa Lefler - Fort Worth Chamber, **Ross Martinez** - Federal Highway Administration, **Kathy O’Day** - GTE Directories, **Dr. Lillie Palmer** - Collin County Community College District, **Lynn Platania** - Tandy Corporation, **Dr. Michael Ralston** - Dallas Public Schools, **Cynthia Reed** - Intel, **Dr. Larry Reed** - Navarro College, **Clint Rio** - Dallas Public Schools, - **Jean Wright** - DeVry Institute of Technology

Business write in responses: John P. Davis - Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., **Michelle D. Burk** - The Business Press, **John Pena** - TU Electric

Phase II ~ Student, Secondary Education, Post Secondary Education, Parent Focus Groups

Group I ~ Mineral Wells and Weatherford ISD Students ~ Hosted by Weatherford ISD: David Barfield – Weatherford HS, **Linda Crass** – MWISD, Laura Chrestman – Weatherford HS, **Courtney Clark** – Weatherford HS, **Kelly Fears** – Mineral Wells HS, **Jack Fulwood** – Weatherford HS, **Earon Gatlin** – Mineral Wells HS, **Ashley Glover** – Mineral Wells HS, **Rivers Gray** – Mineral Wells HS, **Laura Hanna** – Weatherford HS, **Paul Harrison** – Mineral Wells HS, **Brandy Lawson** – Mineral Wells HS, **Kim Ortiz** – MWISD, **Christian Owen** – Mineral Wells HS, **Mickey Peters** – Weatherford HS, **Erik Pierce** – Mineral Wells HS, **Kim Safford** – Weatherford HS, **Dustin Smith** – Mineral Wells HS, **Jody Smothermon** – Weatherford HS, **Joey Willis** – Weatherford HS, **Laci Woodruff** – Weatherford HS

Group 2 ~ Irving ISD Students ~ Hosted by Irving ISD and the Irving Arts Center: Uchenna Agbim – Mac Arthur HS, **Brent Black** – Nimitz HS, **Jose’ Contreras** – Irving HS, **Renetta Gavard** – Union Bower HS, **Barnett Joanna** – Nimitz HS, **Darryl Mitchell** – Mac Arthur HS, **Bethany Nuckolls** – Nimitz HS, **Oluchi Omogah** – Irving HS, **Jackie Peavler** – Irving HS, **Rudy Silva** – Mac Arthur HS, **Evan Sterner** – Union Bower HS, **William Terry** – Nimitz HS

Group 3 ~ InterLink Parents, Grandparents, Educators: Linda Anderson – Birdville ISD, **Donna Barlow** – CEF, **Sherry Boles** – Weatherford ISD, **Melissa Cook** – Greater Dallas Chamber, **Max Davis** – Raytheon, Inc., **Carl Hecht** – North Texas Commission, **NaTosha Hooks** – WorkSorce~Dallas County, **Bob Hughs** – TD Industries, **Jay F. Hundley** – J.C. Penny Co., **Dr. Judy Knight** – Garland ISD, **Karen**

Krumme – Irving ISD, **Tasa Lefler** – Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, **Dave Mah** – Texas Instruments, **Ross E. Martinez, Jr.** – Federal Highway Administration, **Tom Morton** – North Lake College, **Kathy O’Day** – GTE Service Corporation, **Don Perry** – Dallas County Community College District, **Dr. Arturo Salazar** – Dallas Public School, **Dr. Lynda Szydlak** – Region XI ESC, **Mary Lou Wiggins** – Arlington ISD, **Dr. Ken Wylie** – Navarro College

Group 4 ~ Plano ISD Students: Todd Belute – Plano SHS, **John Benner** – Plano SHS, **Ron Bob** – Plano SHS, **Jed Butler** – Plano SHS, **Chris** – Plano SHS, **James Collins** – Plano SHS, **Raquel De La Fuente** – Plano SHS, **Aemir Efteknasi** – Plano SHS, **Alan Ervin** – Plano SHS, **John Fenn** – Plano SHS, **Ivan Ffial** – Plano SHS, **Jeff Forester** – Plano SHS, **Pablo Gonzales** – Plano SHS, **Cere Hammond** – Plano SHS, **Chris Holman** – Plano SHS, **Stefany Hunter** – Plano SHS, **JSW2** – Plano SHS, **Nicholas Lipscomb** – Plano SHS, **Tellina Liu** – Plano SHS, **Angie Mahar** – Plano SHS, **Mike** – Plano SHS, **Breh Montique** – Plano SHS, **Blake Patterson** – Plano SHS, **Mallika Pika** – Plano SHS, **Stacey Potter** – Plano SHS, **Carlos Quirarte** – Plano SHS, **Stuart Reed** – Plano SHS, **Matt Reuber** – Plano SHS, **Mehul Shah** – Plano SHS, **Jason Sherard** – Plano SHS, **Chris Sutton** – Plano SHS, **Brooke Talbert** – Plano SHS, **Aaron Tredway** – Plano SHS, **Asuka Ueda** – Plano SHS, **Jeff Vinson** – Plano SHS, **David Worrell** – Plano SHS

Group 5 ~ North Central Texas Tech Prep, Parents and Educators ~ Hosted by Tarrant County College: Craig Benedict – DeSoto ISD, **Patsy Caropresi** – Eastfield College, **Chris C. Christopher** – Irving ISD, **John Key** – Palmer ISD, **Charlie Magill** – Dallas ISD, **Patti McGlohen** – Dallas County Community College District, **Jerry Stanley** – Weatherford, **Azil L. Tipps** – Windham TDCJ, **W.J. Winter** – WorkSource for Dallas County

Group 6 ~ ISD Parents ~ Hosted by Birdville ISD: Cindy Baren, Susan Barajas Beth Bernquist, Gary Bruner, Melody Bustillos, Lisa Green, Kathy Handler, Vicki Kays, Clara Kucker, Jane Preston, Paula Seher, Donna Wattenbarger, Anda Williams,

Group 7 ~ Region 10 Education Service Center: Barbara Biebuyck – Dallas ISD, **Phyllis Eshbaugh** – Mesquite ISD, **Donald B. Garrett** – Terrell ISD, **Phil Gilbreath** – Garland ISD, **Judy S. Knight** – Garland ISD, **Jonna McCarty** – Dallas ISD, **Dolores McClatchey** – Midlothian ISD, **Rick McMichael** – Waxahachie ISD, **Gayle Millican** – Garland ISD, **Donna Murray** – Dallas ISD, **Judy Rollins** – Mesquite ISD, **Art Salazar** - Dallas ISD, **Polly Schlosser**- Garland ISD, **Melinda Smith** – ESC Region 10, **Gary L. Ustler** – Pottsboro ISD, **Karen Wiggins** – Richardson ISD,

Group 8 ~ Region 10 Education Service Center: Ann Anderson - Duncanville ISD, **Tricia Cannon** – Plano ISD, **Yvonne Davis** – Mesquite ISD, **Nancy Edwards** - Ferris ISD, **Kay Gozberk** – Plano ISD, **Margaret Green** - Mesquite ISD, **Connie Layman** – Celina ISD, **Kathi Long** – Mesquite ISD, **Tina Schultz** – Terrell ISD, **Ron-Marie Walker** – Coppell ISD, **Robert N. Wiegel** – Garland ISD, **Jackie Winton** – Terrell ISD, **Dave Wylie** – MGEC,

Group 9 ~ Region XI Education Service Center: Jennifer Giddings Brooks – Fort Worth ISD, **Donnie Cody** – Rio Vista ISD, **Cheryl Dunkley** – Keene ISD, **Connie Forbes** – Parker County Co-op, **Cassie Gordon** – Fort Worth ISD, **Vicki Lawson** – North Central Texas Workforce, **Dale Miller** – Lewisville ISD, **Sherri Nowell** – Arlington ISD, **Dr. Bethany Quinn** – Fort Worth ISD, **Camilla Reid** – Fort Worth ISD, **Claudia Roberts** – Fort Worth ISD, **Jeanene Russell** – Crowley ISD, **Bill Thetford** – Bridgeport ISD

Group 10 ~ Region XI Education Service Center: Hope Currin - Birdville ISD (Haltom High School), **Donna Harkey** - Birdville ISD, **Rebecca Palmer** - Grapevine Colleyville ISD, **Ann Redfearn** - Aubrey ISD, **Judy Stanley** - Grapevine Colleyville ISD, **Vicki Wise** - Grapevine Colleyville ISD,

Group 11 ~ Alliance of Higher Education: Jean Anderson – Weatherford College, **Arleen Atkins** – Weatherford College, **Johnnie Bellamy**- DCCCD Eastfield, **Edwin Bell** – Tarrant County College, **Patsy Capriosi** - DCCCD Eastfield, **Kay Eggleston** – DCCCD Richland College, **Barbara Eubanks** – CCCC, **Lum Farr**– Weatherford College, **Sondra Flemming** – DCCCD El Centro College, **Susan Hackett** – AHE, **Curtis Hill** – DCCCD, **Janet Jaworski** – CCCC, **Brent Kesterson** – DCCCD Richland, **Sheila Kinhead** – Weatherford College **Lyndon McClure**- DCCCD, **Tom Morton** - DCCCD Northlake, **Lillie Palmer** – CCCC, **Rex Parcels** – CCCC, **Don Perry** - DCCCD **Helen Reid** - Trinity Valley Community College, **DeLisa Reed** – Tarrant County College, **John Roderick** – CCCC, **Tommy Stringer** - Navarro College, **Ben E. Taylor** – DCCCD Cedar Valley, **Luis Valle** – Tarrant County College, **Troy Vaughn** – Tarrant County College, Unknown - 1

Group 12 ~ Career and Technology Educators of North Texas: Linda Anderson - Birdville ISD, **Paul E. Beeler** - Carrollton Farmers Branch ISD, **Craig Benedict** - DeSoto ISD, **Judy Christopher** - Irving ISD, **Geneva Day** – Mineral Wells ISD, **Ed Foster** - Birdville ISD, **Nancy Kirkland** – Richland HS, **Judy Knight** - Garland ISD, **Mary Park** - Commerce ISD, **Jim Pressly** - Duncanville ISD, **Arturo Salazar**, **Dallas ISD**, **Marvin Stewart** - **Garner ISD**, **Nita Wyatt** – Birdville ISD, Unknown – 4

Group 13 ~ Secondary Educators: Dr. Ray Crass – Mineral Wells ISD, **Linda Crass** – Mineral Wells ISD, **Leanette Davies** – Lone Oak ISD, **Vickie-Lynn Kennerk** – McKinney ISD, **Vicki Lindsey** – Joshua ISD, **Jewel Lockridge** – Corsicana ISD, **Tony Neely** – Northwest ISD

Executive Summary ~ North Central Texas Focus Group Project Final Report

Purpose: *To establish a link between the relevancy of the skills and knowledge that business and industry need, with what is being taught and learned so that students graduating from secondary and post-secondary schools understand their occupational opportunities and are prepared to enter high skill jobs.*

Background

Texas led the nation in total employment growth for the last five years with the addition of 1,372,900 new non-farm jobs, 32% of which were created in North Central Texas during 1998. The strongest regional economy in this decade is challenging Metroplex employers to find enough skilled workers.

In response to this need, North Central Texas InterLink, Inc. and the North Texas Commission started a Workforce Development Task Force, which formed a partnership with other regional organizations to find solutions to the workforce challenges we face. Phase I of the project was conducted through business sessions during the fall and winter of 1998. The partnership under the leadership of InterLink and the North Texas Commission held employer focus groups around the region in which approximately one hundred business representatives participated.

Phase II, the student, educator and parent sessions took place throughout the spring and summer of 1999. InterLink conducted focus groups with over two hundred educators, parents and students to determine their needs and suggestions regarding educational preparation for the future of our young people.

This final report provides information that will be useful to those organizations working on the workforce challenges in our region. The "Focus Group Final Report" presents aggregate results of responses given by participants. Broad categories were identified and responses were grouped in accordance to the rank order in which they were answered.

Phase I ~ Business Focus Groups:

Six questions were determined by the task force to determine the needs of businesses and industries in the way of a workforce, which is functional in current and future jobs. Questions one through three were intended to define the skills and preparation needed for the jobs of today and the next five years. The last three questions allowed participants to provide information that could result in solutions to the challenges with the preparedness of the workforce; identify what resources will be needed; and suggestions of who should do what to accomplish the objectives.

1. If you were back in high school, what skills would you insist on learning to prepare you for your present career?
2. How will your company be different in 5 years from what it is now?
3. What new skills will you require of your workers five years in the future?
4. What do you want to see happen in schools today to get people ready for your place of employment?
5. If you could start an occupational education program of your own, what courses, skills, training, would you set up?
6. What other suggestions do you have for the improvement of the workforce?

Phase I ~ Business Trend Summary:

Business focus group participants identified two major challenges facing the North Central Texas workforce. The first was the immediate need to respond to the critical shortage of skilled workers for current jobs. The second was long-term skill and knowledge preparation of the workforce to meet the changing and evolving workplace. There is an urgency to find solutions to these issues to continue the strong economy of the Metroplex. It was recognized and encouraged that business and education should address these challenges in partnership.

In aggregating the responses to the six questions asked of business, the following trends emerged:

Business Operations

Companies will be more globally competitive and profit minded than ever before. The flattening of organizations will continue as a way to control the bottom line. There will be more outsourcing for goods and services, which will create more small businesses and entrepreneurs. Workers will change careers several times in their working lives and they will need to take responsibility for their own career preparation and growth.

Worker Expectations

A dichotomy exists in the workplace today. Employers have higher expectations of workers, and are making more demands of them than in the past; however, younger workers entering the workforce view jobs differently than other generations. They want more flexibility with work schedules, immediate feedback, and greater satisfaction. Less loyalty will occur between employee and employer.

Changing Workplace

Changes in the way we work are just beginning. Technology will allow workers to be more productive, while at the same time making continuous learning imperative. Computers will continue to impact the way work is performed. Large corporations will use skilled, self-directed work teams to become more competitive. Work may be performed from different locations than the job site, from homes, virtual offices - even globally. The Internet, satellites, and robotics will continue to evolve the way work is performed.

Higher Skills and Standards

There is a blurring of the skill levels needed for future workers. Mid-level skills are disappearing as higher levels of skills for all work increases. Even jobs that might have once been considered menial labor, now require higher levels of reading and understanding, interpersonal and computer skills. Businesses will need to find ways to invest in human capital as lower skilled workers are hired into the workplace and trained. Elevated expectations of workers will become the norm. Higher standards and the expectation for all students to be successful in school will put more pressure on the educational system to find ways to help all students be learners.

Changing Education Needs

Each focus group was adamant that students should have mastery of basic reading, writing and math at grade level. Computer literacy was also considered to be a basic knowledge that should be mastered by all students. Communication skills will be very important. Teamwork and interpersonal skills (especially working with diversity) will be highly regarded by employers, as will the ability to work independently. The educational level of workers is changing. More jobs are requiring more than a high school degree but less than four years of college. The two-year associate degree is considered a respectable way to prepare for many of the technical-level jobs. Life long learning will be required for all workers. It will not be unusual for workers to have multiple degrees and many certifications in order to keep up with changes caused by technology. All curriculums should show relevance of what is being taught to how it is practically applied.

Business ~ Education Partnerships

Business recognizes that they must actively participate in the education process as partners and role models, to meet the demands of the changing environment. Business partnerships should focus teachers and students understanding the relevance of what is being taught at school with how it is used in life.

Regional Diversity

As business becomes more global, there is a need for workers to become bilingual. Because the most commonly used international language is English, there was no consensus on which foreign languages would be necessary to learn for international business. However, Texas is becoming a majority-minority state, and its citizens need to be bilingual and culturally sensitive. There is a growing need and current shortage for Spanish speaking workers and educators in Texas.

Phase II ~ Students, Secondary Education, Post Secondary Education, Parents Focus Groups:

Five questions were asked during the focus group sessions with twelve written questions completed at the end of each session. The first six questions were developed to capture suggestions on how to successfully prepare students for the future. Questions seven through thirteen looked at teaching and learning strategies and success, and questions fourteen through seventeen explored technology and education.

1. What personal and technical skills do students need to learn to be successful in the workplace?
2. What do students need to learn to prepare them to manage their adult life?
3. What do you expect from education in the way of courses, skills and training to prepare young people for a successful future?
4. If you had limited funds, which programs would you insist upon having?
5. What other suggestions do you have for successfully preparing students for the future?
6. What are effective methods of informing students of the relationship between their secondary courses and their future success in life?
7. Should schools provide students with a career focus? (Yes/No)
8. Disregarding the grades achieved, what percentage of students do you believe will have the skills to be successful going on to work or higher education upon graduation? (20%/40%/60%/80%/100%)
9. Should schools prepare students in academic courses only? (Yes/No)
10. What is your perception of Career and Technology Education?
11. What do you wish you had learned in high school?
12. Do you think students enrolled in Career and Technology Education are for the most part college bound? (Yes/No)
13. What methods of instruction do you consider to be the most effective? (i.e. lecture, hands on, teaming, etc.)
14. Do you think students learn better with other students in the classroom?
15. What is your reaction to the option of offering specific courses to secondary students via an electronic media from home (or wherever)?
16. Do you know what SCANS is? (Scholastic Aptitudes/Skills and Knowledge)
17. Do you have a computer(s) in your home?

Phase II Summary:

Overwhelmingly, the participants in each focus group category were in consensus in their responses to almost all questions. They were unanimous in the belief that students should be challenged to be successful in school and encouraged to take higher level courses. The need to engage students in the learning process was an issue with all groups. There was agreement with the business focus group sessions of the skill needs for employment in the workplace, and Career and Technology Education was considered an important way to prepare students for the future. Methods to improve the teaching and learning process were identified with the need to have elevated expectations for student success. While parents and educators believed they had for the most part received adequate education to prepare them for their future, students generally expressed the desire to have taken more challenging courses. The majority of respondents have computers in their homes, and the idea of distance learning at the secondary level was mediocre.

Skills Necessary to the Workplace: Participants agreed that mastery in basic reading, writing math, communications, and computers are requisites for the current workplace. Most thought that higher level math, and sciences are necessary for the future.

Preparation for Teaching and Learning: All groups indicated the need to offer students courses in life skills (which should be offered at different times during the life of education) to help them succeed in school as well as to prepare them for the future. Curriculum should include problem solving, how to learn, study and take tests; where to go for information (resources and research); time management, conflict resolution, and other methods to help students ease into the learning process.

Students consistently mentioned the desire to slow down the learning process. They stated the need for more time to learn in the classroom. They felt rushed, and were concerned that there was little time for meaningful interaction with instructors, which would help them learn.

Teaching educators to engage students in the learning process was determined to be imperative. Relating to student learning styles, and teaching applied or contextual learning were identified as two ways to help students succeed. Students expressed that educators should be masters of their content. Teachers and students expressed the need to relate curricula and activities to their application in the real world.

Heightened Expectations: Students and educators indicated that expectations for student success was often low. Schools allow students multiple opportunities to hand in assignments and take tests. This wastes students and teachers time, and sends a message of tolerance that doesn't exist in the world beyond school, setting students up for failure. It was suggested that the education system should become less tolerant of delayed success and more demanding of excellence from all students. Students were especially eager to be challenged and held accountable.

Importance of Career and Technology Education: All groups identified Career and Technology Education as an effective way of preparing students with the skills to prepare for the workforce. Career and Technology Education was described to be most effective when the integration of academics and vocational are applied. It was also determined to be under appreciated and in need of marketing at state and local levels

Phase II Focus Group session results follow the results of Phase I in the next few pages.

Phase I ~ Business Session Results

1. If you were back in high school what skills would you insist on learning to prepare you for your present career?

“Every student should graduate with mastery of basic reading, writing and math. There is a blurring of lines between job skill levels with mid- skill level jobs disappearing. Traditionally low skill jobs are now requiring mastery of the basics.”

I. Communication Skills

• **Speaking**

- ✓ Public presentations
- ✓ Communicating/managing people
- ✓ Presence – focusing on topic and audience
- ✓ Telephone etiquette

• **Writing**

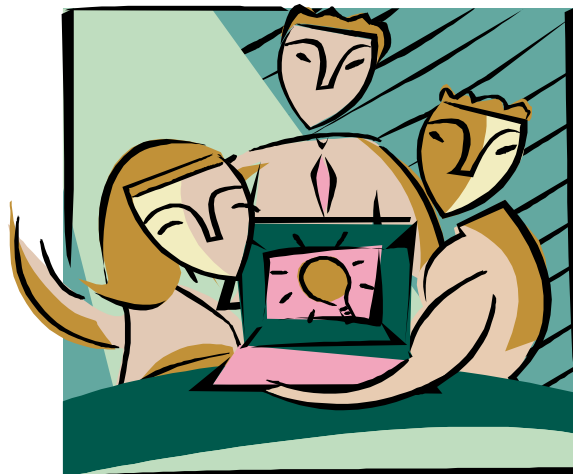
- ✓ Writing – clear and concise
- ✓ Spelling without spell check
- ✓ Grammar

• **Listening**

- ✓ Listening for understanding
- ✓ Discriminatory listening
- ✓ Questioning - probing
- ✓ Interviewing

• **Interactive**

- ✓ Being comfortable with people
- ✓ Understanding and working with differing points of view
- ✓ Shaking hands
- ✓ Responding to others needs
- ✓ Personal appearance
- ✓ Conflict management
- ✓ Influencing others
- ✓ Negotiating
- ✓ Networking



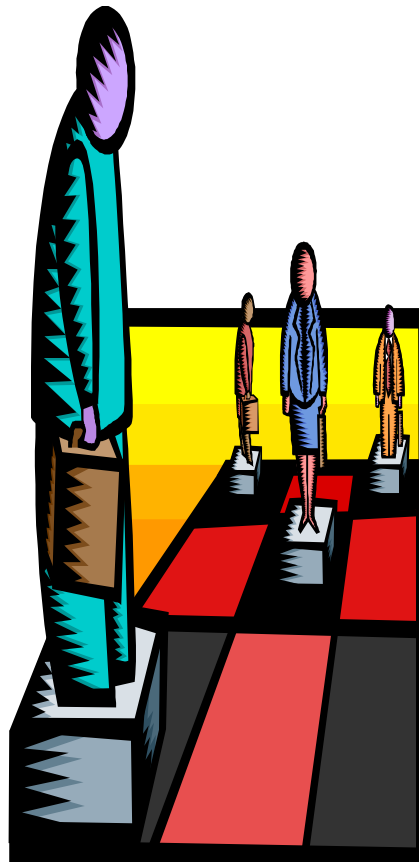
If you were back in high school what skills would you insist on learning to prepare you for your present career?

II. Cultural Skills

- **Business**
 - ✓ How and why they operate
 - ✓ Business/education partnerships
 - ✓ Change perception of construction and other trades jobs
 - ✓ Awareness of non-traditional jobs

- **Social**
 - ✓ Cultural awareness
 - ✓ Diversity awareness
 - ✓ Citizenship skills
 - ✓ Empathy – understanding and caring about others problems
 - ✓ Working cooperatively
 - ✓ Sense of common cultures

- **Language**
 - ✓ Foreign Language
 - ✓ Spanish and Chinese
 - ✓ Basic language skills
 - ✓ Putting thoughts into writing



If you were back in high school what skills would you insist on learning to prepare you for your present career?

III. Technical Skills

• **Specific Technical Skills**

- ✓ Technology - systems, applications, operations, and its value
- ✓ Computer literacy, keyboarding, and software skills
- ✓ Personal money management
- ✓ Business financials/accounting
- ✓ Long term planning
- ✓ Adaptability to change
- ✓ Resume writing
- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ Managing information and data
- ✓ Problem solving and process management
- ✓ Decision making and application
- ✓ Time management



• **Basic Technical Skills**

- ✓ Application of what is being taught to how it is used
 - ✓ Math (including Algebra)
 - ✓ Reading with comprehension
 - ✓ Writing - including grammar and punctuation
 - ✓ Science
 - ✓ Social studies
 - ✓ Technology - computer applications
 - ✓ Problem solving
 - ✓ Critical thinking
 - ✓ Life long learning
 - ✓ How to learn/study
 - ✓ Test taking

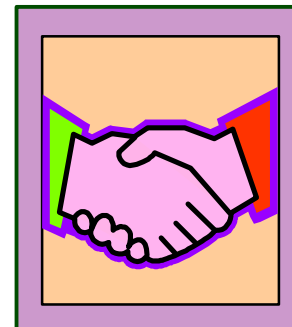


- ✓ Skill learning value in extra curricular activities such as: Academic Decathlon - Choir – Drama – Sports – Ballroom dancing

If you were back in high school what skills would you insist on learning to prepare you for your present career?

IV. Industry/Education Linkage to Develop Skills

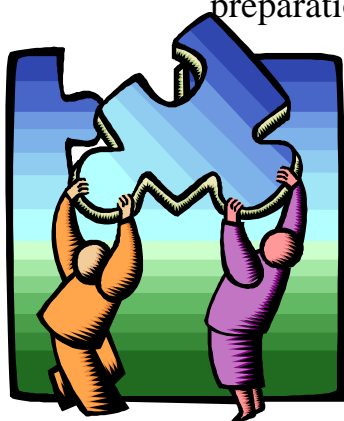
- ✓ Need for business/education partnerships for teacher and student mentoring and internships, employee recruitment, public relations and communications, and finding solutions to challenges
- ✓ Awareness of what is taught with what is needed in the workplace
- ✓ Early career path counseling
- ✓ Need for on the job training and future training
- ✓ Accelerated pace of business needs to be applied to education
- ✓ Learn what is needed before worrying about the dollars
- ✓ Security of having a plan
- ✓ Restructuring teaching to what is needed rather than TAAS



V. Social Skills

• Personal Social Skills

- ✓ Personal responsibility – self-control - long-range patience –accountability - values - preparation for work –accountability - attitude –self-confidence – knowing personality strengths – knowing learning styles
- ✓ Creative independence – survival skills – lessons learned
 - ✓ Parent involvement – home reinforcement
 - ✓ Balancing home and family
 - ✓ Leadership
 - ✓ Flexibility to change
 - ✓ Work ethics – being on time – showing up
- Goal setting - career planning and exploration, job seeking skills
- ✓ Value education and knowledge – attitudes – relevance
 - ✓ Interaction with others
 - ✓ Economic value of volunteerism



• Group Social Skills

- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Social skills – social interaction – getting along with others – relationships and respect for others - social etiquette - life and team skills
- ✓ Listen and tolerate differing points of view
- ✓ Ability to master change
- ✓ Dynamics and process
- ✓ How to research
- ✓ Organization
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Understand that some things are not negotiable
- ✓ Global knowledge
- ✓ Employee/employer relationships
- ✓ Risk taking
- ✓ Understanding deadlines



2. How will your company be different in 5 years from what it is now?

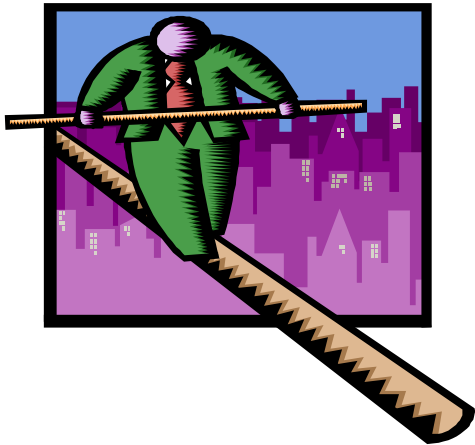
“Technology, rapid change, and global competition is changing the face of the workforce faster than any other time in the nation’s history ~ and this change is just beginning.”

I. Business

- ✓ More unstable – continuous change - change is just beginning
- ✓ Continued mergers - more company growth with fewer employees
- ✓ More global businesses and competition – US companies with global regional offices
- ✓ More technical communication – computers – Internet – video conferencing – satellites – Global Positioning Systems
- ✓ Many jobs will become obsolete – fewer middle skill jobs
- ✓ More outsourcing – consultants - contracting – free agents – whole departments will close – virtual offices
- ✓ More small businesses
- ✓ Flatter organizations with less hierarchy
- ✓ More telecommuting - offices in homes – physical work can occur in one place while intellectual work is done in another
- ✓ More customer focused
- ✓ Need for continuous training as technology changes
- ✓ Evolving business culture – flexible hours - more “family friendly” – better quality of life – wellness programs – child care – casual wear – private sector involvement with communities, schools, etc. -
- ✓ Workers will change jobs more often
- ✓ Less employee loyalty
- ✓ More automated - paperless
- ✓ More use of robotics and intelligent vehicles
- ✓ Continued need workers to perform basic tasks such as hotels, restaurants ground keeping, custodial, etc.
- ✓ Companies will “grow their own” employees



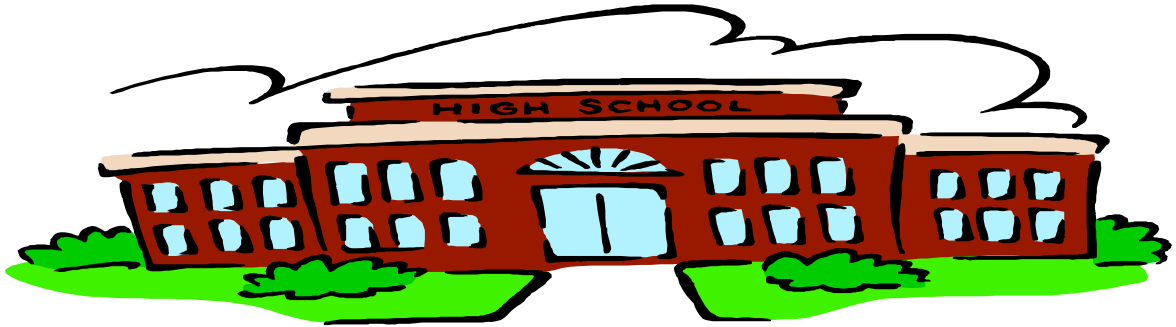
How will your company be different in 5 years from what it is now?



II. Employee

- ✓ Just-in-time workforce – contract workers – independent contractors – temporary – part-time
- ✓ More accountability
- ✓ More women in non-traditional jobs
- ✓ More diverse – Texas is becoming a majority/minority state – more women owned businesses – younger - multilingual
- ✓ Demand for Spanish speakers
- ✓ Greater demand for workers: will necessitate the need to hire lower skilled people and train them - may need to import foreign workers for
- ✓ high skill jobs
- ✓ More working in teams
- ✓ Good employees will drive the system and expect to be rewarded
- ✓ More individual responsibility for own health care
- ✓ Quality of life issues will be more important – flexibility
- ✓ Employees will be more interested in building careers than company loyalty
- ✓ Employees will want rewards, satisfaction, gratification, and immediate feedback
- ✓ Less loyalty to company
- ✓ Continuous training/learning

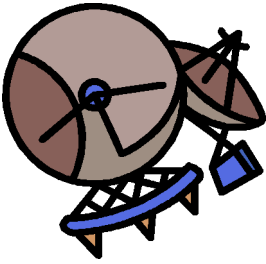
How will your company be different in 5 years from what it is now?



III. Education

- ✓ Life long learning
- ✓ Greater demand for schools to prepare students for the workplace
- ✓ Requirement of business/education partnerships through internships to exhibit skills to students/teachers
- ✓ Demand for integrated curriculum – application of knowledge
- ✓ Graduates with 4-year degrees are returning to community colleges to get skills industry needs
- ✓ Business hiring on skills rather than degree
- ✓ Need students to take more demanding courses – “Advanced Placement”
- ✓ More school accountability – student statistics gathered
- ✓ Education on demand, anytime/anywhere - distance learning – telelearning – Internet -
- ✓ Less instructor tenure
- ✓ Business support for employees to have different education choices – 4-year degree is not most necessary. Community colleges as honorable choices. Multiple degrees and certifications
- ✓ More education experimentation – vouchers – charter schools – Tech Prep – school-to-career
- ✓ High school diploma could become skill reports
- ✓ Higher degrees for higher levels of career paths
- ✓ Technology will deliver education differently and more conveniently – virtual learning

How will your company be different in 5 years from what it is now?



IV. Technology

- ✓ On-line services will drive industry into the new millenium - more use of the Internet
- ✓ Computers will increase productivity
- ✓ Transfer of information is as important as shipping packages
- ✓ Increase in technical knowledge
- ✓ More automation – robotics
- ✓ Greater use of composite technology
- ✓ New jobs will emerge from technology



V. Customer

- ✓ Greater customer expectations – more information and results from people not technology
- ✓ More customer service oriented
- ✓ Teams will align themselves to meet customer needs
- ✓ Better able to relate to broad spectrum of needs, problem recognition and solving ability
- ✓ Easier access to product for customer
- ✓ No client loyalty
- ✓ More confusion for the customer



3. What new skills will you require of your workers five years in the future?

“Workers must be more entrepreneurial and self sufficient in nature. They need to be continuous learners, and become accustomed to being agents of change.”

I. Technical Skills

- Specific Technical Skills

- ✓ Computers and on-line technology
- ✓ Communication –bilingual – presentation skills –technical speaker – proficient in non-facial dialogue through distance communication – listen/talk/interact
- ✓ Deep technical experts –understand systems - apply technology – access information
 - ✓ Shared specialties
 - ✓ Engineers will use CAD
 - ✓ Composite technology



- Basic Technical Skills

- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ Basic skills – reading – writing – math – problem solving – personal behavior
- ✓ Continuous learning/training – must be adaptable to fast changing business/work environments and systems
- ✓ Filter large amounts of information quickly
- ✓ Front line of contact employees need higher skills and education

What new skills will you require of your workers five years in the future?

II. Social Skills

Personal Social Skills

- ✓ Life long learning
- ✓ Personal responsibility - career development - updated skills – enthusiasm for work – benefits - flexible hours and work conditions
- ✓ Work more autonomously – distance working

Group Social Skills

- ✓ Skilled, self managed teams with authority to take risks
- ✓ Work independently and in teams
- ✓ More outsourcing - collaboration with other companies
- ✓ Multiple jobs/careers
- ✓ Skilled immigrant workers with strong work ethic

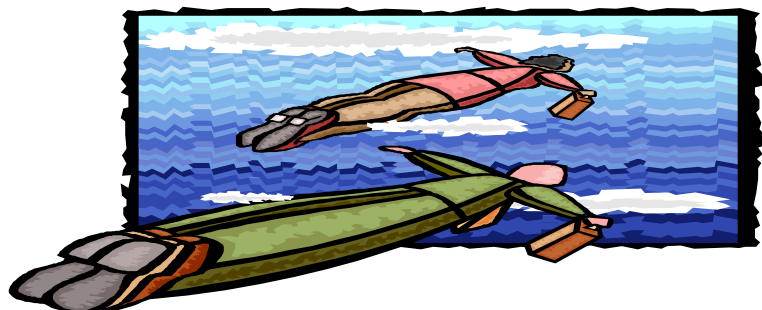


III. Cultural Business Skills

- ✓ Shortages of low wage/low skill and low wage high skill workers
- ✓ Management skills – communication - cultural diversity – rapid change agents – budgeting – negotiating - salesmanship
- ✓ Empowered employees – more responsible – more mobile

IV. Communication Skills

- ✓ Writing – clear – concise
- ✓ Interpersonal – negotiating – customer service – teaming



4. What do you want to see happen in schools today to get people ready for your place of employment?

“Just as business is required to re-engineer due to the fast pace of technology and the changing workforce, so too must education change to meet to the demands of the changing environment.”

I. General Skills

- ✓ Skills – math – English – reading comprehension – financial responsibility – economics - creative thinking - problem solving – adaptability and creativeness -
- ✓ Application of skills and knowledge – how courses relate – relationship to work – career and academic teacher teaming
- ✓ More career preparation programs
- ✓ Schools prepare students with skills to enter the workplace - certifications
- ✓ Students introduced to career choices for better-informed decision making – at all levels
- ✓ More emphasis on learning and less on teaching
- ✓ Student apprenticeships and internships
- ✓ Student service learning to teach diversity and application of TAAS
- ✓ Alternative teacher certification – earlier student teacher interaction
- ✓ Business/education partnerships – experimental learning



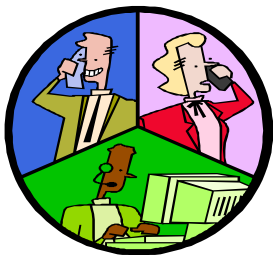
II. Changing Student Perceptions

- ✓ High expectations of student success transfers to understanding the value of work
 - ✓ All students must master the basics of reading, writing and math
 - ✓ Change attitudes that all students need to go to four year colleges
 - ✓ Life long learning is required of everyone
 - ✓ Classroom subject matter should relate back to jobs
- ✓ Introduce students to careers through internships, co-op, tech-prep, business partnerships, and special life-skill programs
 - ✓ Teach students to give back to the community through service learning
 - ✓ Students should be well rounded with diverse interests
 - ✓ Engage students in new ways to make learning interesting
 - ✓ Teach students that loyalties have changed – there is no “job for life”

What do you want to see happen in schools today to get people ready for your place of employment?

III. Business and Community

- ✓ Business and education should converse about what is needed in the workplace and review process on an annual basis
- ✓ Change the mind set that students need a 4-year education when a 2-year or in-between is what will be most needed
- ✓ Many 2-year college degree jobs pay more than 4-year degree jobs
- ✓ Businesses should offer internships to help students with college and career decisions
- ✓ Award education requirements – hours in alternative ways such as continuing education hours for serving in business
- ✓ If students have basic skills and a willingness to work, industry will train in specifics
- ✓ The population that is not college bound should be targeted for good paying jobs that do not have college degree requirements
- ✓ Parents should be convinced that students need to explore jobs – not just 4 years of college or companies will stay in the Metroplex
- ✓ Look at the structure of how business schedules parent employee participation with schools and become more flexible for parent involvement
- ✓ Corporations should offer training programs to employees, spouses and their children



IV. Statements and Perceptions

- **Education**
 - ✓ Education should be delivered differently – restructured school hours – concentrated subject time – intensive programs –
 - ✓ Educators should be more of the decision making process for change
 - ✓ Respect career and technology education
 - ✓ Hire strong principals in schools – excellent principals produce better students
 - ✓ Less school emphasis on extra curricular activities and more on academics
 - ✓ Less restriction on public schools to be able to compete with private schools
 - ✓ Pay teachers and counselors what they would make in the private sector
 - ✓ Teacher training at universities and colleges must better prepare teachers for the classroom
 - ✓ Teachers must be computer literate
 - ✓ Re-tool educators to go from teaching lecture to facilitation of learning
 - ✓ Schools offer computer and language courses to parents after school/evenings
 - ✓ TAAS is a necessary evil and results will make school districts more competitive

- **Students**

- ✓ Students must learn while in school so that business does not have to remediate
- ✓ Support the Governor's goal that every student read at grade level by 5th grade
 - ✓ Many college students are hired into business through internships

-

- **Business**

- ✓ Change the perception of certain jobs that all work is honorable, and many high skill labor intensive jobs pay very well
- ✓ Well rounded workers with outside interests/hobbies/activities make happier workers
- ✓ Business is different today, many employees in technical jobs have long hair, work weird hours, and make lots of money
- ✓ Business could focus more on college seniors and graduates of career and technical program for entry level workers
- ✓ 70% of the new jobs will be with small companies who don't have training resources and students will need skills to work in these companies

V. Social Skills

- ✓ We are all accountable for our own actions
 - ✓ How to differentiate between realistic and unrealistic expectations
- ✓ Relate expectation of not doing a job right to real life examples– if pilots and bankers were only accurate 90% of the time
 - ✓ Soft skills are taught by modeling at a young age

VI. Cultural

- ✓ Texas is becoming a majority minority State, and we need positive role models for everyone
 - ✓ The need for a bilingual society



5. If you could start an occupational education program of your own, what courses, skills, training, etc. would you set up first? Second?

“Teach students how to learn and study. All students should graduate with mastery of the basics – reading, writing, math, and computer literacy. Teach the relevance of what the students are learning and how it applies to real situations ~ then they will understand. Business should partner with education to open the world of work to teachers and students”

I. Social and Personal Skills

- √ Basics – reading-writing-math -language arts – diagramming – computer (keyboarding) - speaking
 - √ Communication
- √ Interpersonal skills – relationship skills – courtesy – timeliness – attendance – enthusiasm – teaming- attitude – patience – ethics – responsibility – customer service
 - √ How to learn – personality typing – discovery process of learning
- √ Confidence building skills – working through problems – responsibility – follow through – personal responsibility
 - √ Risk taking and creativity – it’s okay to fail
 - √ Computer skills
- √ Money management – interest rates – credit card debt - credit reports – check books
 - √ Applied learning
- √ Foreign languages – Spanish
 - √ Speech and presentations
 - √ Professional writing
 - √

II. Business/Education Partnerships

- √ Partnerships between businesses, schools, teachers and students – rotation through business/jobs – shadowing – mentorships
- √ Flexibility to explore different companies and careers to understand relevancy of what is taught
- √ Build a complex at a business to teach occupational education at high school and community college district levels. Feed one program into another.
- √ Relate careers to what is being taught
- √ Offer more co-op programs – get CEO buy-in from beginning
- √ Business involved in curriculum reform and refinement - teaching



- √ Community College credit for students studying at the place of work
- √ On-the-job training for all career education students
- √ Value teachers and education – performance based pay
- √ Curriculum should include how industry/business relates to the world ~ what makes up the economy
- √ Respect all professions – all work is honorable

III. Career Guidance

- √ Counselors solely dedicated to students
- √ Not all students are college bound - many good jobs do not require a 4 year college degree
- √ Develop a student career plan –values - likes - aptitude and skills – research options – follow through
- √ Do not allow students to graduate without marketable skills
 - √ Change the perception of vocational careers
 - √ Mentors for students
 - √ Success comes from doing what we like and know well
 - √ It is okay to fail – successful people persevere
 - √ Encourage volunteerism



I. Social Skills

- √ Involvement in community ✓Team work ✓Customer service
- √ Basic preparation on self sufficiency – appearance – being on time
- √ Employability skills ✓Awareness of safety ✓ Awareness of safety
- √ Behavior courses – motivation – pride of ownership – responsibility – coping with anger – avoiding depression
- √ Welfare to work initiatives – life training skills – child care – transportation – internal and external customer relations – proper dress
- √ Awareness of environment ✓Current events – local and global

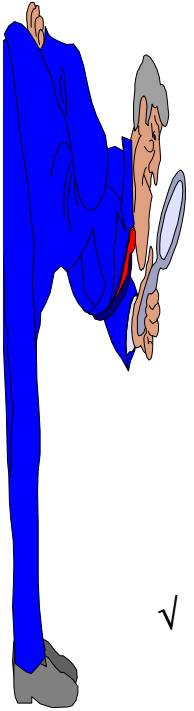
II. Technical Skills

- √ Computer – electronics – Internet ✓More career and technical programs
- √ Keyboarding ✓Tool and materials handling
- √ Rapid change requires changes in the process of learning – how things work – evaluation



6. What other suggestions do you have for the improvement of the workforce?

“Bring us people with mastery of the basics, and industry will train them with the specific skills for the workplace”



I. Higher Standards

- √ Raise expectations for more students to take higher level courses, Advanced Placement Courses
 - √ Strive to meet all responsibilities – home –school - job – community
- √ Parenting is vitally important – some things can only be taught from early age
 - √ Society is a model
 - √ Essential elements broadcast on cable and on website
 - √ Open communication about issues affecting workers, students, etc.
 - √ Mutual understanding between employer and employee
- √ Better communication and preparation for career pathway opportunities in business
- √ Consultant to study area resources and needs and then advise and develop legislative changes
- √ Partnerships that listen to each other, concentrate on wants and needs and look at the plethora of research that has already been done and take advantage of it
 - √ Plan
- √ Give parents and students the facts about career options so they can make sound decisions
- √ Change curriculum in history, economics, etc. to be more interesting and “real-time”
 - √ Help teachers who are “burned out”
- √ Make education accessible to everyone – Internet – grocery stores and other accessible public places – flexible hours at schools – controlled costs

II. Business Cultures

- √ The current workforce also needs to be retrained to succeed in new jobs
- √ Just as there has been a shift in Health Care to “well care,” there needs to be a shift in business and education
- √ Character and ethics training to prepare students for learning and working
- √ Emergence of “multi-local” workers who work from many different places
- √ Need interpersonal skills - bulk of the workforce deals directly with the consumer. Companies have responsibilities to employees for retention

- √ Companies should change the way they view their workers to have more respect for them
- √ Politics is behind everything; employers should share levels of concern and exposure of situations with employees
- √ We need to put pride back in the workforce – everybody does contribute

V. Business and Family

- √ Acknowledge the consequence of family abuse and look at ways to deal with employee/student victims
- √ How to deal with dysfunctional families
- √ Business more “family first” oriented
- √ Employer attitudes should show employee value – create a culture – family
- √ Find a way to employ ex-offenders to keep them from becoming repeat offenders out of desperation
- √ Parent involvement in what is taught

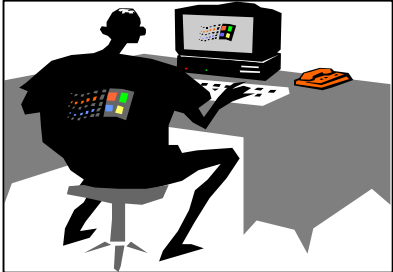


IV. Skills


- √ Focus on mastery of basics on K-3
- √ Basic Skills – reading – writing – math
 - √ Negotiation skills for win-win

Phase II. Student, Secondary Education, Post Secondary Education and Parent Sessions

What personal and technical skills do students need to learn to be successful in the work place?

Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Good Attitude: Accept reality - no fairy tales. Ethics. Responsibility. No second chances in life and in the real world	Basic Skills: Reading. Writing. Math. Communication. listening	Basic Skills: Reading. Writing. Math	Personal Qualities: Integrity. Honesty. Patience. Morals. Family values. Willingness to start at bottom. Personal hygiene. No second chances in life
Communication Skills: Verbal. Written	Social Skills: Ethics (personal and work). Honesty. Interpersonal skills. Teamwork. Responsibility (No second chances)	Social Skills: Sensitivity. Caring. Etiquette. Values. Ethics. Adapt to change	Basic Skills: Reading. Writing. Math. Computers. Communication. Interpersonal skills
Social Skills: Work with others. Teamwork. Interpersonal	Technical Skills: Computer (keyboarding and systems). Technical reading and writing	Technical Skills: Computer. Writing. High level math	Workplace Competencies: Computer skills. Money management. Time management
Technical Skills: Computer. High level math	Life Skills: How to study and learn. Where to go for information. How to ask for help. Financial information. Should be a required class	Life Skills: Problem solving. Financial management.	
Problem Solving: Organization. Money management.		Workplace/Career Skills: Ethics. Honesty. timeliness Interviewing. Team work. All work is honorable	

What personal and technical skills do students need to learn to be successful in the work place? (continued)

Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Relationships: Trust. Tolerance. Compromise. Respect self and others. Self esteem	Basic Skills: Reading. Writing. Math. Problem Solving	Life Skills: Goal setting. Social values. Wellness. Time and change management. Finances	Interpersonal Skills: Family values. compassion. Morality. Accountability
Good Education: Preparation for college and life. Computer skills. Communication skills. Teamwork	Basic Social Skills: Ethics. Values. Kindness. Tolerance	Interpersonal Skills: Communication. Cultural Diversity. Integrity. Responsibility. Self Esteem. Relationships. Perseverance	Money Management: Budgeting. Checking accounts. No debt.
Responsibility: For actions - decisions. Independence. When to step out and when to conform. Find yourself when young	Life Long Learning: Two year degree 's are respectable/valuable. Attitude for learning. Past behaviors can become habits.	Work Skills: Leadership. Teamwork. Critical thinking. Accountability	Time Management: How to study to allow time for extra's. Scheduling does not allow time for extra curricular and academics, students shouldn't have to choose
Time and Money Management: Prioritize. Set goals. Focus. No second chances in college and work. Work even when you don't feel like it. Credit cards are bad	Mentorships- Internships: Career exploration. Varied opportunities. Workplace reality. Accountability	Career Planning: Job options and opportunities. Employability skills	
Parent Mentors: Responsible parents. Sometimes school is the only safe haven for students. Teachers become parent models	Life Skills: Financial. Time management. Organization. Decision making		

What do you expect from education in the way of courses, skills and training to prepare young people for a successful future?

Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Ed.
<p><u>Curriculum and Courses:</u> More challenging classes earlier in life (math. foreign languages. reading. computer) More diverse classes. Extra curricular classes that provide exposure are being taken away. Types of jobs and what is available. What education is needed for jobs</p>	<p><u>Basics:</u> Reading. Writing. Math. Critical thinking</p>	<p><u>Career Skills:</u> Computer skills. Career paths. Career exploration</p>
<p><u>Classes Apply to Life and Work:</u> Learn how and why. Hands on training. Content courses need to focus on application. How things apply to the real world</p>	<p><u>Teaching:</u> Be skilled in relevance to workforce needs. Partnerships with students. Improve students perception and attitudes toward education</p>	<p><u>Life Long Learning Skills:</u> Study skills. Challenging courses. Foundation skills. Inquiry. classics. application & synthesis. College preparedness</p>
<p><u>Learning:</u> Slow down the pace - allow time for students to take the challenge. Too fast to be sure learning takes place. Forget deadlines. Smaller classes</p>	<p><u>Creative Teaching:</u> Relevance of curriculum to real work and life. Relevance of one course to another. Interact between courses. Teach "out of the box". Use the internet and technology. Utilize learning styles</p>	<p><u>SCANS Skills:</u> Basic reading. writing. communication. interpersonal. organizational</p>


What do you expect from education in the way of courses, skills and training to prepare young people for a successful future? (continued)

Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education
<p><u>More Time:</u> More time to really learn. Everything is set to time schedules. Not enough time to ask questions. Varied classes to challenge students who may not be the best students. Less competition for "top grades". Athletics instill competition and pride. "No pass-no play" results in taking easier courses</p>	<p><u>Life Skills Course:</u> Learning styles. Aptitude/Interest. Finances. Employability skills. Time management. Teamwork</p>	<p><u>Basic Skills:</u> Reading. Writing. Math. Communication. Computer. Critical thinking. Problem solving. Interpersonal. Honesty. Integrity. Teaming</p>
<p><u>Workplace Learning:</u> Career and Technical Education. Coop. Mentoring. Internship. "To learn about the "real" world</p>	<p><u>Integration of Academic and Career Programs:</u> Teach how academics are applied to all facets of work. Creative teaching. Flexible learning. Academies</p>	<p><u>Technology/Computer:</u> Technical preparation programs. Computer skills. Keyboarding. Application. Programming. Software. Hardware. Troubleshooting. Repair</p>
<p><u>Technology/Computers:</u> Comprehensive computer programs/labs. CAD. Email/internet. Computer for each student. Software, programming and repair</p>	<p><u>Intensive Courses:</u> Reading. Writing. Math. Science. Communication. Computer. If the basics are not learned early, students cannot be life long learners</p>	<p><u>Career Development:</u> Computer skills. Customer service. Occupational specific skills. Basic office technology</p>
<p><u>Career Exploration:</u> Start in early years. Aptitude testing. Change courses yearly. Job search skills</p>	<p><u>Career and Technical Courses:</u> Technology focused. Special unites every step of the way. Internships and workplace experiences. Industry focused to show how to use the information being taught</p>	<p><u>Change Education:</u> Consolidate courses - shorter, harder, perhaps fewer credits. Require child development course. Resource sharing between CCD/ISD/Bus. Distance learning. Better teacher certification training. Help students recognize potential. Teach to learning styles</p>

What other suggestions do you have for successfully preparing students for the future?

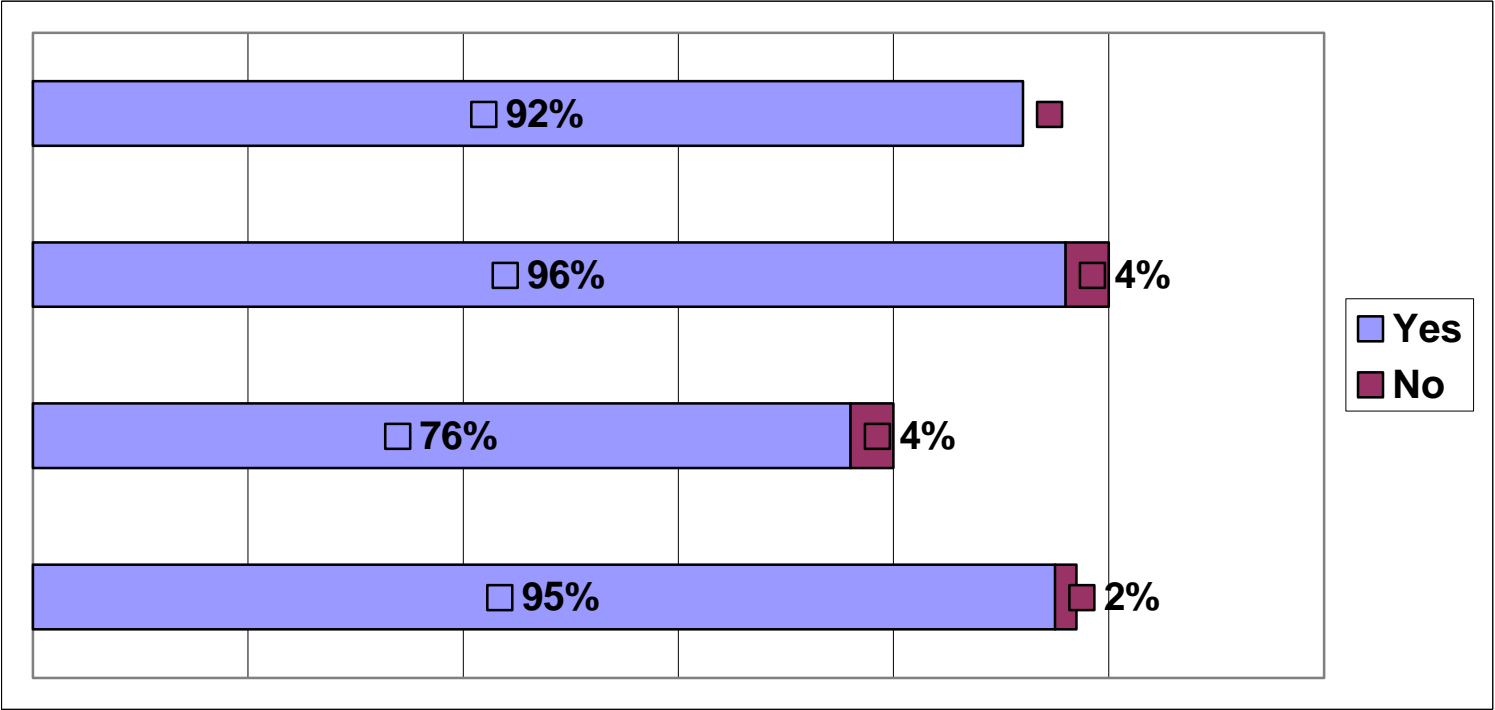
Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
<p>Preparation: Time to learn basics so the rest is easier - reading, writing, math, communication, language, computers. Teachers make sure students have knowledge, don't rush learning time</p>	<p>Invest in Teachers: Evaluate quantity versus quality - more teachers & counselors. Maximize learning by minimizing disruption. Make competitive. Require parent involvement.</p>	<p>School Changes: Maximize interactive learning, portfolio building, teamwork. Minimize multiple choice exercises and tests. Mastery at grade level. Integrate students talents, skills and interests with career paths. Create environment to encourage</p>	<p>Business Involvement: Mentoring, internships give students/teachers and counselors exposure to the relevance of education to work so that students understand what they are learning in the classroom</p>
<p>Life class: Personal skills study skills, financial management, how to learn. Exposure to life & careers. Adapt to change. How to communicate. Elevated expectations result in higher standards. Help make us succeed</p>	<p>Require teachers to be certified in classroom. Qualified substitutes. Require teachers and counselors to intern a week in business to understand the relevance of education to the workplace to inform students</p>	<p>learning. More local control. TAAS becomes barrier to continued learning. Teach creative thinking. Teach study skills. Teach until the student has learned. Slow down to accommodate learners who do not fit the "model". Make student feel that there is no shame in taking longer to learn</p>	<p>Career and Technical Education Programs: Programs should be valued by the State, they are working and should be supported. CATE should not be a dumping ground for disinterested students, interested students succeed in college and jobs</p>
<p>More Electives: They make us well rounded. Reward: Middle level student as well as Honors, they work as hard for good grades</p>	<p>Students: Focus on abilities and interests in 8th 9th grades so that students can think about varied opportunities and make appropriate plans</p>	<p>Interpersonal Skills: Work ethics, workplace communication. Self esteem. Learned family values. Appreciation for diversity. Ability to work in teams and succeed individually</p>	<p>Challenge: Students should be motivated and challenged. They should be held accountable for their work quality and assignment timelines</p>

What are effective methods of informing students of the relationship between their secondary courses and their future success in life?

Students	Secondary Ed.	Post Secondary Ed.	Parents
<p><u>Business Interaction:</u> Vocational and co-op classes. Real-life interaction with business in seminars, at work site. Classes that actually apply the material learned to a certain career field in life. Students like to know real-world applications of what they are learning</p>	<p><u>Counseling:</u> Effective guidance & counseling program. Time for students. Start guidance in middle school to give students time to plan courses that will prepare them for their interests. Stay involved with student</p>	<p><u>Business Exposure:</u> Teachers and student internships. Field trips with students and teachers. Shadowing. Summer camps to explore career fields of interest . Career days. Guest speakers. Show what is necessary for success</p>	<p><u>Career Exploration:</u> "Build layers" to a successful life a through experience. Begin in elementary school with life and social skills. and keep students informed about options through graduation.</p>
<p><u>Skills:</u> Basic skills and workplace skills necessary for career field. Integrate the parallels of work versus school into the curriculum - for instance, stressing the importance of deadlines, communication, study skills, ethics, etc. Teaching until student understands. Career and interest exploration</p>	<p><u>Business Exposure:</u> Internships, co-op, mentoring, site visits, guest speakers. Information fairs. Employer seminars. Teachers also need business exposure to understand and teach relevance of academics to business needs</p>	<p><u>Instruction:</u> Teachers aware of how instruction is related to actual employment. Actual situations that apply what they learn to what they expect to become or how it relates to problem solving for everyday life. Keep students involved - not just memorizing. Hands on, contextual learning</p>	<p><u>Counseling/Teachers:</u> Counseling sessions with students, counselors, teachers and parents. Handbooks or CD ROM to take home and explore. Colleges spend time at high schools as advisors on courses for college and careers</p>
<p><u>Begin process early in life:</u> Enforce the fact that everything done at an early age will affect students later in life. What you are doing now will pay off later. If you get behind you probably won't catch up to stay in school</p>	<p><u>Instruction:</u> Contextual teaching and learning. Activities relevant to workplace. Integrated curriculum between academics and career and technical programs. Students want reality</p>	<p><u>Counseling:</u> Informed Guidance counselors to tell students and parents about career options and classes. Counselors given more individual time with students. Counselors exposed to reality of work place</p>	<p><u>Involve Business:</u> On the job experience. Job shadowing. Career days. Teachers, counselors and students should experience the workplace to understand the way things work</p>
<p><u>Counselors/Information:</u> Allow time for students. Booklets. Information packets. Brochures</p>			<p><u>Life Skills:</u> Start early. Study skills. How to learn Right from wrong</p>

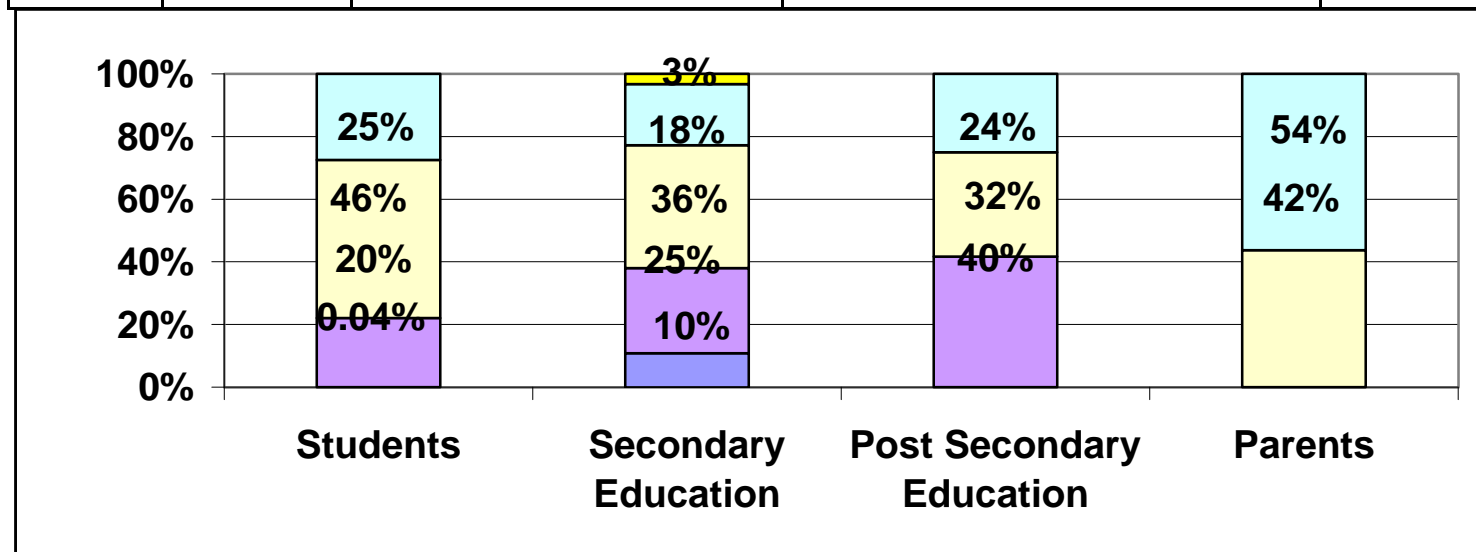
Should schools provide students with a career focus?

	Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Yes	95%	76%	96%	92%
No	2%	4%	4%	



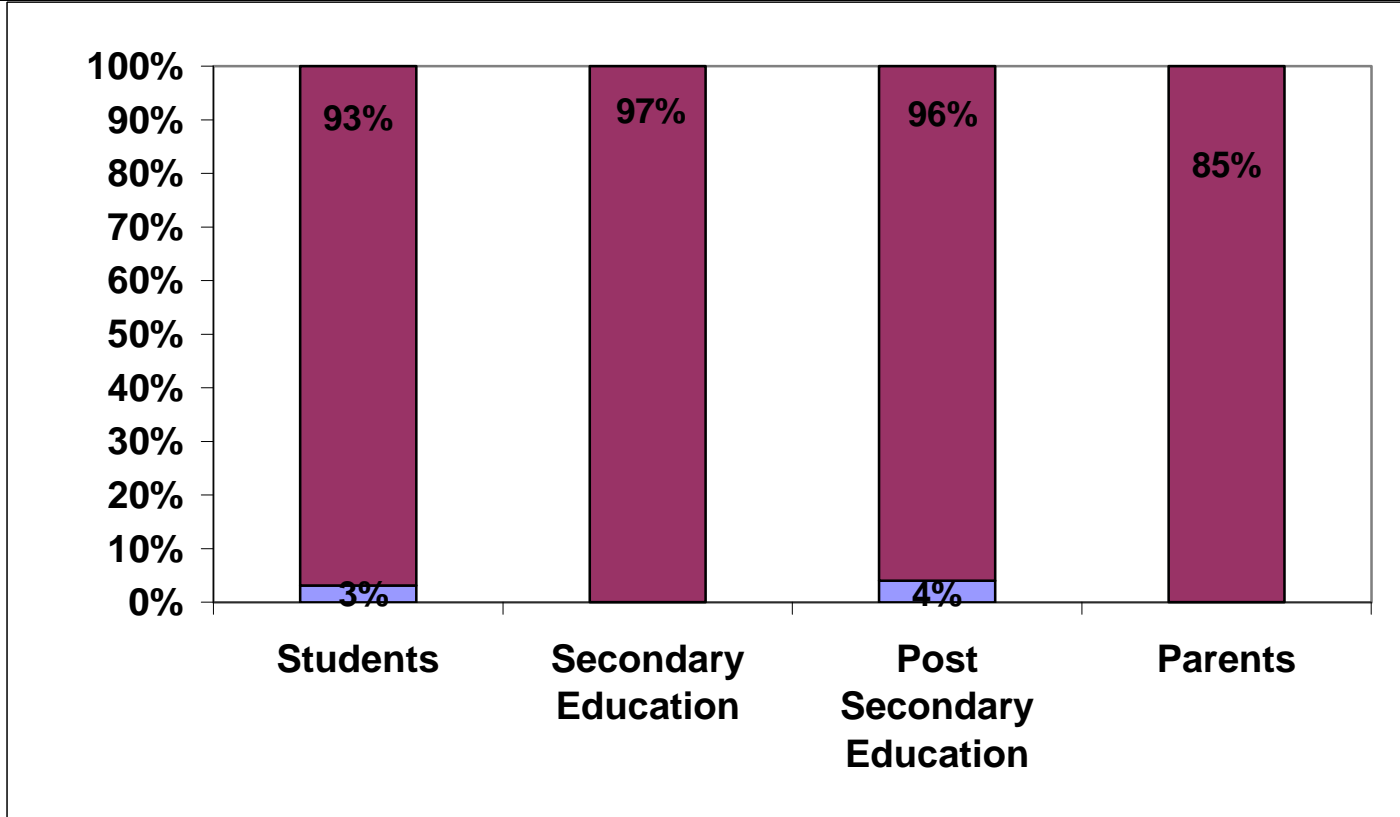
What percentage of students do you believe will have the skills to be successful going on to work or higher education upon graduation from secondary education?

	Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
20%	0.04%	10%		
40%	20%	25%	40%	
60%	46%	36%	32%	42%
80%	25%	18%	24%	54%
100%		3%		

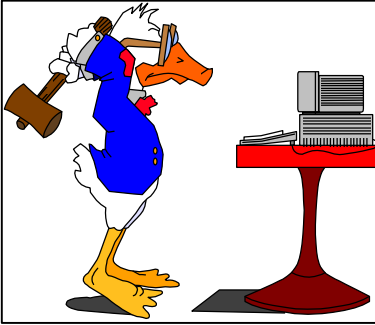


Should schools prepare students in academic courses only?

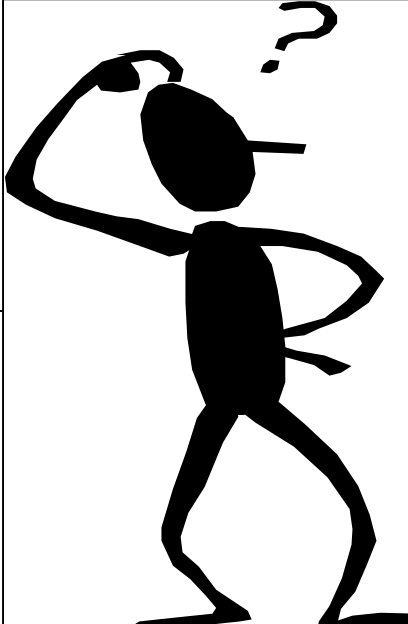
	Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Yes	3%		4%	
No	93%	97%	96%	85%



What is your perception of career and technology education?

Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
<p><u>Very important:</u> Gives career options and insight. Shows how to use skills that are being taught. Helps understand other classes, how to use math, science, computers</p>	<p><u>Positive:</u> Prepares for work and higher education. Begin earlier. Best way to prepare for student's future. Every student should participate. Should be more highly regarded in the State as a way to promote higher learning</p>	<p><u>Essential:</u> Necessary for all students. Underrated and unrecognized for value. Demand is increasing. Gives student "employable" skills. Every student should have some type CATE course to discover options for their futures</p>	<p><u>Necessary part of school:</u> Provides the education and motivation for higher learning and entry level jobs. Necessary for all students. All kids need to learn what opportunities are available and the skills needed.</p>
<p><u>Future Preparation:</u> Good whether going to college or into job after graduation. Helps to know occupation options</p>	<p><u>Integration of academic and technical:</u> Every school should require integration of academic and technical into every class</p>	<p><u>Applied learning:</u> Best way to integrate academic and technical. Application of curricula to real world. Should be a required component</p>	<p><u>Suggestions:</u> Needs better marketing that CATE can be for all students. These courses are not just for learning a trade, they expose to life</p>
<p><u>Success:</u> Wouldn't be in school if not for CATE. Will go to work in area I trained for to pay for college. Now I know what I want to do with my life</p>	<p><u>Suggestions:</u> Gets a bum rap. One of the best ways to prepare students for the future. Should be introduced to every student. Academic teachers should participate with CATE</p>	<p><u>Work place component:</u> Every student in CATE should experience work environment. Internships are important to CATE success. Instructors and counselors should experience work environment to understand what we teach</p>	

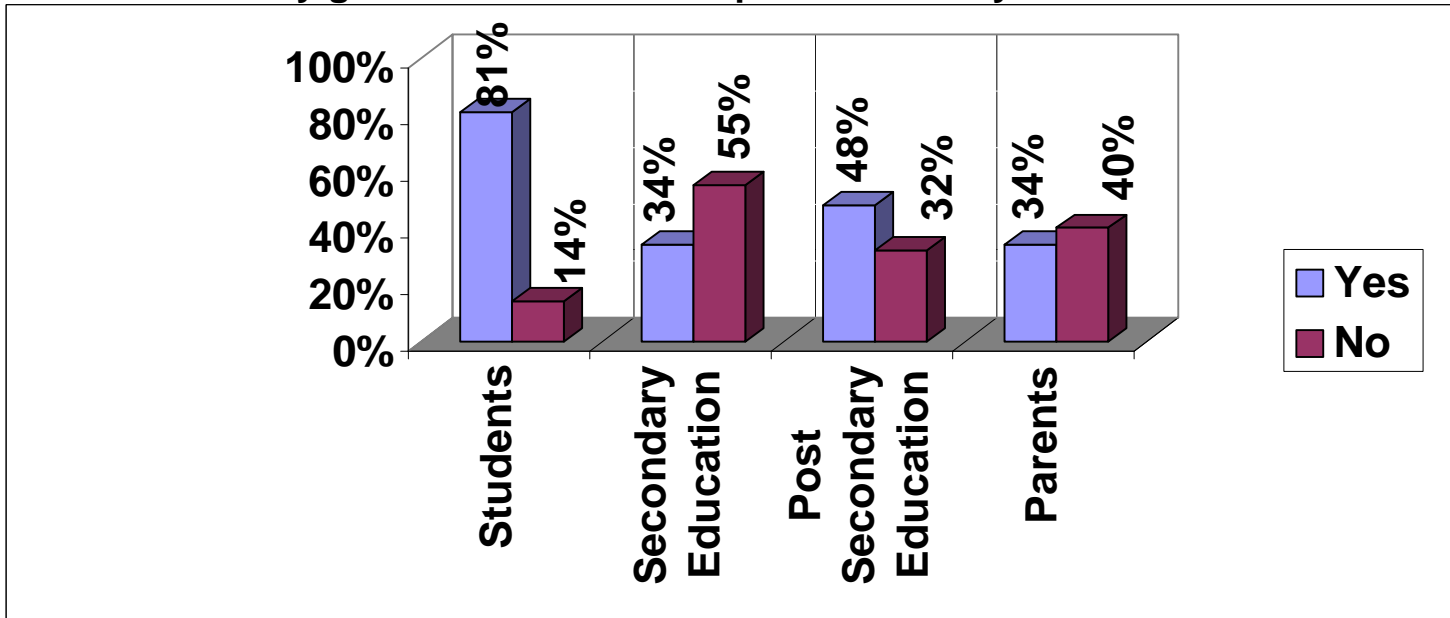
What do you wish you had learned in high school?

Student	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Skills: Communication. Computers. Higher math. Higher Science. Foreign language.	Skills: Foreign language, Technology skills. Higher math.	Skills: Higher math and science. Honest communication. Keyboarding. Foreign language	Life Skills: How to study. Money management. Time management. Organization skills. Occupation opportunities. Aptitudes
Life Skills: How to learn. Anger management. How to turn ideas into working solutions. Study habits. To be more conscientious. Financial management and planning. People skills. Try harder.	Life Skills: Study skills. interpersonal relationships. Career options. Literature. Assertiveness skills.	School Preparation: How to learn. Study skills. Time management. Personal learning style. How to study. It is okay to fail.	Skills: Math. Computers. Music appreciation. Art education and appreciation
Courses: Take more challenging courses. More time to take courses for pleasure. What you take ins school affects your future	Success: Learned what I've needed in life. We had to learn - no other options! Respected education, teachers, learning	Appreciation of Education: Applied learning would have made learning fun. You get out of your education what you put in. Hard work pays off. Education prepared me well	
		Life Skills: Career options. Financial preparation. Career options. Appreciation of aptitudes and interests. Conflict resolution	


Do you think students enrolled in career and technology education are for the most part college bound?

	Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Yes	81%	34%	48%	34%
No	14%	55%	32%	40%

Comments: Many go to work and/or into post secondary education

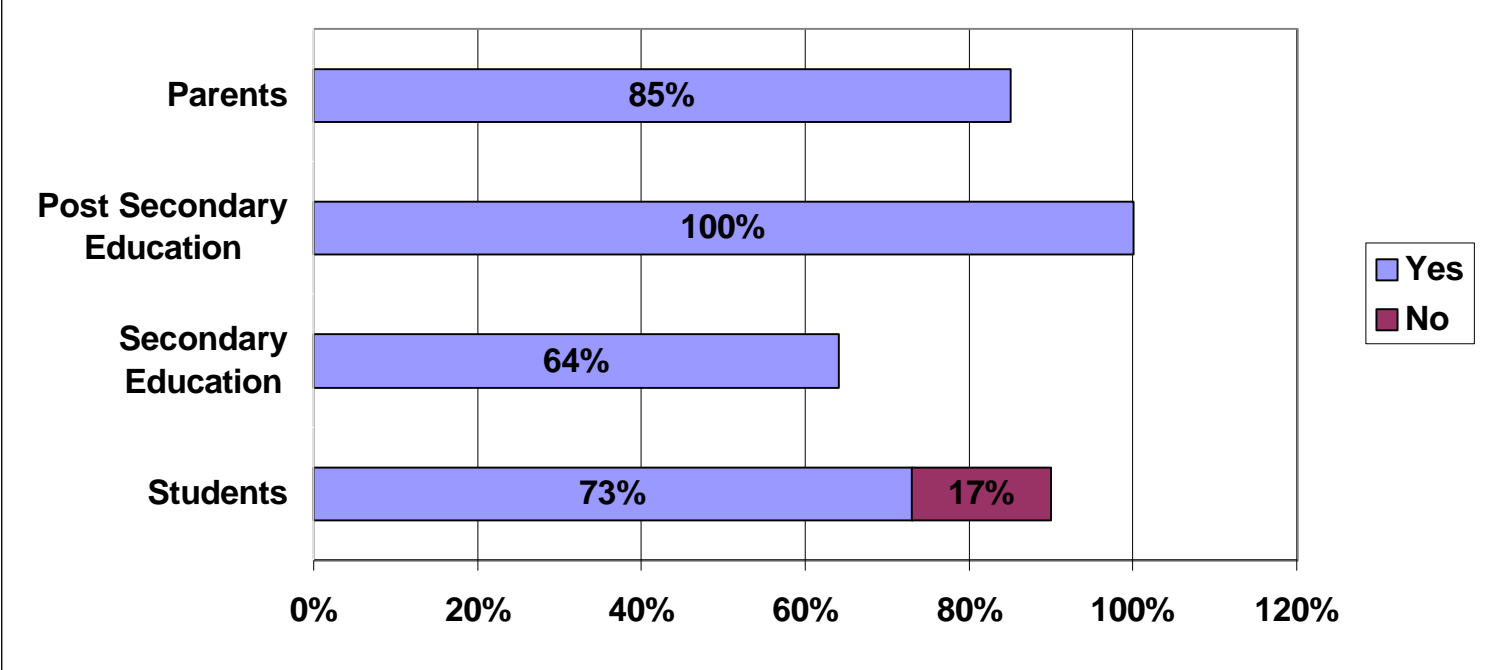


What methods of instruction do you consider to be the most effective?

Students	<u>Secondary Education</u>	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Hands on: It provides us with instruction and direction. We'll really learn and remember. Lecture is boring	Hands on: Students can employ all methods of learning, visual, kinetic, hearing. They can figure things out for themselves and will really learn	Hands on learning: Contextual learning. Applied learning. Students <u>really</u> learn and ask questions about what they are learning and how it is applied to life.	Hands on: Lecture is too easily "tuned out." They are accustomed to being active. It requires them to participate
Teaming: Working with other students helps us understand the work and also helps us to learn to get along	Applied learning: Learning applied to real life examples	Interactive learning: Teamwork	Teaming: It encourages them to really think/discuss
Visual Learning: Video. PowerPoint. More than lecture	Teaming: Students learn from each other and teaching helps learn	Learning styles: Incorporate different styles into teaching	
	Multisensory: See, hear, feel, smell, do	Problem solving: Allow students to learn by doing	
	Internships: This shows the reality of what and why they must learn	Engage the student!!! The days of "sit and get" are over	

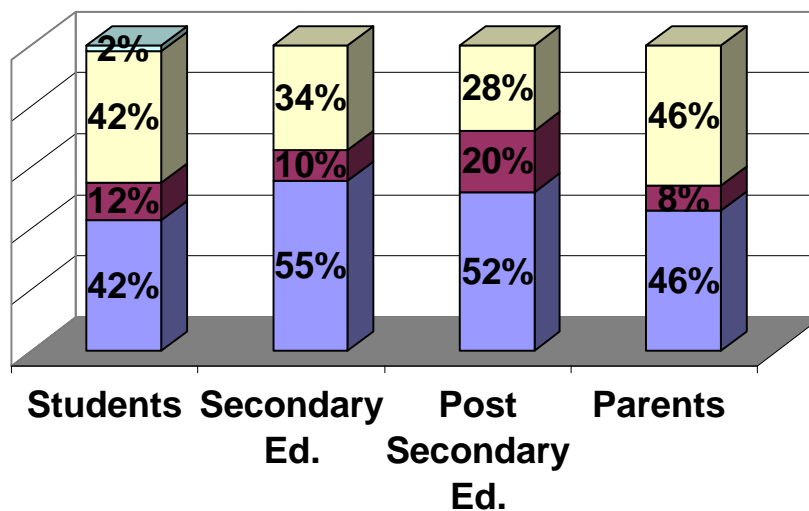
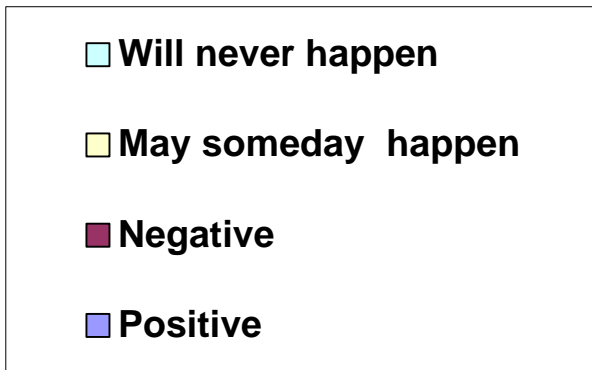
Do you think students learn better with other students in the classroom?

	Students	Secondary Education	Post Secondary Education	Parents
Yes	73%	64%	100%	85%
No	17%			



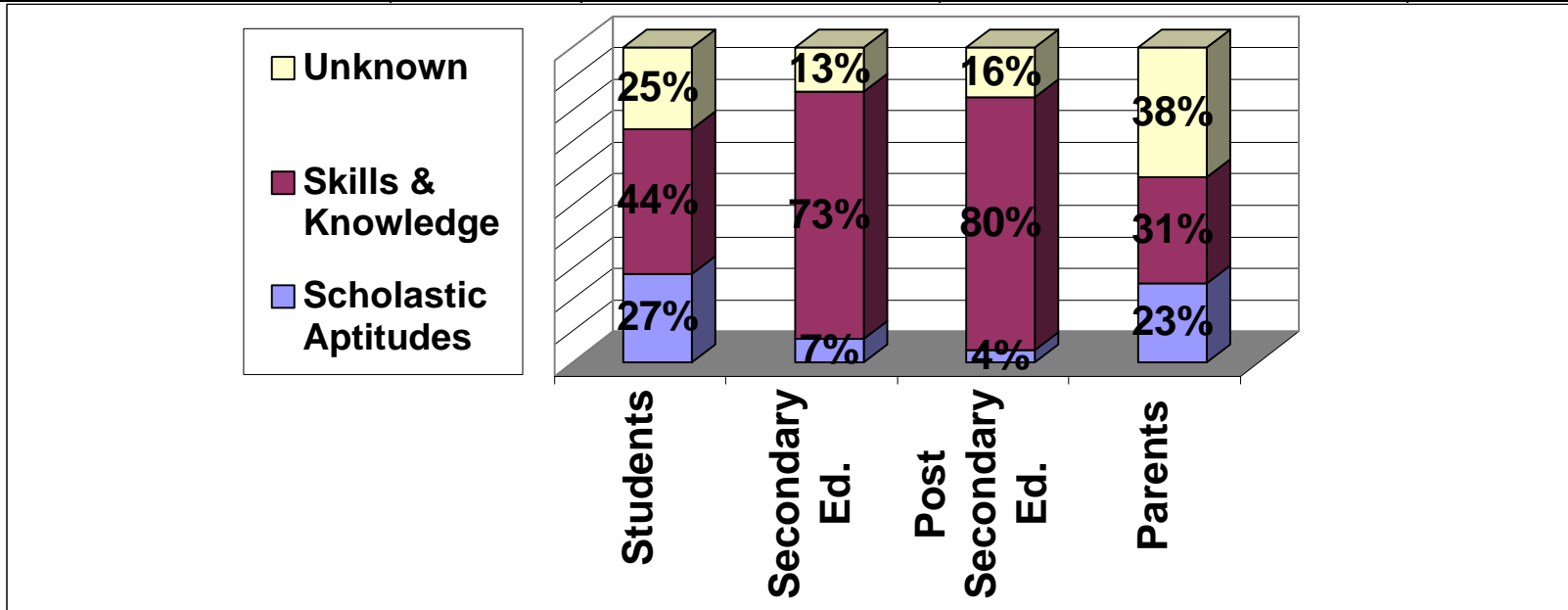
What is your reaction to the option of offering specific courses to secondary students via electronic media from home (or wherever)?

	Students	Secondary Ed.	Post Secondary Ed.	Parents
Positive	42%	55%	52%	46%
Negative	12%	10%	20%	8%
May someday happen	42%	34%	28%	46%
Will never happen	2%			



Do you know what SCANS is?

	Students	Secondary Ed.	Post Secondary Ed.	Parents
Scholastic Aptitudes	27%	7%	4%	23%
Skills & Knowledge	44%	73%	80%	31%
Unknown	25%	13%	16%	38%



Do you have a computer in your home?

