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Career and Technical Education 2017 Student Survey Results Summary

Students' Thoughts About the Advanced Courses They Took in the Career Pathway

Introduction

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Student Survey, administered in Spring 2017, was designed to gather students' feedback about their experiences taking the advanced CTE courses offered in their specific career pathway. The survey was sent to 4,392 participants; 2,551 students responded to the survey, representing a 58% response rate.

The statistical analysis shows that we can be 95% certain the population percentage is within 1.3 percentage points on either side of the sample percentage. In other words, responses provided by the sampling of 2,551 students are representative of the population of 4,392 students.

Summary of Findings



Ready for college, career, and life. Research indicates that CTE serves as an educational strategy for providing young people with the academic and technical knowledge and skills needed for college and career entry (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Association for Career and Technical Education, and National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, 2010). Consistently, students who participated in the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) CTE Student Survey highly rated the courses they had taken in their career pathway and the opportunities to gain hands-on experiences ready for their life, college, and career.



Quality instruction. More specifically, 89% of respondents valued the CTE classroom instruction and recognized that teachers were knowledgeable, effective instructors; 84% indicated class projects were interesting; and 64% indicated the equipment worked well. Students felt what they learned in the career pathway met their expectation of learning. Sixty percent of respondents were interested in continuing on to the next course.



Beneficial hands-on experience. Research shows that CTE engages students in learning through hands-on activities that



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contribute to the construction of knowledge as well as application of what they learned and the competencies required in the workforce (Brown, 2003; Partnership for 21st Century Skills...Consortium, 2010). Findings from the CTE Student Survey coincide well with the research. For example, 85% of respondents indicated they gained knowledge and skills from the hands-on experience in the career pathway. Notably, they not only gained academic knowledge but also developed skills in communication, collaboration, leadership, critical thinking, time management, and problem solving.



Inspiration on post-graduation choices. In addition, the CTE Student Survey findings demonstrated that students' exposure to what is actually done in the field inspired their choices after graduating from high school. Students developed an awareness of career and college goals related to the career pathway. They cited varied types of assistance they would like to receive from teachers/counselors to help accomplish their goals after graduation. Notably, 40% of respondents indicated academic guidance to improve grades and grade point average (GPA) and to apply/choose a college, 27% indicated advice about life after high school, and 19% indicated connection with professionals in the field and information about job opportunities, as helpful to accomplish their goals.



Recommendation on program improvement. When asked to provide comments about what they would like to change to improve the career pathway, 33% of respondents indicated no changes need to be made. Changes suggested by other respondents were varied. They most frequently requested more in-depth learning, more time contributed to focused learning, more structured engaging curriculum, more hands-on activities, more opportunities for internships, and better facilities.

References

Brown, B. L. (2003). *The benefits of career and technical education: Trends and issues alert*. Columbus, OH: Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education.

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