

College Ready for Some or Career Ready for All



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For years, educators have been driven to produce “college ready” students through secondary education programs. Yet today, 41% of matriculated high school students do not pursue postsecondary education.¹ Of the ones who do, less than half actually graduate.² These students need to be taught marketable 21st century skills at the secondary level.³

A Focus on 21st Century Skills

Some existing Career Technical Education (CTE) programs remain centered on vocational skills that were important in the past but find little traction in today’s digital technology driven market. In order to overcome the challenges our nation faces, our workforce must be highly competitive in the global market, and it must remain the leading innovator in the high-tech industries and occupations that dominate our global economy. In order to accomplish this, our education system must adapt to these new demands.

America’s workforce is aging. Fifty percent of our workforce³ is close to retirement age, and others lack the skills necessary to truly compete in today’s market. The generation of future workers who are entering high school now will be

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expected to use technology at the beginning of their careers, in many cases technology that does not even exist today. How do we prepare these students to meet these challenges and take the reins of a digital economy?

Career Ready for All

Well, to begin with, educators must recognize the paradigm shift from “College Ready for Some” to “Career Ready for All”. CTE is more important now than ever.

- Future employees must have cognitive/critical thinking skills to compete in technology driven markets
- Survival – adaptive academic skills are imperative, as individuals must stay current and continue training in technology

To prepare secondary students to be “Career Ready”, we need to look at what employable and marketable skill sets all students need foundationally to succeed regardless of the profession they desire to be in. These include Digital Literacy, Fluency in Creative and Technical Skill Sets, and Critical Thinking Skills.



The Role of Technology in Education

To meet this challenge, educators themselves have begun using a variety of technology based education tools and methods. These include virtual learning environments, blended learning environments, web-based technologies such as blogs, streaming media, social networks and more.

The majority of students who enroll in modern CTE programs that incorporate these learning styles and include a measureable result with an industry certification (Intro to IT, Web Design, Web Development, Digital Design, Gaming Design, TV Production, and Digital Media) are staying in school, graduating, and performing better on state standardized exams. These courses include digital design applications such as Adobe Photoshop, Flash, Dreamweaver, Illustrator and

Premiere Pro which are engaging and provide a true visual learning experience that attracts all students. They focus on cognitive and critical thinking skills as a core element of the learning process.

What do the district and school gain?

- Increase in graduation rate
- Increase in student academic achievement across common core
- Increase in state standardized test scores
- Increase in enrollment
- Return on investment and measureable result: industry certification

Adobe's Investment in Education

Adobe has made tremendous strides in providing free online curriculum, teacher and student resources and a nationally

recognized industry certification. The industry certification the students achieve is a credential that employers recognize, one which quantifies the skills of the worker and sets them apart.

As a result, students entering the workforce have a much better opportunity to earn a livable wage, either while beginning their postsecondary studies or embarking on their career.

More information about the resources available through Adobe can be found online at <http://www.adobe.com/education/k12/career-technical-education.edu.html>. Programs of Study are also available for the Information Technology Career Cluster™ at <http://www.careertech.org/career-clusters/resources/plans/it.html>.

Companies like Adobe have made great strides to understand the value of Career Ready for All! ●

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