

Education Malfunction is a Myth



By **Todd Thibodeaux**, CompTIA president and CEO.

Is today's education system failing our children?

Not necessarily. The problem may be that too many people are limiting the boundaries of what makes up our education system. Think about it. A lot of folks with a stake in the matter are doing just that and results indicate the traditional college route isn't cutting it when it comes to career opportunities for young people.

Training for Career Readiness

More states, school districts, government leaders and students themselves are demanding improved preparation in career readiness in the form of industry certifications and Career Technical Education (CTE) programs.

In our particular quadrant of the professional world, the technical industry, there's a greater demand today for young people entering the professional world to gain real-world training not always available through traditional academic avenues. Add to that the expense of a post-secondary education and one can certainly understand the growing acceptance and encouragement of CTE programs as a viable substitute for an academic degree.

enter many industries and careers has increased dramatically.

Just as CompTIA certifications come in the form of high-stakes exams, government programs must quantify success or lack thereof to determine individual student achievements and program viability. More and more employers not only are recommending, but requiring attainment of those credentials.



Support for Career Pathways

Studies have shown that student graduates of CTE programs have a higher grade-point-average and a higher rate of graduation than their peers in high school.

In a form of unprecedented joint commitment from U.S. government agencies this April, the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor promoted the use of career pathways as a "promising strategy" to help adults earn marketable skills and industry-recognized credentials toward employment. Career pathways such as CTE are to be a chief focus of integrated federal and state funding streams to advance higher levels of future education and better aligned training and employment.

Lest we forget Harvard University's Pathways to Prosperity Project which balanced its illustration of an education system that has failed to engage students with a solution that has a strong emphasis on CTE?

All in all, actions within our academic, government and technical communities continue to align in favor of CTE programs as a valued method of preparing students to step foot in the workplace and succeed.

Today's education system is not a failure. The boundaries of that traditional system just need to be expanded. ●

"Results indicate the traditional college route isn't cutting it..."

A student who graduates with a high school degree and an industry certification has the opportunity to garner a well-paying position while pursuing an education to continue up the ladder on a career path.

The Importance of Industry Certifications

In the past decade, language within the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act focused on the inclusion of industry certifications as a measure of what must be attained to