

NEW YORK STATE RETIRED SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS POSITION PAPER

CAREER TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

If this were the best of all worlds, every young adult would be in school or at work in an occupation commensurate with his or her interests and aptitudes, and every employer dependent upon this adult's output would be satisfied.

Everyone would possess the skills and training needed for productive and efficient work.

In the same world, the specific employment needs of governments, geographic regions and local communities will have been met.

However, since the start of the 21st century, it has become apparent that technology is changing the nature of work as we now know it. The effects are seen in all areas – from business, science, and health services to agriculture and manufacturing.

Some estimates indicate that many jobs available today will no longer be viable in 10-20 years. They will have been eliminated due to newer and better equipment and methodology. As robots take over operations in more areas, human workers will need increasingly more sophisticated skills to direct the use of new technologies.

Ensuring that our schools are preparing students for careers in this new world of work will require revolutionary changes in instructional programs and policies including graduation requirements and state financing policies.

We believe that to achieve these ends, we will need to:

- change attitudes toward Career Technology Education [CTE] so that it will no longer be thought of as course work only for “non-academic” students. CTE instruction must be included in programs for ALL students.
- dispel the idea that a traditional college degree is essential to achieve the “good life” recognizing that currently as many as 40% of college enrollees drop out before graduation, often while burdened with heavy debts.
- provide for programs designed to meet the needs of ALL students including those with special needs. This will include education in the humanities, sciences, and technology usage as well as the communication and interpersonal skills critical for success in every type of career. Ideally this will involve a broad view of course work that includes both academic knowledge and skills and on-site experiences and internships.
- recognize that CTE must be incorporated into instructional programs K-12. Developing work habits and interpersonal skills that will facilitate success in careers of every kind should start in Kindergarten.
- create for the earlier and upper grades a broad and continuous guidance system to help students develop realistic ideas about their own interests and talents. In addition, support should be provided for those who find their interests changing as they mature in order to foster intelligent decision making in terms of selection of courses of study and educational goals.
- provide adequate staffing levels and continuing support and professional development for the guidance personnel necessary to help students transition to career options, which will continue to be subject to societal change.
- ensure that all constituents are involved in program planning and implementation.
- back decision making with sufficient funding based upon community and school specific needs.

Once all of the above are in place for K-12 students, work can begin on offering a full complement of no-cost or low-cost training and apprenticeship programs to high school graduates.

As members of NYSRSAS we believe that comprehensive Career Technology Education is essential for all students and we will lend our support for efforts to achieve these goals.