



February 6, 2008

Dear Friend of Colorado Career and Technical Education:

Colorado's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are vital in preparing youth and adults to enter the wide array of careers in Colorado's workforce. The Colorado Community College System (the statutorily-designated agency charged with supporting our state's secondary and post-secondary CTE programs) is pleased to announce the emergence of a new operational model. This model holds the promise of resolving the competency-gaps within our workforce so that we can help ensure Colorado's competitiveness in a global marketplace. This model is being shaped through a commitment by our state's CTE educators for:

- Collaboration with business and industry to ensure specific workforce needs are met;
- A student-centered approach to career success (currently CTE serves 105,000 Coloradans);
- Greater accountability for results and program improvement;
- Curriculum alignment between high schools and higher education providers;
- Stronger academic and technical integration; and
- Increased coordination among providers.

The citizens and policymakers of Colorado have a long history of supporting career and technical programs. This has been due to CTE's relevant, rigorous, and reliable coursework, coupled with applied learning to make students attractive candidates for employment. In addition, CTE partners with business and industry to address their workforce needs.

As we continue our current transformation to a new model for CTE, we need your support more than ever. For example, with sufficient resources, Colorado CTE is poised to be integral to accomplishing Governor Ritter's Colorado Promise. This includes the goals of reducing the high school dropout rate, while increasing the number of postsecondary certificates and degrees that are awarded. Likewise, our CTE programs of the next decade will be more intentional about helping students move into the high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With Colorado's citizens and policymakers supporting our efforts, CTE can help develop and execute models for implementing major components of Governor Ritter's recently announced Colorado Achievement Plan. This plan calls for a competency-oriented seamless pathway between secondary schools and higher education that leads to career readiness. This is a direction Colorado CTE embraces and one in which CTE has already been heading. With your support, we are confident we can create a Colorado in which employers across the state have the option to hire qualified Coloradans to fill their high-skill positions instead of having to recruit workers from other states.

To assist you with educating yourself about the underpinnings of our current transformation, we have assembled this **“Bridges to Opportunity” Marketing Kit**. Specifically, the right side of this marketing kit includes:

***The Bridges to Opportunity through Career Pathways Brochure***

Discusses the progress being made toward accomplishing our shared vision to leverage partnerships and implement career clusters, career pathways and plans of study to transform CTE across Colorado.

***The Colorado Career Cluster Model***

In this model, the workforce needs of Colorado have been condensed into six industry sectors. The model groups careers that rely on shared competencies together to guide the composition of programs and demonstrate to students the options that unfold depending on the path their education follows.

***The Colorado CTE Plan of Study Template***

This template will be used by local educators and counselors to show students and their parents how their program relates to a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career-related courses, commencing in ninth grade and leading to an industry-recognized certificate or licensure and/or a college or university degree.

The left side of this marketing kit includes:

***The Bridges to Opportunity Career Pathway Case Studies DVD***


This video, hosted by Lieutenant Governor Barbara O’Brien, uses case studies to demonstrate how the career pathways strategy is working to align education with Colorado’s economic opportunities.

***A Sampling of Communications Generated by Citizens, the News Media and Colorado Succeeds***

We have enclosed recent newspaper clippings about the importance of CTE in addressing the state’s educational goals. We have also included a report about CTE from Colorado Succeeds, a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of business leaders committed to improving education for workforce development and economic growth. These communications detail the directions many believe law and policy makers should pursue to enable CTE to have an optimum impact on Colorado’s economy.

These are exciting times for Career and Technical Education in Colorado. I hope this kit helps you understand the potential CTE has to greatly advance the state’s economic development. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Scott Stump, Interim Dean of Career & Technical Education, at 303-595-1578.

Best Regards,



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President  
Colorado Community College System