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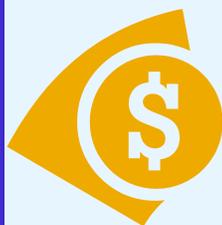
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Unpaid Experiential Learning Program



The CSDE is pleased to announce a new work-based learning program for high school students that will be piloted in the 2015-2016 school year with 25 districts or “entities.” The Unpaid Experiential Learning Program (Unpaid ELP) was developed in cooperation with the Department of Labor and will serve as an added resource for Connecticut public schools seeking to differentiate learning experiences for students. Specifically, the program affords schools and business and industry partners an opportunity to provide up to 120 hours of unpaid training for students 16 and over in non-hazardous placements. The program waiver will assist LEAs with their efforts to expand and build new pathways for learners. High school students who take part in the Unpaid ELP will acquire transferrable skills that will help them succeed in college, careers and civic life. On April 9, over fifty districts from a cross-section of Connecticut public schools sent representatives to an informational session at the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell. The level of response and enthusiasm with which the program details were met was a clear signal that our schools welcome the availability of new learning experiences. The electronic application for the pilot program will be distributed later this month and the districts/entities selected to participate will be notified during the first week of June 2015. We are confident that the twenty five available openings will be filled with committed educators who will welcome the opportunity to provide their students with relevant “anytime, anywhere” learning experiences. For more information about this program, please contact Suzanne Loud.

Connecticut’s High School Online Personal Finance Course



Personal Finance introduces students to common financial challenges that individuals face every day in our society, empowering students to become financially literate. Students are exposed to a variety of situations and simulations to teach them how their personal decisions, the economy, national financial institutions, and how our government plays a role in their personal finances. It is crucial for students to gain a strong foundation in personal finance to ensure their financial stability in an ever-changing economy. Students will develop a foundation of knowledge in financial literacy regarding the basics of personal finance. These include personal decision making, personal income, managing finances and budgeting, saving and investing, buying goods and services, banking and financial institutions, using credit, protecting against risk and knowing where to find resources to answer future questions. Course instruction and interaction take place online through classroom webpage and e-mail. Therefore, students must be prepared to commit the time necessary to independently read, research and communicate with their peers and the teacher. Students must be highly motivated learners who understand that an online course requires a commitment to self-directed learning. Periodic meetings at the discretion of the teacher will be mandatory throughout the semester. These courses can be found in the following districts: Brookfield, Ledyard, Meriden, New Britain, Region 8 and Waterford. Grant funding from the CTE Unit has made this course possible and currently there is a request for proposal for next school year for additional districts to add this course. This will allow additional students the opportunity to take personal finance so that they will be college- and career-ready. For more information about this unique course, please contact Lee Marcoux.

Understanding the Statewide Career and Technical Education Assessment

CTE ELECTIVE COURSES

Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses in the general instructional programs of Business and Finance Education, Cooperative Work Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, Marketing Education, Medical Careers, Technology Education and Agriculture Education make up the latest number of elective courses in Connecticut's secondary schools. The nature of elective courses includes two distinct characteristics. The first is that each elective course is in a competitive selection environment where students must choose between a CTE course or one in music, art or those listed in academic categories such as poetry (ELA). The second elective course characteristic is that the instructional program of the elective course is very much teacher stylized. In Connecticut, when a school receives funds from the Carl D. Perkins grant, they do so with the understanding that each CTE teacher will provide instruction in the Connecticut CTE State Performance Standards and Competencies in the 21 areas of concentration.

WHO TESTS IN THE CONNECTICUT STATEWIDE CTE ASSESSMENT

The determination as to what students are to be tested is in our basic definition of what is a concentrator. A "Concentrator" is any student who has received instruction in all of the competencies in one or more of the areas of concentration and is tested in that tested area. There is a slightly different definition of a concentrator for Agriculture. The definition of a concentrator in Agriculture is a student enrolled in a Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Center and is a senior who has completed the performance standards and competencies in one of the agriculture areas of concentration (Animal Science, Plant Science, Agriculture Mechanics, Natural Resources or Aquaculture) and has successfully met the performance elements of premier leadership, personal growth and career success through involvement in the National FFA Organization and a planned Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) project.

THE THRESHOLD/CUT SCORE

To understand Connecticut's plan for continuous improvement under the Carl D. Perkins legislation, Connecticut as a state must meet our core indicators. An individual student test score has been established to serve as an initial measure by which we determine annual statewide progress. Connecticut has identified 65 percent as the cut score, a baseline of individual student test results. The 65 percent cut score is not to be construed as a passing/failing score. The indicator (1S2), entitled, Technical Skill Attainment, requires that Connecticut meet a federally negotiated annual performance level for our statewide CTE assessment. These performance levels represent the percentage of all statewide CTE concentrators (students tested) who meet or exceed the 65 percent cut score (threshold score). For 2015, Connecticut's indicator for skill attainment requires that 44 percent of all students tested meet or exceed the 65 percent threshold score.

For more information about this assessment, please contact Dr. Stephen Hoag.

Dates to Remember

Investing and Personal Finance Grant Submission—May 1, 2015

Carl D. Perkins Grant Submission—May 15, 2015

Carl D. Perkins Innovation Grant Submission—May 29, 2015



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Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/American with Disabilities Act Coordinator

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