

ACTIVE news

Vol. XVIII, Number 1

THE ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Government Publications
Texas State Documents

MAR 5 1987

January/February 1987



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Master Plan for Voc Ed Approved

The "Career Opportunities in Texas: A Master Plan for Vocational Education," with agreed upon changes, was adopted by the State Board of Education on January 10, 1987.

Two changes to the final draft were approved by the Board. One change dealt with education technology. Alternative language was introduced to replace the language dealing with keyboarding and computer literacy in K-6.

Also, Coordinated Vocational Academic Education (CVAE) will not be "phased out," but rather will be "phased into appropriate alternatives to social promotion."

During discussion of the Master Plan, Representative Bill Carter asked the committee to consider changing the designation of the CVAE youth leadership organization from extracurricular to co-curricular. Mr. Brumley responded that this topic would be referred to the Committee for Students for consideration.

The Committee for Students will assume the major responsibility for implementing the Master Plan.

ACTIVE Recommendations

In a recent report, "Vocational Education: A Choice for the Future," the Advisory Council outlines recommendations to the 70th Texas Legislature.

The report, which is the biennial report to the Governor and the Legislature, also contains a review of the key provisions of the Master Plan; vocational education's efforts in serving disabled persons; vocational education tables/charts; and a summary of the Council's activities.

The Council developed eight recommendations for the Legislature to consider which address the following areas:

- Adopt a resolution strongly supporting vocational education at the secondary and postsecondary levels;
 - Maintain, if not increase, the current funding level for secondary and postsecondary to ensure full implementation of the Master Plan;
 - Retain the authority to assign weights and replace the current vocational weights with new weights as well as provide add-on weights for certain vocational classes as outlined in the Master Plan;
 - Retain current law in the transition from the appointed to the elected State Board of Education;
 - Restrict the requirement for maintaining competency profiles to those courses that are designed to provide occupationally specific instruction;
 - Maintain the current state level administration for apprenticeship while studying the feasibility of centralizing the administration with the Coordinating Board;
 - Dramatically increase the line item appropriation for "adult/adult vocational education" and allow greater flexibility in utilizing private literacy and adult education systems. Specifically recognize English as a Second Language (ESL) among
- (RECOMMENDATIONS, Continued on Page 3)

Master Plan, Part II

The Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, approved Part II of the Master Plan for Vocational Education in Texas. This section concerns postsecondary and adult education.

In the development of the Master Plan, Part II, certain critical issues determined the focus of postsecondary technical and vocational education for the next five years. Of the issues, two appeared to be most critical - access and the delivery system.

Within the Plan, thirteen goals were identified: (1) Purpose, (2) Students Served, (3) Pivotal Role of Postsecondary and Adult Education in Texas, (4) Planning and Approval of Programs, (5) Funding, (6) Evaluation, (7) Delivery System, (8) Private and Public

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Feds Propose Redlining of Voc Ed Funding

The Reagan administration is advocating redlining funding for vocational education at the federal level beginning in 1988. The elimination of federal voc ed funds were part of the President's fiscal budget proposal submitted to Congress January 5.

Also, the Education Department is pushing a proposal, known as a "rescission," which would half federal voc ed spending for 1987. This would require going back into 1987 appropriated funds for voc ed and taking away about half the money already allotted.

Voc ed supporters in Congress have questioned the success of this proposal. Congress is intensely interested in improving international competitiveness and is unlikely to cut funding for training.

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ACTIVE Hosts NASCOVE Conference

The Advisory Council extended a big Texas welcome to the National Association of State Councils on Vocational Education (NASCOVE) as 200 members from across the Nation converged in Dallas on December 4-6 to discuss "Economic Development and Vocational Education: Creating the Future Together."

Two prominent Texans were among the key speakers of the conference. Terry Thompson, President of Urban Corps, Inc., in Houston, gave the keynote speech at the opening luncheon. Maria Elena A. Flood, Chairman of the Finance and Programs Committee of the State Board of Education, served as a panelist in the second general session.

In Mr. Terry Thompson's luncheon address, he stated "Since 1973, there have been 30 national commissions, hundreds of blue ribbon panels, papers, and reports. The whole litany spells out a parade of failures, frustration, and advice not heeded. Why are we here today? I think it is a covenant that each of us feels about the youth of this Nation and the national security of this Nation...As you go, I sincerely believe, so goes the national economy."

In discussing why most Americans view vocational education with disinterest, he went on to say, "Why should the average American pay any attention to vocational education? The average American is the product of our educational system and...We never taught him the relationships of skills to a state or national economy. They are not concerned out there about who is providing vocational education unless this group makes them concerned. They are assuming public education is taking care of that. You are assuming business is taking care of it. Maybe business is assuming that labor is taking care of it. I am here to tell you that nobody is training the next generation of Americans."

Mr. Thompson's hard hitting comments went on to innumerate other vocational concerns. "Maybe we have been too polite with our recommendations to the State Board and the Governor. Maybe you should go out into the streets and tell them on the hills and the mountains that this Nation is at risk... Tomorrow's youth...has been passed through the system without useable skills or preparation for the real economic warfare that is going on...in most of the cities of this Nation. We have not used our land grant funds wisely to teach skills and techniques and prepare tomorrow's youth. What we have done is build monuments and land grant institutions with those funds."

During Mrs. Maria Elena A. Flood's segment of the panel discussion, she reiterated that vocational education has a serious mission that is critical to the economic development of the Nation.

In meeting the needs of the future, an important human resource must be tapped. "I am here to tell you that El Paso, Texas, the State of Texas, and other border states are the future of this country. You cannot stop the movement of people who are desperate to succeed and to achieve. All of us will face the necessity to cope with developing from

ethnic and new immigrant minorities capable, concerned, and dedicated people."

"...one of the hazards for the future of this Nation is an undereducated public...I do not fear the Russians are coming. I don't even fear any longer a nuclear holocaust. I fear an undereducated electorate who cannot participate, be responsible, and understand their role in manufacturing, in business, in personal responsibility to self, and community. That is what we train in vocational education programs, perhaps better sometimes than the academic school teacher."

Mrs. Flood concluded by issuing a challenge "...the downfall will come if we are not successful in Texas, California, and in every state in convincing the leadership of the states and the country of the importance of vocational education. However, please don't serve me the same old soup warmed over from years back. Change the face because the country has changed, the demands have changed, and the competition has changed. The players are changing daily that you must cope with."

Cook Gets National Award

Shirlene Cook, member of the Advisory Council, was nationally recognized for her outstanding contributions to Beaumont and received the Distinguished Leadership Award from the National Association of Community Leadership Organizations. News of this award was announced at NACLO's seventh annual conference in Indianapolis, Indiana and presentation of the award was made at the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.

NACLO members work together to establish and improve leadership programs in communities nationwide. Local programs identify citizens who have leadership potential and assist them in learning more about the challenges as well as the opportunities they are facing. This knowledge facilitates their active involvement in leadership roles.

TSTI Selected as National Winner

The Texas State Technical Institute has been selected as the national winner of the American Vocational Association's Award for Excellence in Automotive Service Programs representing postsecondary schools.

The award was presented at the AVA National Convention held in Dallas in December.

The Automotive Service Award is co-sponsored by the Industry Planning Council, a joint council made up of representatives of major automobile manufacturers, others in the automotive service industry, and vocational educators who are involved in this aspect of program delivery. The winning program received funds to enable staff members to attend the convention and will receive a substantial amount of equipment and curriculum materials to be used in the instructional programs, according to Charles Buzzell, executive director of the American Vocational Association.

"How Employers Make Hiring Decisions"

Findings on "how employers make hiring decisions" were developed based on research that was conducted at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and sponsored by the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education. The research document, "The Influence of Applicants' Education and Skills on Employability Assessments by Employers," by Kevin Hollenbeck and Bruce Smith, described and analyzed the behavior of employers in their assessment of youthful job applicants for entry-level clerical, retail, and machine trades jobs.

According to the report, employers generally have each job applicant fill out an application form, which is screened to obtain a set of information. The employers were shown an entry-level job description and application forms from fictitious youthful job seekers. The applications exhibited a wide range of educational and work experience backgrounds. Employers rated the individual applicants with a hiring priority rating.

Three general factors influence how employers rate youthful job applicants which include: characteristics of the applicants, characteristics of the job and firm, and characteristics of the rater. The selected questions and answers below summarize the results from analyzing the applicant characteristics:

How important to employers are high school grades?

High school grade point average had the strongest positive influence of any school experience variable for all three occupations.

Does the course of study or major in high school influence employability ratings?

In machine trades occupations, a machine trades vocational education program had a significant positive influence on ratings. In clerical and retail occupations, high school curriculum did not influence ratings.

Does participation in a cooperative education program or an occupational work experience program increase the employability ratings?

Cooperative distributive education program participation had a significant positive influence for retail applicants. Other cooperative or occupational work experience program participation had a positive, but not statistically, significant influence on ratings.

Does attending a postsecondary institution improve employability?

Attending a postsecondary school improved ratings in all occupations. The positive effect was virtually doubled if the applicant had obtained a certificate or degree.

How important is postsecondary grade point average?

Postsecondary grade point average was statistically insignificant for all occupations. The important postsecondary school characteristics were that applicants completed programs and that the programs were relevant to the jobs being sought.

What are the effects on employability ratings if an applicant has no work experience?

Having no prior work experience was a serious disadvantage to an applicant. Employers usually coach applicants to list activities such as babysitting, yard work, or volunteer work to indicate the ability to accept responsibility.

What kinds of part-time jobs improve employability ratings?

Employers favored employees who held part-time jobs at large organizations and had work experience relevant to the job for which they are applying. Experience in fast-food restaurants was valued highly by retail employers.

How does part-time work experience during school influence employers?

There was virtually no difference in employability ratings for applicants who had part-time work experience during the school year and those who worked during the summer only. If working during the school year has a negative influence on grades, it is ill-advised.

Do employers pay attention to reasons applicants list for leaving prior jobs?

The number of quits and number of times laid off had a strong negative influence on the employability rating.

Do gaps in the work experience record hurt employability ratings?

Gaps in work experience did not hurt employability ratings for the entry-level jobs sampled.

The full report of this study is available by contacting Margo Vreeburg Izzo of the National Center for Research Division at 800-848-4815 (toll free).

(RECOMMENDATIONS, Continued from Page 1)

- the adult education programs receiving state funding; and
- Permit approved certification program for non-degreed vocational teachers to be counted in lieu of a bachelor's degree for Level 2 certification and advancement to Level 2 on the career ladder.

A copy of the report, including the complete recommendations, can be obtained by contacting the Council office: ACTIVE, P. O. Box 1886, Austin, Texas 78767, (512)

463-5490.

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Partnerships, (9) Economic Development, Competitiveness, and Stability, (10) Regional Planning, (11) Adult Literacy and The Future of the Texas Work Place, (12) Texas Displaced Workers, and (13) Emerging and Impacting Technologies, Occupations, and Industries.

The last section of the Plan is "The Year 2000 - A Scenario."

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The Education Department justified the cut in federal vocational spending because the majority of the cost is borne by the state and local districts.

Charles Buzzell, executive director of the American Vocational Association, explained that the elimination of federal vocational funding would send a signal to states that they also could reduce their support for vocational education. He also pointed out the link between vocational and productivity.

According to the Education Department, the "zeroing out" of vocational for 1988 was brought on by demands from the Office of Management and Budget.

SBOE Legislative Proposals

The State Board of Education, at its January meeting, reviewed a legislative package containing 46 proposals.

Three proposals were reviewed that directly relate to vocational education. They are as follows:

- Competency profiles for vocational education students - Eliminate the requirement for maintaining competency profiles for students enrolled in vocational education courses that are not designed to provide occupationally specific instruction. Action taken - approved.
- State administration of apprenticeship training programs - Centralize within the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, the state-level admin-

istration of all apprenticeship training programs. Action taken - tabled.

- Vocational education weights - Repeal weight of 1.45 for all vocational education programs and allow the State Board of Education to determine various funding weights for vocational education programs. Action taken - approved.

The legislative package will be reviewed again by the Board at its February meeting.

Thorogood Accepts Presidency

Dr. Nellie Carr Thorogood has accepted the presidency of North Harris County Community College East Campus. Dr. Thorogood has served as Assistant Commissioner for Community Colleges and Technical Institutes at the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, since the position was created in September of 1985.

Prior to coming to Austin, Dr. Thorogood served as Dean of Instruction and Student Services at North Harris County Community College East Campus.

A search is currently underway to fill the Assistant Commissioner position.

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