



VATAT

News

A publication of the Texas Agricultural Education Family ☆ 2013 Volume IV, Issue VII

CTE Student Performance and Post Secondary Readiness

By: Kevin Swor, President

This is the first of a three-part series.

Never before, in the history of public education, has student performance been under as much scrutiny as today. Educators are expected to have students meet state and federal standards, while the bar is constantly being raised. All students and subpopulations are expected to meet the standards including career and technology education students.

Many consider career and technology students, or sometimes referred to as vocational students, to be a pathway of lower-level achievers. A comparison of CTE students with other students will be considered to determine if their performance meets expectations.

Research has proven that students in core enriched CTE courses have a broader understanding of core subject matter. James Stone, III, Director, National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, reported in the NTPN Connections newsletter (2005) data that supports this statement. "His study involved more than 4,000 students in 240 schools in 2004-2005. The students and teachers were divided into experimental (math enriched CTE courses) and control groups (conventional CTE courses). Students in the experimental group

developed a deeper and more sustained understanding of math than students in the conventional courses." (Hull, 2006, p. 136)

Is there more information that would help us examine the career and technology student performance and what is the importance of career and technology programs in the schools today? As students are being pushed to higher levels of education every year, we should consider this: Are career and technology students being prepared for post secondary education?

According to Hull "NCLB and many federal K-12 grant programs call on educational practitioners to use scientifically based research to gather decisions about which interventions to implement." (Hull, 2006, p.136) Why are interventions necessary? Obviously students are not performing at the level that is expected and schools feel the need to put programs in place to correct the problems. Many times programs are scientifically based but practitioners do not consider whether they will work at their particular school. The lack of proper planning can result in program failures.

The overall trend of schools is to reduce the number of CTE programs to make room for programs that are



considered more beneficial to student performance on state-mandated tests. There are many conflicts in the theory. Proponents claim CTE programs are not helpful in raising student achievement and opponents claim that CTE programs can and will add value to the overall school performance. As I researched the conflicts in theory it became apparent to me that there are

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Foundation Center Cooperating Collections

Free Funding Information Centers

For free fundraising information and other funding-related technical assistance, visit Cooperating Collections. Located across the U.S. and in many locations around the world, in libraries, nonprofit resource centers, or other agencies, Cooperating Collections provide visitors with free access to core Foundation Center electronic and print resources and fundraising research guidance, along with access to the Internet and searchable databases. Many offer workshops and programs for local nonprofits. For the most current contact information, visit foundationcenter.org/collections or call (800) 424-9836. Individual Collection hours vary, so please confirm specifics before paying a visit. No appointment is necessary, and no fee is charged for use of Foundation Center resources.

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2301 Kell Blvd.
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(940) 322-4961

definite gaps in the research. There is much data prior to 1999 and very little data since.

My perspective is that CTE programs are the solution to student performance, and they can be of benefit to all schools today. I analyzed data on state-mandated tests, overall student performance and considered the readiness for post secondary education between CTE students and non-CTE students. Data can be found that proves both theories and suggest that more research is needed in the future. To guide my study I have created a roadmap which includes the following:

- Types of Students in the Study
- Career Pathway Verses College Pathway
- Academic Preparation of Students Entering High School
- Method of Measuring Students Ability on Tests
- Post Secondary Remediation
- Concluding Remarks

Types of Students in the Study

Schools must analyze the overall increase or decline of student enrollment in CTE programs to understand the effectiveness and impact this will have on their student performance. The study includes students that are CTE concentrators, non CTE students and students that take one CTE course just for an elective. CTE concentrators are labeled as students who take two or more courses for three or more credits. "About one-fourth of all high school seniors are vocational concentrators." (Hoachlander, 2005, p. 1)

"NAVE's studies of promising practices should not be limited to some subset of students who are defined as vocational. Such a definition would have to be arbitrary and artificial, given the fact that almost all students take at least one vocational course. Identifying a group of high schoolers as vocational students would make no more sense than labeling some as mathematics students." (Stern, 1999, p. 6) The NAVE's report sheds light on the fact that nearly all students take at least one CTE course while in high school. "In 1994 high school graduates found that 97.2% of public high school students had taken at least one vocational course." (Stern, 1999, p. 6) A result in some state data reflects that CTE students are outperforming their counterparts. "Arizona reviewed its CTE curriculum and wrote specific standards that included reinforcing state academic standards. In 2004, CTE graduates who took two or more CTE courses outperformed general high school students on all three of Arizona's high-stakes academic test. The next step will blend STEM more closely with CTE." (Lewis, 2007, p.1)

The CTE programs should not be blamed for the shortfall of all students nor credited for the success of all students. Only the students that are considered career concentrators should be targeted for the purpose of analyzing CTE

Agricultural Education: A Profession of Volunteers

Barney McClure, VATAT Executive Director

One fact I often mention is how much more complicated agricultural education is now compared to only a few years ago. This rate of change is probably going to continue or even accelerate. More is asked of our teachers than ever before. The same is true of the leadership of our profession. Jobs that used to be carried out by paid staff members must still be done, but we are asking our teachers to volunteer to get tasks accomplished. It is vital for our teachers to continue in this spirit.

Just a couple of weeks ago, a group of teachers and stakeholders met here in Austin to assist in planning our Professional Development Conference. Their input helps shape our conference. I am sure they could have stayed home to take care of other tasks, but they made the effort to spend the day in Austin for the improvement of our conference.

Ron Whitson sent a request recently for teachers to volunteer to serve on an Agriculture Teacher Certification committee. This group will help formulate the next certification test for agricultural education. I hope you took the time to apply.

Another group has met to help prepare modifications to our LDE rules. This hot-button issue has gained the attention of many teachers. How many of you made comments on the proposed rule changes that were posted on judgingcard.com and other places? Another volunteer group, the elected LDE committee, will have the opportunity to pass any revisions.

A TEKS revision team will be formed later this year, and there will an opportunity for teachers to apply for a position on this group. This committee will recommend changes to present to the State Board of Education. The curriculum of every agricultural education program in Texas will be affected.

In December, your VATAT Board of Directors met to conduct the business of our association. These educators serve without pay for the improvement of our profession. They are sometimes called upon to make tough decisions for the good of all. The VATAT officers go above and beyond the call of duty to serve not only the VATAT, but also other groups such as the FFA Board, Foundation Board and Animal Industries Committee.

Other opportunities exist in the areas of FFA Scholarships, CDEs, State Degree Check, FFA Convention, textbooks or teaching materials, district officers and area officers. We also can't forget serving on a variety of validation committees. While many Area Coordinators receive some compensation, most are woefully underpaid,

To be continued in the next issue

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View more information and registration forms at <http://www.tsfa.org/default.aspx?p=EducationalClassesWorkshops>.

VATAT AWARDS ARE ONLINE

The award applications and procedures are available on the VATAT website. Check out the following award categories and make plans to apply or nominate someone!

Each area is responsible for selecting its VATAT Award recipients and giving the winning nomination forms to the VATAT area executive committee member at your area convention. The executive committee member is responsible for turning in the area award winning nomination forms to Julie Vrazel, Communications Coordinator.

Awards

- Outstanding School Administrator
- Outstanding Cooperation Award
- Outstanding Newspaper
- Outstanding Radio Station
- Outstanding Television Station
- Teacher's Media Award
- Texas Turn the Key
- Ideas Unlimited
- Teacher Mentor Award
- 30-Minute Club

VATAT Scholarship

The Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association offers VATAT scholarships to members' children upon their graduation from high school. Scholarships are awarded to all eligible applicants as long as VATAT membership requirements are met, and the application meets all scholarship requirements.

Download a scholarship application at www.vatat.org under Association>VATAT Awards & Scholarships. The completed application and supporting materials must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2013, and sent to the VATAT office. Late applications will not be accepted.

A Profession of Volunteers

Continued from page 3

and volunteer much of their time also.

The next time one of your fellow teachers accepts one of these opportunities, consider thanking them for their service. They don't have to do these extra duties, and often receive criticism for decisions made. Consider letting other teachers know of your willingness to serve. Many times we ask the same individuals, because we know they are willing. We do need new blood to inject new philosophies and ideas; there will be many chances in the next several months. If you are not willing, who is?

Conference Timeline March 15

Reserve Conference Housing
Register for Pre-Conference Workshops
Pay 2013-2014 VATAT Membership Dues

Visit www.vatat.org for all your conference news!

We have a brick with your name on it.

Make your mark on the VATAT brick campaign. Purchase your personalized brick to be placed in the front walkway of the Agricultural Education Ford / Texas FFA Leadership Center in Austin. Pay \$100.00 for a brick today, and enjoy it for years to come. Each brick comes with a commemorative brick certificate which is perfect to frame and present as a gift!

Complete the brick order form, found online, and send it in with payment, which includes tax deductible checks, to the Texas FFA Foundation * Attention: Brick Campaign * 614 East 12th Street * Austin, TX 78701. You may also purchase your brick with a credit card through VATAT Online.

For more information about the brick campaign please contact Barney McClure at 512.472.3128 or barney@vatat.org. Don't miss out on this great opportunity!



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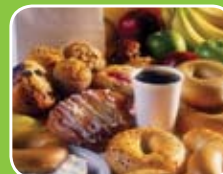
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Texas FFA

Update

Teachers should note minor, but vital CDE changes for spring 2013

Tom Maynard, Texas FFA Executive Director

As teachers think forward beyond the stock show season into the sudden transition to CDE mode, there are a few things to note in placing scan sheet orders and planning CDE-related travel.

Floriculture

Floriculture will now use the Universal C scan sheet.

Land

The Land Evaluation CDE has a new scan sheet and a slightly different process in marking answers in the treatment factors portion of the event. On the old scan sheets, students marked "all that apply." On the new sheet, students must consider each possible treatment and respond with a yes or no. Also, the CDE Advisory Committee clarified the rules to state that the Oklahoma or National Land Judging Publication was the final authority in cases in which it conflicted with the Texas Land Judging Manual publication.

Nursery Landscape

In previous years, providers supplied a paper scale. Because of accuracy issues with copied paper scales, a drafting scale is now included on the supply list, which means teachers will need to be sure scales are purchased ahead of contest dates.

Veterinary Science

Veterinary Science now requires a qualifying event ahead of state competition. Teachers should consult their respective areas for information on the area veterinary science CDE. Also, the language concerning scrubs was modified. Contestants must have scrub tops and bottoms. Over the past few years, some interpreted scrubs as only scrub tops, as is often observed in rural veterinary clinics.

Wool

Due to increasingly limited space at the state level, a qualifying event is now required for wool. Teachers should

check with their respective area for information regarding the area wool judging competition or the event designated by the area as the qualifying contest.

Teachers should review all rules prior to competing. Just like our counterparts in the athletic department, it is our job to know the rules and make sure students are properly instructed before they step into competition. It is also imperative that students are dressed appropriately. These are career development events, and dress codes are the norm in the workplace.

Winning banners, plaques and trophies is exhilarating, but banners fade and trophies tarnish. What remains are the skills and life lessons we instill in the next generation. It's still about teaching.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- March 11 - State Tractor Tech CDE - SHSU
- March 15-17 - Ag Mech Project Show - HLSR
- March 20 - McClennan Community College Invitational CDEs - Waco
- March 21 - Tarleton Invitational CDEs - Stephenville
- March 22 - West Texas A&M Invitational CDEs - Canyon
- March 23 - CDE Clinics - Texas A&M
- March 23 - Clarendon College Invitational CDEs - Clarendon
- March 26 - Stephen F. Austin Invitational CDEs - Nacogdoches

Applications for Convention Chronicle, Chorus and Foundation Ambassadors are available on the Texas FFA website.



Foundation Update

Steward Leadership in Action

Aaron Alejandro, Texas FFA Foundation Executive Director

It is a noble legacy when a leader in the FFA works to build the organization, its members and supporters not for their gain, but to ensure the future prosperity of the organization. It is a sincere motivation not of themselves, but a heart to serve others. Combine this desire to serve with communication skills to help others understand our Texas agricultural education and Texas FFA and you have the Texas FFA Foundation's Ambassador Program.

Teachers, students, parents and sponsors ask me on a regular basis, "What is this Ambassador thing?" "What are they going to learn?" I believe the real answer to these questions is not found in my response but rather in the actions of those who have served as Ambassadors and shared what they have learned with their respective chapter and community. Over the past four years, we have many great testimonies to share. Here's one that captures the heart of an Ambassador and her desire to serve.

If you are an advisor, student or parent wondering what the Ambassador program is, how it works, and what it intends to do, read the testimony below. We are planting trees and sowing seeds of greatness.

To be a Foundation Ambassador

Chanda Rae Neal

It's amazing how much you can change in just one year. In the past year I have observed tremendous changes in myself and my chapter. Nelson Henderson once said, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit." At our first day of Texas FFA Foundation Ambassador orientation, Aaron Alejandro shared with us this quote, and it has stuck with me since. I use this quote daily to help make a difference in the lives of others and to promote the most important thing I learned during my week as an ambassador - being a servant leader will make you a premier leader.

As an Ambassador, we learned not everybody knows what we as FFA members know. Not all people realize the FFA is more than just showing animals or memorizing opening ceremonies. At state convention it was our job to share with the sponsors the FFA's main focus - premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education in the classroom, a supervised agricultural experience and the FFA program. Additionally, we also pointed out that no matter what career you planned to enter, the FFA would help you achieve it because every competition we do helps you grow useful skills for the future.

When I got back to school the following August, I was ready to make a difference. One thing that was made evident as I began my term as chapter president was the lack of any agricultural or FFA knowledge by the younger students. So the officers and I decided to start a Jr. FFA chapter to get the students more involved in agriculture and hopefully ensure more members for the future of the Saltillo FFA chapter. But more than anything I wanted to teach them about servant leadership, because everything we do revolves around it.

While being a member of the chapter skills team, my advisor gave me the opportunity to mentor the Greenhand skills team. This experience helped me realize sharing my knowledge with others allows me to grow and also encourages them to gain confidence in their own abilities. The Ambassador program has taught me to empower others to exceed expectations and to be their best.

It's sad to think after this year I won't be around, but I know my success as a chapter officer will not be judged or known until I leave. I can only hope that I have helped leave a legacy - to leave a tree that will allow someone else to enjoy the shade. My FFA and Ambassador experiences have helped me confirm my career decision in agricultural education and agricultural communications. This fall I will be attending Tarleton State University to make that dream a reality.



Chandra Neal



Texas FFA Alumni

Update

Teacher Confession

Kelley White, Texas FFA Alumni President

“Once a child is in my class, I will always refer to him as ‘one of my kids’– even when he is grown.”

The above mentioned statement was posted on a friend’s Facebook page. That friend is a teacher and a former student I had in class almost 20 years ago. Of course I commented on the statement and had to share the post on my page. This post received several comments from former students asking if I really claimed them as one of my kids. My former agriculture teacher honored me by stating he claimed me as one of his kids.

We would all agree that an agriculture teacher is not your ordinary teacher. Our professors lectured us during our student teaching block about this unique profession we were preparing to enter.

You have been a part of those kids’ life if you have been in education long enough. To borrow a phrase and adapt it: You have seen “the thrill of victory, and the agony of defeat. The human drama of ~~athletic~~ agriculture competition...” You healed cuts and broken hearts. You have been there for high school graduation, college graduation and successful careers. You have danced at their weddings and celebrated the joy of birth. Sadly, you may have also delivered a eulogy and wept with their families at their passing.

I have enjoyed my time in and out of the classroom with my kids. I have also been honored to serve the Texas FFA Alumni the past few years. I have had the opportunity to share with your kids grants, scholarships and other awards during the State FFA Convention. I look forward to hanging in there to continue working with the FFA kids.

Alumni Membership

Hopefully you have figured out the new dues collecting process that the National FFA Alumni is using this year. We will have the process posted on the Texas FFA Alumni website (www.texasffaalumni.ffa.org) with the directions that were sent to us. We will be collecting State FFA Alumni dues.

Roster information can be found online at the National FFA Alumni website. They have updated their website with some AgCN resources for your use.

<https://www.ffa.org/GetInvolved/Alumni/Pages/MembershipRosters.aspx>.

This page includes:

- 1) How to guides for:
 - Individual FFA Alumni AgCN users
 - Local FFA Alumni Admins
 - State FFA Alumni Admins
- 2) Directions for submitting new affiliates paperwork and excel roster (We’ve developed a new excel roster ONLY for new affiliates and posted it online)
- 3) Directions for submitting dues payment if you’re not participating in the PayPal program.

NOTE: Please update your contact information. This could be the reason that you (the advisor) are not receiving Alumni information.

Register at <http://texasffaalumni.ffa.org> to receive information about deadlines and other Alumni news.

State FFA Alumni dues (\$5.00 per member) should be paid to:

Texas FFA Alumni
Attn. Tricia Sullivan
614 East 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701



Texas Young Farmers Update

From the President's Pen

Barry Choate, Texas Young Farmers President

Congratulations Texas Young Farmers on a great Convention in Sugarland. A good time was had by all, and the tours were very educational. It was interesting to see how the urban sprawl is affecting changes in agriculture. We are constantly adapting to our surroundings in order to make progress. Enjoy the pictures of the convention and congratulations to the award winners.

Remember that Young Farmer Scholarship applications are due by April 1. Send to Texas Young Farmers, 1694 LCR 256, Mexia, Texas 76667.



Carrie Halpain of the Bryan Young Farmer Chapter was the winner of the Farm and Ranch Management Contest.



Mark and Barbara Vecera of the Schulenburg Young Farmer Chapter were the winners of the Photo Contest.



Robert Bland of the Gonzales Young Farmer Chapter was the winner of the Ag Expressions Contest.



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Young Farmer Convention Photos



Mark Vecera of the Schulenburg Chapter was the winner of the Sundowner Award, sponsored by Daryl and Mary Raub of Lampasas.



Charles and Ethel Rochester of the Gonzales Young Farmer Chapter won Family of the Year Award, sponsored by Area VIII Young Farmers, Steve Wood President.



Kenny Bulger of the Fairfield Chapter was the winner of the Outstanding Member Award, sponsored by Chico Young Farmers, G. A. Buckner, President.



Outstanding Chapter was awarded to the Gonzales Young Farmer Chapter, Charles Rochester, President. The award is sponsored by Schulenburg Young Farmers, Connie Koopmann, President.



The Schulenburg Young Farmer Chapter was the Runner Up Outstanding Chapter.



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TEXAS AG ED FAMILY EVENTS

March 2013

1st - Spring Semester FFA Dues
Deadline - Austin

4th - TAKS Testing (Grades 10
& 11)

4th - STAAR Testing - English
Language Arts

8th - 23rd - Star of Texas Fair
and Rodeo

11th - State Tractor Tech CDE
- HLSR

April 2013

1st - 4th - STAAR Testing

1st - Swine Tag Order Begins

15th - FFA Chorus, Chronicle,
and Ambassador applications
due

24th - Deadline for Steer Tag
Orders - TAMU

May 2013

3rd - State CDEs - SHSU

4th - State CDEs - Texas A&M,
College Station

31st - Late swine tag order
ends - Austin

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of Texas

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