

Perceptions of Career & Technical Education: Findings from the 2019 DESE CTE Survey

Executive Highlights

The survey generated responses from every county in Missouri

- The survey received 9,954 total responses; almost 70 percent of survey responses came from non-students
 - Educators accounted for over 40 percent of survey respondents; students represented 30 percent.
 - Over 1,600 parents completed the survey representing 10 percent of the total.
 - 445 business leaders completed surveys, or 4.6 percent of the total.
- Among the 6,735 non-student responses 52.5 percent and 37.4 percent were in metro and non-metro counties, respectively.
 - 16.4 percent of survey respondents were in the Missouri counties of the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).
 - 13 percent of survey respondents were in the Missouri counties of the Kansas City MSA.

Non-Student respondents do not have a negative connotation of CTE, but they perceive that one exists

- More than 90 percent of non-student respondents agreed that CTE is just as important as subjects like Math, English, Science & Social Studies and that CTE can be a pathway into college for some students.
- Over 47 percent of non-student responders agreed that CTE students are not as respected as those who take more traditional classes.
- Perceptions of CTE are positive overall, but perceptions were highest among respondents from non-metro counties.
- Among the questions asked of all respondents, the findings were very consistent among non-student respondents (e.g., parents, educators, business leaders, other).

CTE perceptions differ significantly between Student and non-Student respondents

- Students appear less aware of the earning opportunities in CTE-related careers.
- Many adults do not equate CTE with college; students appear somewhat less certain.
- This lack of awareness may explain why many students prioritize college prep efforts.
 - 72 percent of students agreed that the most important thing schools should teach are courses that meet college entrance requirements.
- Assumptions about negative perceptions of CTE are more commonly held by adults.

CTE students have a much clearer understanding of CTE courses & opportunities

- The information gap between CTE students and non-CTE students is due more to a lack of awareness, than a negative perception.
- More than a third of non-CTE students lack knowledge of CTE careers, post-secondary education opportunities and certifications.

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Many parents have positive perceptions of CTE, but lack knowledge about CTE-related credentials, programs & opportunities.

- More than 50 percent of parents were unaware of opportunities to transfer CTE credits to community and technical colleges; over 40 percent did not know about student opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials.
- The relative lack of awareness about CTE certifications and opportunities was consistent between parents who did CTE when they were in school and parents who did not, as well as parents with a 4-year degree or more and those that had less than a 4-year degree.

Educators, particularly administrators & counselors, have a positive perception of CTE

- Three out of four administrators and counselors felt that students who take CTE classes are better prepared for employment than those who do not.
- Almost 90 percent of educators agree that CTE exposure should begin before HS, but many K-8 teachers lack CTE knowledge.
- Roughly 1 in 4 K-8 teachers did not know about individual career and academic plans, CTE certificates, and if their school offered work-based learning opportunities.

Business leaders represented less than 5 percent of respondents, but had a positive perception of CTE

- Over 85 percent of business leaders believed that CTE classes teach students transferable skills that will serve them well in this economy.
- Almost 80 percent believed that students who take CTE classes are better prepared for employment than those who do not take CTE.
- Over 90 percent of business leaders agree that local employers should partner with schools to provide students with real world education & training experiences.
- Only 40 percent of business leaders indicated that their company offers students in Grades 7-12 internships & work-based learning opportunities.

Contact Information

- *University of Missouri Extension, Labor and Workforce Development Program*
 - Robert Russell, Ph.D.
 - Director, Labor and Workforce Development
 - E-Mail: russellrob@Missouri.edu
 - Mark C. White, Ph.D.
 - State Specialist, Labor and Workforce Development
 - E-Mail: whitemc@missouri.edu
- *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*
 - Steve Bryant
 - Missouri Career Pathways Manager
 - E-Mail: Steve.Bryant@dese.mo.gov