

MetroED News

ADULT & CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION



Education Aimed at Specific Skills Begins a Comeback in California

**By Dan Walters
The Sacramento Bee,
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As Californians worry – with good reason – whether the state will ever truly recover from recession and re-emerge as a global powerhouse, they know that education is one major factor.

They also sense, as demonstrated by a recent USC/Los Angeles Times poll, that California's school system is very troubled, plagued by financial uncertainty and poor outcomes, such as a high dropout rate and low scores on national academic tests.

Clearly, improving education is vital to California's future, and there's no shortage of political, civic and academic discourse about reform – especially in light of the incredibly wide economic, linguistic, cultural and ethnic range of the state's 6 million school kids.

Should we spend more money? If so, how should the funds be apportioned?

Should we have more charter schools? Should we give parents "vouchers" to be spent at private or public schools? Should teachers face greater scrutiny?

Should we require that all students be prepared to attend college, or should we restore what used to be called "vocational education" to our high schools?

The latter issue has become one of the most contentious.

During the last couple of decades, many local school systems sharply reduced vocational education, since renamed "career technical education" or CTE, in favor of college prep, even mandating the latter for all.

But as dropout rates have soared to scandalous levels – 50 percent or more in some districts – it also became evident that eliminating opportunities to acquire job skills was devaluing those not inclined toward higher education.

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CCOC Students Volunteer for Peer Court

High School Students Participate in Real Cases

More than 30 Central County Occupational Center (CCOC) Probation & Legal Careers students are volunteering as "peer court members" as part of Santa Clara County's Peer Court program. The pilot program began hearing cases in November of juveniles between ages 14-17 who have already plead guilty.



For CCOC students, the county's Peer Court program is the perfect opportunity to immediately use the skills they are learning in their daily three-hour Probation & Legal Careers course that they take as part of their high school requirements. In Peer Court, students serve on cases in a variety of courtroom roles that rotate. Roles offered to student

volunteers include prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, clerk/bailiff, jury foreperson, and jury.

"Peer Court allows students to see how a courtroom really operates," CCOC Probation & Legal Careers instructor, **Mark Adams**, said. "This is an incredible opportunity for CCOC students to become familiar with the legal system by participating in real cases."

The cases that are heard in Peer Court are for misdemeanor crimes such as theft, vandalism, and assault and battery. Peer Court was first introduced by Santa Clara County Supervisor **Dave Cortese** during his State of the County address in January. Cortese said, in his speech, that Peer Court "will empower previous youth offenders to hold accountable their fellow youth, and have the added benefit of exposing youth to the workings of the criminal justice system and hopefully inspire our next generation of attorneys, judges and probation officers."

So far the Peer Court program has held information sessions at CCOC and Andrew Hill High School with an outstanding response, Cortese said. More than 60 high school students have volunteered with the majority of students coming from CCOC. "For CCOC students, this program is a really good fit," Cortese said. All volunteers must attend mandatory training sessions and sign confidentiality statements. Students can choose to accept or deny an assignment and may opt out at any time prior to signing onto a case.

Many CCOC students said that they thought the training would be overwhelming to someone without a legal background or who isn't taking a class such as CCOC's Probation & Legal Careers.

"We had already heard and learned a lot of the legal terms

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mentioned at the Peer Court training in our CCOC class," Bianco Lozano from Liberty High School, said. "It helped make it more understandable and not overwhelming."

During court sessions, a Superior Court volunteer judge presides over the case. A teen defense and prosecution attorney present the case to the teen jury. As with any case, the facts and evidence are presented. The jury then deliberates and decides on the sentence for the offender. The offender then signs a contract to complete the sentence. If the contract is not completed, the offender is returned to the Juvenile Probation Department for prosecution or consequences.

The goal of Peer Court is to stop juveniles from developing a criminal behavior pattern and help them form a better attitude toward those in authority.

The first case was held November 1 at the Santa Clara County Superior Courthouse in San Jose, Cortese said. Six CCOC students served as the prosecuting and defense counsel, one as the bailiff, and 14 served as jurors. He added that Peer Court sessions will be held twice a month with a total of four to six trials being heard each month.

Judges Bench & Witness Box on Loan to CCOC

CCOC's model courtroom in building 700 is nearly complete and will resemble a fully functional courtroom, complete with a judge's bench, witness box and jury room.

The Judge's bench and witness box is courtesy of the Santa Clara County Superior Court system. Judge **Richard Loftus** arranged with Probation & Legal Careers instructor **Mark Adams** to have a judge's bench and witness box that used to be in the County's Superior Courthouse be brought to CCOC for use on a long-term loan basis. The antique bench was refinished by the County before being placed into storage during the Superior Courthouse's remodeling.



"This is a really fantastic opportunity for CCOC," Adams said. He added that the judge's bench will be raised up and placed on a platform which will authenticate CCOC's model courtroom.

CCOC's Second Annual Blood Drive

MetroED's CCOC and MAEP students donated 140 unit/pints of blood at the second annual CCOC blood

drive on November 8. The blood collected will help up to 343 patients in the Bay Area, Blood Centers of the Pacific representative, **Wendy Theisen**, said.



Nearly 200 students and staff members registered to donate blood and 129 were eligible. Theisen said the blood goes directly to local Bay Area hospitals and is used in as little as three days after the drive. All donated blood is first tested for 14 different types of blood diseases including leukemia and AIDS.

"The participation and enthusiasm of the students, teachers, and staff at CCOC/MAEP was terrific," CCOC Health Occupations instructor, **Collette Better**s, said. "Your blood benefited and saved a number of lives here in the Bay Area." A unit of blood is nearly equivalent to the size of a small water bottle.

Prior to donating blood, students had to verify that they were at least 16-years-old, had a permission slip signed by their parents, and had a picture identification. The drive was organized by CCOC's Health Occupations students with assistance from students in CCOC's Medical Assisting and Medical Office Careers Program.

Former MAEP Students Honored at ACSA Event

Two former MAEP students, **Ken Nguyen** and his wife **Myhau Phan**, were honored at the ACSA Conference in Sacramento on November 3. Each received a Students

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MetroED News is a publication of Metropolitan Education District which administers the Central County Occupational Center/Programs for six South Bay school districts and the Metropolitan Adult Education Program for San Jose Unified School District.

At its 242,000 square foot Career Technical Education Center at 760 Hillside Avenue in San Jose, Central County Occupational Center provides job training for students from more than 30 local high schools as well as adults from the South Bay region. Training is tuition-free or at a nominal cost in 33 career-technical fields including computer technology, health, business, manufacturing, automotive systems and service technologies.

MAEP offers programs at no tuition or at nominal cost to adults in such categories as high school diploma, adult literacy, English as a Second Language, older adults, handicapped adults, personal and professional growth.

Metropolitan Education District has an annual budget of approximately \$22 million and its staff of 150 full and part-time employees serves more than 10,000 persons each year.

Student Success

Succeed award for the success they have achieved in their lives since attending MAEP's adult education program in the mid-80's.

In 1985, both students escaped Vietnam after Nguyen refused to join the communist army. They began taking ESL classes at Wilson Adult School, which was part of MAEP, in Santa Clara Unified School District, in December 1985.

They attended class every day and enrolled their children in the free childcare offered. After successfully completing their ESL studies, both Nguyen and Phan moved onto college and now own **Furniture USA** in Sacramento. Their two children have also thrived, their daughter is a high school ELA/ELD teacher in Sacramento and their son works in New York as the director of marketing at a software company.



BERBA Cystic Fibrosis Fundraiser

The 3rd Annual Broc Glover Breathe Easy Ride Bay Area (BERBA) Cystic Fibrosis Fundraiser was held at CCOC on October 1 and raised more than \$23,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Nearly 50 riders took a 55 mile route through San Jose, Saratoga, and Los Gatos before returning to CCOC. Riders raised funds by collecting donations, participating in the silent auction, and purchasing raffle tickets.



The event was organized by former CCOC student **Brett Barker** and his girlfriend, **Amber Van Der Veen**, an English teacher at Santa Teresa High School. Barker has CF and received a double

lung transplant in April 2011. This is the second year in a row that the event has been held at CCOC.

MAEP Class Enrollment Continues to Climb

MAEP's consolidation to one campus has been a success! Most classes are full, and many classes such as ESL, High School Diploma, and GED preparation have waiting lists. MAEP recently added two new evening classes for high

school diploma and GED to accommodate the demand.

MAEP plans to start a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) class sometime in the spring. Currently MAEP is searching for a CNA Program Coordinator to teach and coordinate the new class. CNA is one of the fastest growing entry level positions in health care. To enroll in the CNA program, students must be able to read, write, and speak English. More details will be available on www.MetroED.net once more information is available.

CCOC Employer Advisory Board Meeting

More than 200 representatives from industry, the community, and Job Corps, attended CCOC's annual Employer Advisory Board meeting on October 13.

Each sector has an employer advisory board that consists of industry and business members that review course curriculum and inform the instructors of the latest trends in their trade. The annual meeting helps ensure that CCOC teachers are teaching students the latest skills that employers are seeking in job candidates.

Janice Shriver, Labor Market Analyst for the Employment Development Department served as the keynote speaker. Dinner was prepared and served by CCOC's Baking & Catering and Culinary Arts students.

CCOC Begins Student Conferences



CCOC held its first Career Technical Education student trade conference on November 9 for 2011-12. The Business, Finance & Technology all-day "real world" conference was a huge hit with students from CCOC's Managerial Accounting, Computer Technology Careers, Office Assistant, and Small Business Management programs.



Before & After Makeover
ed by a SB70 grant.

Several more student conferences will be held during the school year, each focusing on a different trade sector. Instructors must apply to host a conference for their sector and each conference is fund-

ed by a SB70 grant. Last year was the first year that CCOC held student conferences. Nineteen conferences were held, each consisting of at least three breakout sessions for students to choose from, a keynote speaker, and a lunch prepared by CCOC's Baking & Catering and Culinary Arts students.

Four lucky students were selected to receive a makeover based on an essay they wrote on why they should receive a makeover. The free makeover included a haircut, make-

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MetroED is the largest career-oriented organization comprised of high school and adult career-technical, and academic programs. It annually provides more than 10,000 diverse students with the skills to help them be productive, income-earning and tax-paying contributors to Silicon Valley.

“PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS!”

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 Former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger became a vocal CTE advocate and other political figures, such as Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, joined the chorus. However, many in the educational establishment were reluctant.

Slowly, however, as college graduates collect unemployment insurance while skilled workers in many fields, such as auto mechanics, are in short supply, the worm is turning.

There is a growing realization that not all students are destined for college, nor should they be, that there are too many variations in aptitude and attitude to stuff all kids into the same pedagogic mold, that many would benefit from job-oriented educations, and that society needs them.

A symbol of that realization is what happened this month in Lodi Unified, one of many school districts that had adopted a college-prep-for-all curriculum.

Lodi is eliminating that well-meaning but misguided dictum and telling its high school students that their educations can be tailored to their individual traits, whether that means college prep or vocational.

As one Lodi trustee, Rob Heberle, put it: "We're putting kids in classes that they are not prepared for and forcing them to fail."

May his number multiply.

Read more: <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/11/28/4083363/dan-walters-education-aimed-at.html#ixzz1f1XNe3Qv>

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 up and skin care, and a new business outfit, complete with shoes. The transformation from student to business professional was amazing!

Spring Schedule Will be Posted in December

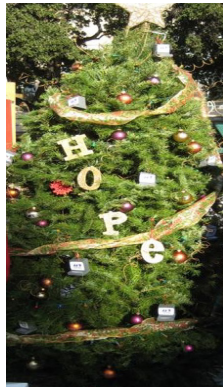
The schedule of classes for Spring 2012 will be posted online by December 1 and classes start in January 2012. Due to budget cuts, a complete schedule of classes is no longer being printed, however a four page mailer will be mailed to homes in the San Jose Unified School District Service area in early December. To view the complete schedule of classes, visit www.MetroED.net.

Christmas In The Park

Both CCOC Interior Design Program and MAEP are continuing their Christmas in the Park tradition this year! Be sure to check out both trees when visiting Christmas in the Park in downtown San Jose at Plaza De Cesar Chavez through December 31.

Tree #702 is MAEP's CalWORKS program tree of H.O.P.E. (Helping Out People Everywhere). MAEP chose the theme of HOPE because students said that hope still exists at MAEP. CalWORKs students that decorated the tree said they come to MAEP to learn a new trade, improve their skills, learn English, earn their GED or high school diploma.

CCOC's Interior Design's program chose the theme of *Despicable Me*. Tree #705 features the lovable minions, their fearless super-villion leader Gru, the moon he planned to steal and the three orphan girls, Margo, Edith, and Agnes that he adopts during the course of the animated film, *Despicable Me*.



MAEP's Tree



CCOCs Tree

Metropolitan Education District

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