

To: School Board, Ferndale School District (WA)

From: Linda Quinn, Superintendent

Date: May 25, 2021

Subject: 2021 Monitoring Report
Results Policy 6 (R-6)
Career Readiness

School Board's Monitoring Notes

(To be completed by each member individually prior to discussion by the whole Board)

Board Member: _____

Total Number of Improvement Goals = 11

Number Demonstrating Reasonable Progress = _____

Number Not Demonstrating Reasonable Progress = _____

Commendations

Recommendations

Other Notes

Overall Rating: _____ Reasonable Progress _____ Not Reasonable Progress

Superintendent's Introduction

This report needs to begin with a recounting of the evolution of Policy R-6, which was first created in the fall of 2017 when members of the Ferndale School Board and Executive Team spent five days with two consultants developing the first draft of the set of governance policies currently in use in Ferndale. At that time, a policy on Career and Technical Education (CTE) was created as a subset of Results Policy 2 (Academic Achievement), which includes a list of all of the academic disciplines (Math, Science, English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and so on). Specifically, the CTE policy was labeled as R-2.8, and it was situated right between R-2.7 (Health and Physical Education) and R-2.9 (Electives).

As we worked with the new Results Policies against the backdrop of the Board's focus on developing the whole child/whole person, we began to see that career education, with the desired outcome of career readiness for every graduate, deserved its own policy, one with the same overarching status as Policy R-3 (Civic Engagement) and Policy R-4 (Character/Social and Emotional Learning). In other words, it needed to be viewed as one of the three pillars of our whole person approach. So, in the fall of 2018, before preparing our first report on this career education policy, we pulled it out of the list of discrete disciplines and relabeled it R-6 (Career Readiness).

As we wrote in our interpretation of R-6, which the Board approved in 2018,

The Board recognizes Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs as a key piece of our overall career readiness efforts. They value the fact that CTE programs have traditionally been hallmarks of excellence at Ferndale High School. They fully endorse the mission of CTE, which is "to prepare students for success in post-secondary education and careers by helping them develop the skills, technical knowledge, academic rigor, and real-world experience for high-skill, high-demand, and highly successful careers." They are committed to maintaining CTE as a major focus area at FHS.

At the same time, the Board knows that an effective system of career-focused education must begin long before high school. As early as kindergarten, students can benefit from being exposed to various occupations and practicing job skills. Therefore, our career readiness program needs to encompass grades K-12.

The Board also knows that, once students get to high school, they do not all concentrate their studies in CTE courses. Therefore, even at this level, CTE programs must be considered only part of a larger district-wide and, preferably, community-wide emphasis on developing the career readiness of every young person.

Although we pulled this policy out of R-2, where it originally resided as one in a list of disciplines and was focused solely on CTE coursework, we have not yet fully achieved the aim of creating a roadmap to career readiness for all District students. The process of preparing this report has made that clear, as I am sure you will also note as you read it. Our report still focuses almost exclusively on the status of CTE classes at Ferndale High School.

We were headed in the right direction following the 2018 decision to make Career Readiness a stand-alone policy. Based on the Board's values, I articulated a new version of our mission in my September 3, 2019 back-to-school speech to the entire Ferndale School District staff, letting them know that career readiness was one of our big three outcomes (or "results," to use the parlance of your governance policies) for every child. I told the staff,

We are going to address the development of the whole child and the whole person not as a means to an end that can be measured and quantified by a number [on a test], but because it is the right thing to do. Because it is the most important thing to do!

To signal to you and the community we serve that we are serious about this shift in our focus, not just for 2019-2020 but from here on out, we have picked a new "brand" to communicate the mission of our school district. FerndaleCARES is going to be our new way of talking about what we do, which is so much bigger and broader than just teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Our main goal is not to get kids ready for the next test. It's not even to get them ready for college, although that is important for those who need a college degree to pursue their chosen path in life. But college is a means to an end, not the end game itself.

With FerndaleCARES, we are announcing our end game, which is this: We are going to help every child and young person entrusted to our care develop into well-rounded, well-prepared, productive adults. And to do that, we are renewing our emphasis on Character, Citizenship, and Career-focused learning.

As I said -- as you all know -- college is not an end game, but it is a means to some ends for some of our students, and we won't forget that. In fact, we will honor that and make sure we keep the option of college open for as many students as possible. However, we are going to make our main focus what we want for ALL students, every single one of them, and that is that they leave us Character Strong, Civic Minded, and Career Ready.

By Character Strong, I mean that they are good, healthy individuals who recognize their own strengths and can manage their own emotions and actions.

By Civic Minded, I mean that they are prepared and willing to be part of an interdependent community and world; they know how to participate in civil discourse; they understand the democratic process; they are good neighbors and good citizens.

By Career Ready, I mean that they are prepared when they leave us to take the next steps (which may or may not include college) toward a career that will support them; they have a purpose and a direction; they also have the knowledge and the skills they need to pursue their chosen path.

We had started down this path. We put it on a poster. We were working with the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce on a career-focused initiative called Ferndale Futures.

We embedded the idea of career education for all into conversations with our broad-based Design Advisory Committee about planning the new Ferndale High School facility.

But the process has stalled. While I generally try to avoid making excuses, I feel like this report warrants an explanation. Forward progress on initiating a K-12 focus on Career Readiness has been stalled by the failed levy and the pandemic. It has been, and it may continue to be, stalled by changes in leadership. The latter, I believe, requires the greatest attention.

During a recent interview for a new high school assistant principal, I listened to a candidate (who was not selected) talk about the old “college or career” dichotomy in high school, as in a student either pursues a college track or a career track. We must divest ourselves of this outdated mindset. College cannot be viewed as an alternative to getting a career, as I feel certain any parent who has paid college tuition recently would agree. And regardless of the strength of their career education pathway in high school, most students will need some sort of post-high-school education or training to secure a family wage-earning job. We know both of these things are true. Yet shifting perspective across the School District and community from seeing career education as the sole purview of CTE to seeing CTE as a subset of career education for every student requires a strong vision and strong leadership. The administrative champions of this perspective in Ferndale, however, will all soon be gone. Scott Brittain (former Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning) and Edwin Elefson (FHS Assistant Principal and Director of CTE) have already left the District. Jeremy Vincent (FHS Principal and Planning Principal for the new facility) and I (your current Superintendent) will soon be leaving. To address these staff changes, my fervent recommendation is that we very intentionally hire and/or cultivate a new group of leaders with a compelling vision of Career Readiness to steward this pillar of our whole-person approach. It is the only way we will achieve our mission of growing every student into a graduate who is character strong, civic-minded, and *career ready*.

A comprehensive K-12 Career Readiness approach will need to encompass:

- A clearly articulated set of universal job skills (attending regularly, meeting deadlines, working with people of diverse backgrounds, etc.) and broad career pathways (Science and Technology, Health and Human Services, Arts and Entertainment, etc.) that are shared across grade levels and disciplines.
- A scope and sequence for cultivation of universal job skills and exploration of careers beginning in elementary school, continuing through middle school, and culminating in high school.
- The expectation that all students leave the 8th grade with the first draft of a Post High Plan with a preliminary selection of a career strand of interest and demonstrated understanding of the education and/or training necessary to pursue a career in that strand.
- Opportunities (if not expectations) for secondary students to participate in job shadows, apprenticeships, mentorships, service projects, and/or community-based experiences related to careers.
- A minimum five-year (grades 8-12) portfolio documenting students' career-focused explorations, experiences, and plans.

- The expectation that all students graduate from high school with a completed Post High Plan demonstrating they have successfully completed a high school course of studies preparing them to embark upon the next steps toward their chosen careers.

Such a comprehensive K-12 Career Readiness approach has many advantages. These include:

- Increasing student motivation by emphasizing interests and strengths rather than deficiencies.
- Making learning more relevant.
- Providing a compelling reason for early planning.
- Empowering students and families by allowing them to take an active role in designing their education.
- Personalizing each student’s educational program within the context of a standard district curriculum that is aligned with State standards.
- Involving all teachers by encouraging them to be more intentional about identifying job skills and designing career-focused, interest-based learning work.
- Creating opportunities for more meaningful community and business partnerships.
- Honoring student learning that occurs outside the traditional classroom.
- Providing a competitive edge for students in post-high programs.

More than 20 years ago, educational scholars began talking about three new Rs for education. Instead of Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, they said we needed to be focusing on Relationships, Relevance, and Rigor. My experience of the past two decades has convinced me these “new” three Rs are not equivalents but rather part of an equation: Relationships + Relevance = Rigor. We have devoted considerable time and attention in Ferndale to the importance of Relationships within all aspects of our school system. I am convinced a stronger, clearer, more comprehensive focus on career readiness can help strengthen the Relevance piece of the equation, which will, in turn, enhance the kind of Rigor called out in the Board’s Results Policy 2, which asks for improved student achievement in each of the academic disciplines.

I realize that the vision I have laid out in this introduction is lofty. I know, as I admitted above, that it far exceeds the contents of the report that follows. I hope that it will provide the impetus for the next cycle of work in the area of ensuring all Ferndale students graduate from high school Career Ready.

Before launching into the remainder of the content of this report, I want to share a note about its format and organization. As we have in the previous monitoring reports we have provided you, we have included the interpretations and monitoring indicators you approved in September 2018 in our Phase One Report for Policy R-6, so that you do not have to look back and forth between two documents. All of the language from the Phase One Report is written in blue. All of the new information is written in black. We look forward to your feedback.

Policy

All students will graduate from high school Career Ready.

Interpretation

We understand this policy expresses the deep value the Board places on career-focused education. The Board expects us to ensure all students leave our school system with the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a “career,” which in today’s economy is more than

just a job. A career provides a family-sustaining wage and pathways to advancement and requires postsecondary training or education. A job, on the other hand, may be obtained with only a high school diploma, but offers no guarantee of advancement or mobility. Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for his/her chosen career (i.e. community college, technical/ vocational program, four-year college, apprenticeship, or significant on-the-job training).

We further understand that the Board recognizes Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs as a key piece of our overall career readiness efforts. They value the fact that CTE programs have traditionally been hallmarks of excellence at Ferndale High School. They fully endorse the mission of CTE, which is “to prepare students for success in post-secondary education and careers by helping them develop the skills, technical knowledge, academic rigor, and real-world experience for high-skill, high-demand, and highly successful careers.” They are committed to maintaining CTE as a major focus area at FHS.

At the same time, the Board knows that an effective system of career-focused education must begin long before high school. As early as kindergarten, students can benefit from being exposed to various occupations and practicing job skills. Therefore, our career readiness program needs to encompass grades K-12.

The Board also knows that, once students get to high school, they do not all concentrate their studies in CTE courses. Therefore, even at this level, CTE programs must be considered part of a larger district-wide and, preferably, community-wide emphasis on developing the career readiness of every young person. The economic future of our society depends on this work.

Through this policy, the Board acknowledges a range of benefits resulting from Career & Technical Education (CTE) specifically and career-focused instruction in general. Through such experiences, students are able to:

- Explore various career clusters.
- Find connections between their academic coursework and their career goals, thereby making classroom learning more relevant and engaging.
- Develop the skills demanded by both the labor market and post-secondary degrees in technical fields.
- Develop positive attitudes and build self-esteem.
- Acquire such transferable employability (“soft”) skills as critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, professionalism, creativity, etiquette, public speaking, and cultural competency – all of which will provide them with a competitive edge for college and/or careers.
- In some CTE courses, earn high school credits in math, science, English/language arts and/or social studies in a context where these academic disciplines are applied to real-world problems.
- In some CTE courses, earn both high school and postsecondary credit simultaneously.
- Find their passion in a particular career field as the first step toward figuring out how to turn a passion into a paycheck.
- Learn about multiple pathways to success.
- According to research, be more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in a two-year college, be employed, and earn higher wages.

Background Information about Career & Technical Education

Every Career & Technical Education (CTE) class in our State and across the country falls into one of 16 “Career Clusters” defined by a group of jobs and industries related by skills or products. These 16 Clusters were established at the National level by the States' Career Clusters Initiative, and they are recognizable across the United States in middle schools, high schools, community and technical colleges, and the workforce. Within each of the 16 Clusters, there are specific “pathways” that correspond to a collection of courses and training opportunities designed to prepare students for a given career field.

Each CTE course is required to follow an established and adopted course framework. Every framework aligns national standards for a particular industry to State core content standards (in ELA, math, science, etc.), performance assessments, leadership expectations, employability skills, thinking skills, and relevance to the current needs of the workforce -- all in one document. In short, these frameworks provide an overview of the outcomes students are expected to meet in each CTE course. They also support the continuous improvement of CTE programs because they are reviewed annually by local Program Advisory Committees and Program Supervisors at OSPI.

In Ferndale, we have CTE Program Advisory Committees for each of the pathways included in our curriculum. These Advisory Committees are made up of members representing business and industry, the District teaching staff, labor organizations, special populations, community, students, parents, and building or District administration. A majority of the members on each committee possesses a working knowledge of the skills and competencies required for the particular occupation(s) they represent, current needs of the labor market, and the kinds of coursework necessary to prepare future workers to meet these needs. As such, the Advisory Committees provide advice to educators about the design, development, delivery, evaluation, and continuous improvement of our Career & Technical Education programs.

The goals of Ferndale High School’s program-specific CTE Advisory Committees include the following:

1. Review skill gap data for Whatcom County and the State of Washington to ensure alignment between community needs and CTE programs offered at FHS.
2. Conduct and/or audit annual program evaluations.
3. Identify and prioritize program gaps and needs.
4. Maintain a five-year program improvement plan.
5. Stay up-to-date on State budget allocations for CTE programs and provide input into budgeting at the local level.

Available Career & Technical Education Results Data for 2017-2018

Enrollment

- Total number of students enrolled in a CTE course = 1033 students
- Number of CTE “Concentrators,” defined as any student who completes two or more courses in a particular CTE Cluster with a “B” or better grade = 558 students
- Tech Prep “Concentrators,” defined as any student who completes two or more Tech Prep courses (eligible for dual college credit) with a “B” or better grade = 302 students

Improvement Goals

Creating this report has caused us to reflect on what data we currently have available to demonstrate the success and/or shortcomings of both our high school CTE programs and our K-12 career-focused education programs – and also the data we wish we had that we are not

currently collecting. We have established the following goals in order to (1) provide a more complete data-rich picture of our career-focused education programs; (2) identify gaps in our current programming; and (3) develop continuous improvement goals related to our efforts to ensure all students graduate from high school career ready.

1. Show evidence that all students enrolled in CTE courses and/or pathways are being provided State-defined CTE content and are meeting State-defined outcomes aligned with those courses and pathways.

___Has made reasonable progress
___Has not made reasonable progress

All of our CTE courses and pathways in the Ferndale School District offer State-defined CTE content and meet State-defined outcomes. On an annual basis, we review, update as needed, and submit our frameworks to OSPI. Additionally, we review our courses and pathway options each spring to determine any gaps in potential offerings and work to resolve those as appropriate.

2. Present more detailed data related to CTE offerings and student participation in each. Include which career clusters are represented at FHS, what pathway courses are offered in each cluster, how many students are enrolled in each course, and what percentage this number represents of the whole student body.

___Has made reasonable progress
___Has not made reasonable progress

An accounting of our CTE offerings and course participation at Ferndale High School for the past two years is displayed in the following chart:

| Course Description | 2019-2020 Count | 2020-2021 Count |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Academic Workshop | | 24 |
| Photo Design 1 | 160 | 224 |
| Photo Design 2 | 68 | 86 |
| Photo Design 3 | 5 | 20 |
| Photo Design 3 | 7 | 20 |
| Advanced Placement Art 2D: Photography | 3 | 6 |
| Advanced Placement Art 2D Photography | 3 | 5 |
| Video Productions 1 | 102 | 92 |
| Video Productions 2 | 37 | |
| Marketing Introduction | 54 | 88 |
| Personal Finance | 35 | 75 |
| Accounting A | 14 | |
| Accounting B | 8 | |
| Advanced Business Education -- DECA | 10 | 15 |
| Advanced Business Education -- DECA | 13 | 15 |
| Business Law | 53 | 101 |
| Web Design 1A | 74 | 120 |
| Web Design 1B | 12 | 28 |
| Advanced Placement Java Programming | 2 | |
| Advanced Placement Java Programming | 2 | |
| Yearbook | 13 | 37 |
| Yearbook | 13 | 50 |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| Health | 115 | |
| Teen Living | 64 | |
| Sewing and Textiles 1 | 28 | |
| Sewing and Textiles 2 | 3 | |
| Culinary Arts Introduction | 167 | 305 |
| Culinary Arts 1 | 94 | 146 |
| Culinary Arts 2 | 51 | 44 |
| Health Careers 1 | | 67 |
| Health Careers 2 | | 47 |
| Child Development | 30 | |
| Child Development Theory | 19 | |
| Medical Terminology A | 28 | 38 |
| Medical Terminology B | 26 | 36 |
| Engineering Design 1 | 167 | 182 |
| Engineering Design 2 | 78 | 95 |
| Advanced Engineering Design | 23 | 182 |
| Advanced Engineering Design | 25 | 95 |
| Architectural Design | 24 | 24 |
| Advanced Architectural Design | | 10 |
| Design and Construction | 167 | 19 |
| Advanced Design and Construction | 30 | 50 |
| Advanced Design and Construction | 91 | 99 |
| Power and Energy A | 30 | 24 |
| Power and Energy B | 29 | 32 |
| Design and Construction | | 93 |
| Special Projects Advanced Agriculture Business | 14 | 7 |
| Special Projects Advanced Metals | 3 | 3 |
| Special Projects Advanced Design and Construction | 6 | 1 |
| Special Projects Advanced Sports Medicine | 9 | 10 |
| Special Projects Advanced Engineering Design | 2 | 1 |
| Special Projects Aquaculture | 5 | 3 |
| Special Projects Medical Terminology | 1 | 2 |
| Special Projects Animal Science | 1 | 2 |
| Special Projects Culinary Arts | 4 | 2 |
| Special Projects Child Development | 3 | |
| Special Projects Business and Marketing | | 3 |
| Special Projects Floral Design | 3 | |
| Special Projects Small Engines | 2 | |
| Special Projects Power and Energy | 2 | |
| Technology and Help Desk 1 | 22 | 40 |
| Technology and Help Desk 2 | 23 | 48 |
| Aquaculture | 193 | 253 |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Horticulture 1 | 130 | 140 |
| Horticulture 2 | 42 | 116 |
| Metals Technology 1 | 130 | 126 |
| Metals Technology 2 | 74 | |
| Advanced Metals Technology | 22 | |
| Advanced Metals Technology | 21 | |
| Agricultural Business Management A | 18 | 15 |
| Agricultural Business Management B | 20 | 13 |
| Animal Science | 50 | 111 |
| Veterinary Science | 30 | 60 |
| Agri-Science 1 | 164 | 239 |
| Agri-Science 2 | 74 | 104 |
| Small Engine Overhaul | 29 | 159 |
| Small Engine Overhaul | 26 | 38 |
| Floral Design A | 14 | |
| Floral Design B | 13 | |
| Landscaping | 29 | |
| Landscaping | 29 | |
| Sports Medicine | 41 | 58 |
| Sports Medicine | 35 | 55 |
| Sports Medicine Practicum | 78 | |
| Sports Medicine Practicum | 68 | |
| Advanced Sports Medicine | 23 | 58 |
| Advanced Sports Medicine | 22 | 55 |
| Work-Based Learning | 29 | 82 |
| Work-Based Learning | 32 | |

Clearly, the data in this chart does not respond to all parts of the goal we established. It is simply the data we have been able to glean from Skyward. For the past four months (since students returned to part-time in-person learning on February 1, 2021), we have been operating without a CTE Director. Principal Vincent and one of the CTE teachers have managed to address state and federal reporting requirements, contractual obligations, and immediate teacher needs to keep our CTE programs fully functioning in the service of students and their learning. However, we chose not to ask them to do the extra work that would have been required to respond fully to all aspects of this report.

We did, however, pull together a list of the career clusters we currently support and the courses that may be offered (but are not all necessarily offered every year) within each of the clusters. (Note that not all of the courses listed are CTE courses, which demonstrates the way a career pathway model can be broader than just CTE).

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
 - Agri-Science
 - Advanced Agriculture Business

- Advanced Metals Technology
- Agriculture Business Management
- Aquaculture
- Animal Science
- Floral Design
- Horticulture
- Landscaping
- Metals Technology
- Power and Energy
- Small Engine Overhaul
- Small Gas Engines
- Veterinary Science
- Architecture and Construction
 - Advanced Architectural Design
 - Advanced Design and Construction
 - Architectural Design
 - Design and Construction
- Arts, Audio-Visual, and Communications
 - Advanced Art Workshop
 - Advanced Chamber Orchestra
 - Advanced Placement Art 2D: Photography
 - Art
 - Ceramics
 - Concert Choir
 - Drumming Introduction
 - Jazz Band
 - Percussion Ensemble
 - Photo Design
 - Swing Choir
 - Symphonic Band
 - Symphony Orchestra
 - Talons – Tenor/Bass Choir
 - Theater Arts
 - Treble Choir
 - Video Productions
 - Wind Ensemble
 - Yearbook
- Business, Management, and Administration
 - Advanced Business Education DECA
 - Business and Marketing
 - Business Computing Introduction
 - Business Introduction
 - Business Law
 - Work-Based Learning
- Education and Training
 - Grow Our Own Teacher Academy (coming fall 2021)
- Finance
 - Accounting
 - Personal Finance
- Health Science
 - Advanced Sports Medicine
 - Health

- Health Science Careers
- Medical Terminology
- Sports Medicine
- Sports Medicine Practicum
- Teen Living
- Human Services
 - Child Development
 - Child Development Theory
 - Culinary Arts
 - Culinary Arts Introduction
 - Latino Cultural Awareness
 - Leadership
 - Oksale
 - Peer Tutor
 - Sewing and Textiles
- Information Technology
 - Advanced Placement Java Programming
 - Technology Help Desk
 - Web Design
 - Computer Science (coming fall 2021)
- Marketing
 - Business and Marketing
 - Marketing Introduction
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
 - Advanced Engineering Design
 - Algebra and Algebra II
 - Astronomy
 - Biology
 - Calculus
 - Chemistry
 - Engineering Design
 - Environmental Science
 - Forests and Society
 - Geometry
 - Multi-Variable Calculus
 - Oceanography
 - Physics
 - Pre-Calculus
 - Statistics

3. Continue to develop and facilitate strong program-specific CTE Advisory Committees and document their progress toward meeting defined goals.

___Has made reasonable progress

___Has not made reasonable progress

The CTE staff at Ferndale High School meets twice annually with their CTE Advisory Boards. To accommodate restrictions imposed by Covid-19, this past year CTE teachers met with their individual advisory boards instead of meeting as a large group.

These Advisory Board meetings allow advisors to review content frameworks and make recommendations for adjusting them, along with instructional practices, to align with current industry standards and better prepare students for careers within those industry pathways.

While we have maintained these Advisory Boards, we need to establish a system that allows for better documentation of recommendations, improvement goals, and progress toward achieving those goals.

4. Upon the advice of CTE Advisory Committees and other representatives of local and State employers, create a five-year plan for updating overall CTE programming in the Ferndale School District.

___ Has made reasonable progress

___ Has not made reasonable progress

Over the course of the past two years, the process of designing the new Ferndale High School facility has provided us with a venue for planning the future of CTE programming. Although that process has not been recorded in the form of a five-year plan, the design itself is evidence of the conversations that have occurred and the decisions that have been made.

During the past 12 months, the members of the CTE department has completed a Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA). The CLNA is comprised of five elements: (1) improving equity and access; (2) evaluation of student performance; (3) evaluation of CTE program alignment (including size, scope, and quality); (4) implementation of programs and CTE programs of study; and (5) recruitment, retention, and training of CTE educators. As part of the CLNA, we reviewed our current state within each of the elements and established improvement goals.

Following is the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment completed by the FHS CTE staff and submitted to the State:

Improving Equity and Access

Our current approach to maximizing student potential to increase success in our CTE programs includes ensuring that there are no dual credit or shop fees, and our intent is to continue to ensure that there are no financial barriers for students participating in dual credit courses. In order to reach out to students historically underserved, our Career Center Specialist made contact with individual students and helped to support and connect them with CTE graduation pathways. As we continue to strengthen our High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP), an area of focus will be creating a system that guides students toward courses that will meet their career needs.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Through our CLNA, we found that we needed to develop data collection strategies to address gaps adequately and equitably in CTE services to our students and create a plan for how to address these identified gaps. Through this data analysis, we also hope to generate an understanding of why the gaps exist and how we could potentially reduce those gaps and increase equity and access within our CTE programs.

Evaluation of CTE Program Alignment: Including Size, Scope, and Quality

As mentioned above, we are in the process of developing and implementing evaluation parameters, and in so doing we are collaborating with other educational institutions to develop strategies and methodologies. As we are in the process of designing and building a new school and CTE department, we are also evaluating the potential for new equipment and programs in collaboration with our Advisory Boards.

Implementation of Programs and CTE Programs of Study

Our CTE programs partner with a variety of stakeholders to ensure that the programs of study are aligned to a postsecondary pathway in several ways. Our CTE dual credit consortium meets quarterly, and during these meetings we focus on articulation between programs. We maintain competency profiles that include college course outcomes and recommended texts, which are reviewed every three years, or as needed. Our High School and College Program Advisory Board meets 2-3 times each year; however, we wish to increase representation from Ferndale High School at these meetings. Our Program Advisory Committees ensure that our programs of study are responsive to community employment needs, are informed by labor market information, and allow for employer input.

Recruitment, Retention, and Training of CTE Educators

The processes that we have in place to recruit new CTE educators who reflect our student population include administering student interest surveys to determine students' interests as well as studying workforce data to determine where we may need additional teachers or different CTE course offerings. We also completed the CLNA with our Advisory Committees' input to determine current community needs in comparison to current course offerings. We encourage our CTE teachers to participate in and attend conferences in their professional organizations. Our CTE Director meets with each teacher annually in the fall to develop a professional growth plan to support that teacher's progress toward earning a continuing CTE certificate, and then the Director meets periodically throughout the year to review progress toward certification. In addition, conditionally certified CTE teachers use trainings and courses to obtain the required clock hours and program requirements to extend their conditional certification.

Two additional areas of focus within this goal include (1) the development of our Grow Our Own program for careers in education in order to achieve a workforce that more closely represents the diversity of our student body, and (2) the implementation of a Computer Science course to comply with RCW 28A.230.3000, which requires an elective computer science course be available to all high school students beginning in the 2022-23 school year. While both of these additions will begin with a single course during the 2021-2022 school year, we envision they will be developed into full-blown CTE pathways over time.

The rationale for the design of the new CTE facility, the information from Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, and a yet-to-be-completed analysis of the local job market will provide the basis for an updated five-year plan called for by this goal. We envision the new leadership of Ferndale High School will complete such a plan before the next report on Policy R-6 is written.

- 5. Assess our current STEM programs in order to work with local businesses and other organizations to create stronger STEM-related pathway(s) that (1) meet the interests of our students, (2) fulfill the needs of the local community, and (3) complement the workforce requirements of the next decade.

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| ___ Has made reasonable progress |
| ___ Has not made reasonable progress |

As mentioned above, we recently completed the CLNA (Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment) in collaboration with our CTE Advisory Boards to evaluate our STEM programs. Also as noted above, we are in the process of adding a Computer Science elective class, along with a new "Grow Our Own" Teacher Academy class at FHS, both beginning Fall 2021.

6. In partnership with the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, launch a District-wide, community-supported initiative – branded as *Ferndale Futures* -- aimed at providing all Ferndale students with quality career-focused learning experiences. Document the results in terms of student participation.

___Has made reasonable progress

___Has not made reasonable progress

Ferndale Futures is a workforce development effort developed through a collaboration of the Ferndale School District and the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce. Its overarching mission is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to be competitive in local and global markets and to strengthen the Greater Ferndale economy.

Lunch with Leaders was the first manifestation of *Ferndale Futures*. It consisted of a series of lunch events each featuring a particular theme or cluster of professions (like manufacturing or health care), which allowed opportunities for a group of approximately 30 interested high school students to rotate through 5-6 employer-led sessions over lunch. Employers talked to students about skills they are looking for in employees, career development pathways, job shadow opportunities, and potential employment.

Unfortunately, one of the casualties of the pandemic was our ability to continue to grow *Ferndale Futures*. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, we had begun quarterly “Lunch with Leaders” programs. However, these came to a halt when we were forced to close down in-person school.

Our Ferndale Futures vision includes resuming our collaboration with the Chamber not only to continue Lunch with Leaders but to move beyond these single events to provide an ongoing source of service-learning, job shadow, mentorship, and work-based learning opportunities for Ferndale students. At one time, we even talked about staffing an office in Pioneer Pavilion (where the Chamber is located) with a District employee whose job would be to facilitate such connections between the business community and the school district.

7. In collaboration with the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, reignite our Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program. Document the results in terms of student participation.

___Has made reasonable progress

___Has not made reasonable progress

Work-Based Learning (WBL) is a federally-supported Career and Technical Education (CTE) program that connects workplaces to the classroom to prepare students for real-world careers. In a nutshell, a WBL program allow students to earn high school credit for holding a job as long as a certified teacher helps them recognize, nurture, and reflect on the knowledge and skills they are developing through that job.

Even though the goal of every WBL program is the same -- to prepare the next generation of the American workforce -- each state has its own variations of what WBL entails. According to the US Department of Education, all programs must exhibit these three qualities to be successful:

- Alignment between classroom and the workplace
- Application of academic, technical, and employability skills
- Support from classroom and workplace mentors

Despite our extensive CTE program in Ferndale, we have not implemented WBL on any kind of significant scale. We have been attracted to the concept WBL for several reasons. Among these are: (1) It honors what students learn beyond the classroom; (2) It can be made available as a career development option to all students, even those who are not enrolled in one of the CTE pathway programs we offer in Ferndale; and (3) It would allow us

to strengthen our current Teacher Assistant “course”/credit by ensuring our TAs are acquiring targeted and identified skills.

We have yet made progress on this goal.

8. Review and expand our Tech Prep efforts with local community colleges (Whatcom Community College and Bellingham Technical College) to better leverage dual credit options for students in our CTE programs. Keep data on the number of students availing themselves of Tech Prep credits in order to set improvement goals.

___ Has made reasonable progress
___ Has not made reasonable progress

We fell very short of collecting and maintaining the kind of data we needed to respond appropriately to this goal. Students at Ferndale High School typically take dual credit classes from one of the following institutions of higher education: University of Washington, Central Washington University, Whatcom Community College, and Bellingham Technical College. Because we are required to report this data to OSPI, we know that in the academic year 2019-2020 the following number of dual credit classes were taken by our students:

- Grade 9: 366
- Grade 10: 370
- Grade 11: 368
- Grade 12: 356

However, we are not required to report to OSPI the number of students who actually avail themselves of getting the college credits posted to their transcripts; and we did not keep a record of this information for ourselves. We have a sense that a significant number of these potential college credits go unclaimed, either because of lack of understanding about their future value or lack of financial resources to pay the credit fees. Since college credits earned in high school are one predictor of post-high-school educational success, our goal is to ensure that as many students as possible take dual credit courses in high school and that all of them who do take advantage of claiming the college credits they have earned.

We are not there yet. We know that we need to establish a system for collecting, maintaining, and analyzing this information as we move forward.

9. Continue to develop our FHS Career Center to meet the career needs of our high school students more effectively. Keep records of the activities sponsored by the Career Center and the number of students impacted by each.

___ Has made reasonable progress
___ Has not made reasonable progress

During the pandemic, our FHS Career Center Specialist maintained her services to our students over Zoom. She was able to (1) check-in and support applications for both jobs and scholarships; (2) assist with resume writing; (3) facilitate career interest explorations; and (4) provide general advising. She also sought out both volunteer and job opportunities and shared those with students. While not as active as a non-pandemic year, she still managed to coordinate awareness of college, career, and military informational events and organize some virtual tours and visits. She was even able to create a small-scale Career Fair, where representatives from different industries talked with students about careers in engineering, marketing, finance, production/manufacturing, and human resources.

Acknowledging that students receive much of their information from social media, our Career Center Specialist continued to maintain its Facebook page and established a presence on Instagram. In addition, she provided relevant and timely career information for inclusion in the *Ferndale 411* (weekly bulletin to students and families).

Part of our goal was to track the number of students who access the Career Center and their reasons for doing so. Although some limited data was kept early in the 2019-20 school year, we definitely did not meet this part of the goal. We have no idea what percentage of the FHS student body took advantage of the services of the Career Center. Anecdotally, the Career Center Specialist feels that most of the students who did visit the Center came to get information on (1) colleges, (2) jobs (searching, applying for, and/or creating a resume), (3) financial aid, and/or (4) scholarships.

10. Assess career-focused education programs and opportunities currently being offered in grades K-8, identify gaps, and establish improvement goals to fill those gaps.

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| ___Has made reasonable progress |
| ___Has not made reasonable progress |

In preparation for writing this report, we surveyed our elementary and middle level principals to ask them about career-focused educational programs and opportunities in their schools. Their responses covered a variety of activities and practices:

- Several of our elementary principals shared that they provide numerous opportunities for students to gain career skills within the daily life of their schools. At one elementary, for instance, students aren't just assigned "jobs" in their own classrooms. In addition, older students are able to serve in their younger counterparts' classrooms as Teacher Assistants, and "earn" jobs as Playground Helpers and Announcement Helpers.
- Students in the elementary Life Skills program have many jobs that assist all-school operations, such as assisting with recycling, giving daily announcements, and serving as messengers to classrooms.
- In a typical year, our elementary schools bring in guest speakers from a variety of different career paths to share information with students.
- One elementary principal reported that, prior to the pandemic, their staff hosted an annual "math day", bringing in approximately 20 guest speakers who each shared the ways that math is important to their career path.
- Within the middle school curriculum, specific career-focused units are part of several courses of study. These include STEM classes (Grades 6-8), Career and College Readiness (Grade 8), and social studies (Grade 7). In addition technology standards run throughout all middle-level content areas.
- In our middle-level STEM classes (Grades 6-8), students learn about the 21st Century Skills, which consist of a list of employability skills students would benefit from possessing in order to acquire and keep a job. STEM teachers ask students to identify several of these skills and apply them when completing their projects.
- In our Career and College Readiness classes (Grade 8), two of the units are focused on (1) career guidance and (2) technology standards. Lessons within these units include the teaching of industry standard "soft skills" (group work, body language, interview skills, etc.). Lessons also include digital citizenship, the difference between a "job" and a career, career clusters, job opportunities, salaries, and creating a resume. Students are asked to complete a culminating career interest project.

- In Grade 7 Social Studies classes, teachers invite guest speakers into their classrooms from local and state government. Speakers during 2020-2021, who presented using FlipGrid online, included our Ferndale Mayor and a State Representative. Additionally, 7th grade Social Studies students complete a Washington Industry Project that asks them to examine major industries, careers, and companies in Washington State.
- Students in the Behavior program at Horizon Middle School learn job skills by operating a coffee cart. They sell beverages to staff at both Horizon and Eagleridge. This year, to meet Covid health and safety restrictions, students transitioned their coffee cart into self-serve stations in the faculty rooms.
- Leadership students involved in ASB (Associated Student Body) activities at both middle schools learn and use Robert's Rules of Order to run efficient meetings.
- Students in Grade 8 begin their High School and Beyond Plans.

While all of these activities have great merit, what is lacking, especially at the elementary level, is a clear scope and sequence and a guaranteed set of learnings and outcomes for every student. Because much of career-focused education at the middle level is embedded in required courses, this is less problematic for students in Grades 6-8. However, we found no indication that the teaching of career-related knowledge and skills at the middle level is intentionally built on students' elementary experiences and little about how it explicitly guides students' decisions about or learning in high school. In short, our assessment shows the need for a more coordinated K-12 approach.

11. Continue to define and develop District expectations for each student's High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP).

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|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has made reasonable progress <input type="checkbox"/> Has not made reasonable progress |
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While we have made progress with our High School and Beyond Plans this year, we are far from where we intend to be. Students in Grades 8-12 can now all access their HSBP online through MySchoolData, providing them with much greater ability to monitor their own high school journeys, continually adjust their goals and plans, and reflect on their progress throughout their high school careers. Our intent is to ensure the HSBP is not just completed and reviewed on an annual basis, but rather it becomes a part of all students' work within their Advisory program (at the middle level) and their Eagle Time (at the high school). Our goal is to make the plans so meaningful and relevant that students refer to them frequently to guide their decision-making and ensure they are getting what they need from high school to be able to follow their dreams and achieve their goals beyond high school.

Superintendent's Final Remarks

While we met most of the goals we set when we wrote our 2018 report on Policy R-6, I am not convinced our list of goals was representative of a true Career Readiness vision for every student. Only Goals 6, 9, 10, and 11 venture beyond the scope of Career and Technical Education. With 7 of 11 goals focused squarely on CTE, it would be hard to convince a reader that we ourselves have shifted our perspective from seeing Career readiness and CTE as one and the same. Much of this report would seem to suggest that we still view career education as the sole purview of CTE rather than seeing CTE as a subset of career education for every student, rather than seeing Career Readiness as the whole sky and CTE as only the brightest star. While most current CTE programs do make students career ready, they cannot be seen as the only programs that make students career ready.

To move forward in Ferndale, we need to understand and articulate the differences between these two career-labeled initiatives. With that said, there is much we can learn from our brightest star. According to Dr. Richard (Dick) Jones, Senior Consultant for the CTE Technical Assistance Center of New York in his 2013 article entitled “Career Readiness Is More than Career and Technical Education,” we would be well-served to view “CTE as the approach to education most likely to produce career-ready graduates.” Jones writes,

Today there is growing agreement among educators that our students need to be prepared for both college and careers. In recent years the most common education goal has been to raise student aspirations and expectations to be academically ready for college as their “ticket to success.” The conversation is shifting to acknowledge that students must be career ready as well.

Research shows that a blend of technical, academic, and employability skills best prepare students for fast-growing and high-earning jobs in the future. No matter what postsecondary path students choose, guiding them through the process of expanding their horizons about career possibilities will help them make better decisions. Giving them occasions to explore career clusters, understand the meaning and structure of various jobs, and conduct multiple career searches will help them build a solid understanding of the training necessary to reach future goals. Providing them with opportunities to develop the “soft skills” necessary for nearly every job will help them succeed in whatever career they choose to pursue.

This kind of career readiness education cannot all happen in CTE. College and career readiness cannot be seen as separate paths of courses. They must be recognized as overlapping sets of student characteristics that require school staff across all grades and subjects to work collaboratively to help students attain.

According to Jones, “the characteristics of career readiness are not defined by what we teach, but how we teach. When we advocate for increasing career readiness, it is important to emphasize the instructional characteristics that we so often see in CTE, and expand those to all instruction.”

Jones goes on to outline the instructional characteristics of many exemplary CTE programs as a way of defining how all teachers can teach for career readiness. They are:

- *Relevance. Students value education when they see a direct connection between education and application of skills in the real world. This relevance connection is very easy to observe in CTE and it is why students in CTE are often highly engaged. Relevance can and should be developed in any instruction.*
- *Work Habits. Education should be about developing responsible work habits such as initiative and collaborating with others. In CTE, teachers provide extensive feedback to students regarding their work habits in everything from safety to teamwork and responsibility. This emphasis can be a component in any subject matter instruction.*
- *Creativity. Students enjoy the opportunity to apply their own ideas to instruction. These are desired traits in the workplace as well. CTE in many different programs provides opportunities for students to use their judgment, introduce new ideas, and innovate.*
- *Engagement. Students achieve better when they invest energy in their own learning and are fully engaged in doing so. Students are frequently engaged in CTE courses more than academic courses because they see an opportunity to nurture their individual interests, challenge themselves to develop their talents, and participate in relevant instruction. Career-ready students must have that same level of commitment to fully engage themselves in their continued learning.*

- *Self-directed Learners. Students in CTE are given many opportunities to develop independence and take responsibility for their own learning — a desirable characteristic in career readiness for lifelong learning.*
- *Proficiency Measures. Being career ready includes having confidence in your skills and being able to apply those skills. Through CTE, students develop a clear proficiency in applying career-related skills. Learning is not defined by grades but by demonstration of skills in the creative solution of authentic, challenging, and meaningful “problems.”*

Lest anything in this report suggests we have plans to diminish our District’s long and proud traditions of supporting and celebrating excellent CTE programs, I want to assure all anyone who reads it that that couldn’t be further from my intent. I envision CTE will not only remain the brightest star in our career readiness firmament, but also become viewed as the North Star, guiding all teachers in ways they can make their teaching more career-focused.