

MAKING WAVES AT DCS



Consortium Highlight: GraphX, Dexter's In-House Graphic Design & Print Shop

Upon first entering Room 376 at Dexter High School, a visitor can easily feel overwhelmed by the hulking, unfamiliar machinery used daily by Dennis Stockwell's GraphX students. One student is spreading gold paint over a silk screen of the Dexter Dreadnaught logo set on a navy t-shirt. Two others are discussing the next step in creating personalized note pads for DHS staff, which is applying adhesive to hold each notepad together using a large piece of equipment capable of holding well over 100 perfectly-aligned pads at once. Another student is using the recently-purchased Konica Minolta AccurioPress C4070 to create conference notebooks for an upcoming SEC Women in Leadership Day. Students are focused on their tasks, and Stockwell walks the shop to bestow a helpful tip or word of encouragement.

GraphX Academy is just one of the many career-technical programs offered DHS students through the South and West Washtenaw Consortium. However, it is the only program housed on Dexter's campus, with classes in our full-service graphic design and print shop available to students from Dexter, Saline, Manchester, Chelsea, Lincoln and Milan. GraphX students learn graphic design industry technology and processes including Adobe Creative Suite, vinyl cutting, glass etching, screen- and press-printing and much more. "Basically, anything the industry can do, we can do," Stockwell says.

Students taking GraphX classes receive industry experience similar to any professional print shop, managing projects from conception to final product. The school-to-work transition is a major focus of GraphX and the Consortium program as a whole. Stockwell strives to bring realism into the classroom to ensure students are comfortable not only with all aspects of the production process, but interacting with others in a business setting. Learning accountability and the importance of being a good team member (positive communication, friendly attitude, dependability, etc.), prepares students to successfully contribute to their workplace environment.

The SWWC is presenting an Open House & Business Showcase entitled "Preparing Tomorrow's Essential Employees Today" on Tuesday, November 30th from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Saline High School. 10th grade students from the six Consortium districts are invited to attend with their parents/guardians, as well as 11th and 12th grade students currently enrolled in SWWC programs. Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the facility and visit the classroom/lab that most interests them. Business and industry leaders for each program will speak in each classroom/lab from 7:00 - 7:10 p.m. on the state of their respective industry, as well as potential employment opportunities. More information about this event can be found at <https://www.salineschools.org/schools/swwc/open-house/>.