

Gifted and Talented Program: Continuum of Services

The Somerset County Vocational and Technical schools (SCVTS) consists of 18 independent career and technical programs, all serving a diverse student population which mirrors Somerset County's demographics. All but two programs offer full time and share time options. The Mechatronics, Advanced Manufacturing, and Engineering program (MEAM) and The Medical Sciences Academy are both full time programs of study.

All students are offered equitable support and services so that they can succeed in their respective programs of study including the gifted and talented program.

The district is committed to providing all students with an educational experience that enhances their academic, social, and emotional growth, helps them become college and career-ready and prepare them for success in a highly diverse and ever-changing society. All students are provided with opportunities to succeed through career and technical and academic programs that address their individual needs.

Students identified as gifted and talented through multiple measures are granted various opportunities that are both rigorous and challenging and meet their individual needs.

Students considered for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs

The district recruits at the middle school level and solicits applications from all schools in the County, however, we receive additional applicants from surrounding counties. Students wishing to be considered are all tested prior to enrollment. The Performing Arts and Academy programs are very competitive, the former includes an audition and interview for consideration, the latter includes an interview and special entrance criteria. Other CTE programs include interviews when the minimum entrance criteria are marginally met.

Programs

As a vocational school district, there are various programs that allow students to excel, especially if they are considered gifted and talented or twice exceptional. These include but are not limited to:

- Early college degree or dual enrollment programs;
- Career and technical education programs;
- Honors courses;
- Independent studies;
- Work-based or Structured learning programs;
- Pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs; and/or
- Career and Technical Student Organization participation (CTSO leadership programs).

Identification

Students are identified throughout their high school experience starting with their entrance scores upon admission and through their ongoing development within their particular career pathway. All CTE teachers are responsible for augmenting the curriculum for those identified as gifted and talented.

Identifiable traits are then flagged as Gifted and Talented markers. They include the following indicators which are entered into Genesis:

- A **95** or above on the admissions criteria rubric, taking into account academic scores, discipline, and attendance. These scores can be modified via an in-person interview and/or an audition where applicable.
- Identification as a **CTE Steller student** which occurs quarterly. (Teacher recommendations can be from a CTE teacher and/or an academic teacher.)
- Students achieving a level of proficiency in their Career pathway, giving way to a **Structured learning environment, Pre-apprenticeship, Apprenticeship, or Work-based learning** opportunity.
- Students identified as **“ambassadors”** for recruiting other potential students into the school
- Students selected as **officers in a Career and Technical Student Organization(CTSO)** such as SkillsUSA, Future Farmers of America, Health Occupations Students of America, Future Business Leaders of America, or The American Welding Society, and/or Rotary interact.
- **Induction** into the National Technical Honor Society, National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, National Honor Society of Dance Art.
- Also considered are students identified as **scholar athletes**.

Professional Development

All teachers and administrators are provided with professional development opportunities to enhance learning in their particular career and technical pathway. Strategies to increase engagement, challenge thinking and augment instruction are specifically addressed for students who are gifted and talented or twice exceptional.

Advisory members are also utilized to advance learning in the work environment and provide external venues for learning.

Industry and two and four-year college partners provide advanced opportunities for career placements, work-place readiness skill development, and academic advancements leading to college degrees.

Teachers participate in SkillsUSA competitions exposing them to state-of-the-art advancements in their fields of study.

Renzulli Learning offers free webinars and trainings specific to teaching those with above average abilities, creativity, and task commitment. All teachers and administrators have access to this resource.

Students in the CTE environment are generally focused and committed to their career pathway, therefore identifying those with a higher level of commitment, talent or creativity can be assessed within the context of each related skill development and subsequent implementation.