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THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL AND
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PRESENTED BY
COMMISSIONER
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TO THE STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

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***CAREER
AND OCCUPATIONAL
EDUCATION IN MAINE
FOR THE "THIRD
AMERICAN CENTURY"***

***KINDERGARTEN THROUGH ADULT
BASIC EDUCATION***

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FOREWORD

It is the mission of the Department of Educational & Cultural Services to lead Maine students to higher aspirations, expectations, and performance, in order to provide Maine citizens with a competitive edge in the 21st century.

Governor John McKernan, Jr.'s Economic Development Strategy Task Force further reinforced the mission of the department in its report, *Establishing the Maine Advantage*, by stating: Maine's economy faces many challenges; our workforce must be better trained for tomorrow's jobs and must be able to shift from traditional to emerging industries.

To meet this challenge, Maine's educational system must identify and implement methods of delivery which will expand educational opportunities for Maine's citizens. Such methods will require "change," or the redirection of available resources. Each student completing grade twelve must be assured of access to continued education or gainful employment to reach their maximum potential.

The initiatives and objectives presented in this document represent opportunities for the Department of Educational and Cultural Services and the educational community to promote career and occupational education in Maine, kindergarten through adult education.

These initiatives were developed in collaboration with department-wide initiatives and recommendations received from the Commissioner's Task Force to Study Secondary Vocational Education in Maine which convened in May of 1987.

INTRODUCTION

TOWARD THE YEAR 2000

In his text, *A Place Called School*, Goodlad (1984) points out that the subjects most popular with students are the arts, physical education, and hands-on activities that involve students. This popularity is most closely replicated in high school by consumer and homemaking education, technology education, and vocational education classes.

Vocational education is a viable mechanism for the preparation of life, whether it be to develop occupational or life skills. However, vocational education and education in general must change to meet the needs of a transforming society.

These needs include:

- the need to readily adapt to a changing job market which will be essential for successful competition in a global economy;
- the need to develop transferable skills through broad occupational cluster programming, thus enhancing opportunities for employment and job flexibility;
- the need to address equity for all groups, understanding that the majority of workers in the year 2000 will be women and minorities;
- the need to develop a worker who understands that education and self-improvement is a lifelong process; and
- the need to develop citizens who possess not only the higher order skills of problem solving and analysis, but also possess the ability to read, communicate orally and in writing, and the ability to apply appropriate mathematical skills.

The changing society provides, not problems or pitfalls for Maine's secondary vocational education system, but tremendous opportunities for those we serve.

The following observations and recommendations should be considered while reshaping our educational delivery system in order to best meet the needs of all Maine's learners.

PART I: THE SECOND PHASE

The second phase of education reform is upon us, and through this phase, it is essential that we align our educational resources toward the common goal of preparing Maine's learners for a rewarding and productive life.

Any plan for career and occupational education in Maine must be integrated into the entire educational delivery system, kindergarten through adult education.

Many recommendations offered by the Commissioner's Task Force (May 1987) on education for the world of work called for cross collaboration and initiatives to assure a cohesive education delivery. Many of these recommendations are included in this document.

The Department of Educational and Cultural Services will develop mechanisms to provide for cross collaboratives in career guidance, employment competencies, and school-to-work transition. Such mechanisms will provide for specific performance goals and time frames for action.

1. A comprehensive, life centered kindergarten - adult career information and exploration program should be developed to empower every student to make informed choices on education, employment and life options. Such a program would include:
 - a. A K-6 career awareness infusion program, integrated within the general subject disciplines, particularly designed to combat sex stereotyping and socio-economic tracking.
 - b. A middle school/junior high component would incorporate career information, exploration, educational planning and employment literacy.
 - c. An educational planning process should be conducted with every student during the eighth grade year, and periodically reviewed and revised. This process would review and assess the interests, aptitudes, and academic portfolio of each student.

The educational plan developed should consider not only the course of study but also the anticipated life goals and objectives of the individual.

Essential to this planning process, beyond school personnel, is the participation of the student and the student's parents/guardians.

Every student should be required to demonstrate proficiency in the following four pre-employment competency areas:

- 1) Career decision making (self-awareness, career awareness, labor market information, career choice),
 - 2) Life/work management (managing personal responsibility, problem solving/coping),
 - 3) Job getting (job seeking, resumes and applications, contact skills, interviewing), and
 - 4) Work maturity (dependability/reliability, communication skills, personal relations, initiative/productivity, worker rights).
- d. Whereas education and training is a life-long process, local educational agencies offering adult basic education programs

should incorporate a similar career information, assessment, and educational planning process.

2. Develop a school-to-work program for those who have a need or desire to participate. Such a program should include:
 - a. Assessment and career guidance services
 - b. Individual and group counseling
 - c. Monitored community-based learning experiences
 - d. Program continuance for participants for at least 9 to 12 months beyond completion of grade 12.
3. Develop a system for delivery of technology education and consumer and homemaking education K-12.

Pat Choate and J.K. Linger, in *The High-Flex Society*, tell us that "the wild card of the future"

for America's business and industry is "technology" and the ability to readily adapt to technological changes of a global economy.

One very vital tool to the education of our youth to the technology of the future is technology education (Industrial arts), and consumer and home economics, K-12. It is through these disciplines that students very early on become informed of the technologies and consumer/personal issues of the world in which they live.

A model delivery mechanism for these subject areas might be:

- a. Integration within core subject areas, K-6,
- b. A minimum of one academic year of technology education, and consumer and home economics, grades 7 - 8,
- c. If not available at grades 7 and 8, a minimum of one year each, grades 9-12.

PART II: THE OUTCRY

The outcry for improved education often leads to attempts to make improvements through existing frameworks rather than establishing new directions.

Vocational education was conceived to meet the needs of an industrialized society. Today, vocational education needs to broaden its horizons to meet the needs of a more diverse economy requiring a variety of skills and improved basic competencies.

The National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education, in its report ***The Unfinished Agenda — The Role of Vocational Education in the High Schools***, recommends that all secondary school students should be able to choose from a comprehensive set of course offerings across academic and vocational areas.

Research states that effective schools are based on the premise that all students can learn and that we must meet the students where they are on the knowledge scale, not where we wish them to be.

The Department of Educational and Cultural Services will encourage the development of balanced vocational programs which enable students to acquire broad, transferable skills for employment and personal use in conjunction with learning specific occupational skills.

Vocational education must also provide instruction and practice in the basic academic skills, although the most unique aspects of applied learning still remain the cornerstone of this new mode of career and occupational education in Maine.

In addition, secondary vocational education must foster and develop self-esteem, positive attitudes toward work, and job-seeking skills within the framework of its programs.

The following offer Maine's career and occupational educators an opportunity to better meet the initiatives and responsibilities which will empower their students to reach their maximum potential in life and the world of work.

1. Vocational guidance and counseling services should be made available to vocational students at the centers and regions, complementing

the services offered at the sending school and including job readiness training and employment seeking and retention skills.

2. Developmental studies services should be available to assist educationally disadvantaged students to assist in the improvement of their basic skills or the enhancement of vocational instruction.

3. The Department of Educational and Cultural Services encourages the further development of a 1987 pilot program, which provided for the delivery of math, science or social studies under three modes of delivery:

- * Instruction delivered through team teaching with the vocational teacher and an academically certified instructor;
- * Instruction delivered by a vocational teacher who is eligible for endorsement in math, science, or social studies;
- * Instruction delivered by a related subject instructor who collaborates with the vocational instructor in the presentation of the academic subject matter.

This instruction will require collaboration between the sending high schools and the respective vocational centers or regions on curriculum development.

Chapter 127.13(F), Instructional Requirement and Graduation Standards, Vocational Education, provides for satisfying the second year of mathematics, science, and social studies through separate or integrated study offered as part of the vocational curriculum.

4. Every vocational center and region in the state should develop a Diversified Occupations program designed to meet the needs of students who are not prepared to enter a specific vocational program or a community-based learning experience.

This program would develop an individual training plan leading to entrance into a specific vocational education program or work experience.

5. Vocational programs offered should be evaluated on their effectiveness, their employment, continued education, and military placement rates, and their rele-

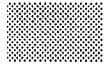
vance to meeting the needs of students and of the local/state economy.

These vocational programs must develop job-specific and transferable skills in broad occupational areas.

6. The infusion of a cluster programming concept would allow for a broader occupational choice and enhanced opportunities for students.

Cluster programming would provide specific occupational skills in several occupational areas and, through open entrance and exit, would provide the vocational educational experience to more "non-traditional" students.

PART III: OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND



pportunities abound for the enhancement of learning options

for Maine's learners who may benefit from career and occupational education.

The Secondary Vocational Education Task Force and the Department of Educational and Cultural Services identified a number of initiatives which should be further developed to advance these opportunities.

Many of the succeeding initiatives are currently being addressed through department-wide initiatives and interagency collaboratives. The advancement of these issues is crucial to a comprehensive redirection of career and occupational education in Maine.

The Department of Educational and Cultural Services is currently working on initiatives in the areas of vocational educator inservice, public relations, expanded vocational facility use, methods of program evaluation, secondary and postsecondary collaboration, competency-based curriculum development, statute review, and accessibility of programs.

1. Pre-service and in-service educational opportunities for Maine's vocational educators will be expanded to include:
 - a. Educating the exceptional child;
 - b. Development and implementation of competency-based curricula;
 - c. Integration of basic skills education (reading, writing, computation) within the vocational instruction;
 - d. Methods of overcoming sex bias and stereotyping and promoting entry into non-traditional programs and occupations;
 - e. Development of vocational youth organizations which foster leadership and community service/interaction skills;
 - f. Establishing educational, business/industrial, and other agency collaboratives for the advancement of education and employment training;
 - g. Technical upgrading, e.g., staff industry exchange and educator-in-residence programs.
2. The department will assist in the development of a systematic and energetic public relations, marketing, and outreach campaign.

This plan will increase the awareness of occupational education opportunities and develop an appreciation for pursuing an occupational course of study.

3. The Department of Educational and Cultural Services, in collaboration with local educational agencies, Welfare, Employment, Education, and Training Program, Job Training Partnership Act Program, Maine Department of Labor, and other agencies, will foster the increased use of Maine's vocational centers and regions through off-hour scheduling, on a seat-available basis, and summer programs.
4. The Department of Educational and Cultural Services will continue the current initiative which provides for the development of a comprehensive research/data base system to enhance the evaluation of existing education programs and provide sound information for future program development.

5. As previously stated, coordination of Maine's educational entities is crucial to the maximizing of opportunities for Maine's learners.

Articulation agreements must be developed between the vocational regions and centers and Maine's vocational technical institutes, providing for collaboration and joint planning of career and occupational programs, such as sequential instruction and two-plus-one programs.

6. Maine's secondary vocational education system must move immediately to competency-based education. All instruction must relate directly to specific performance objectives based on current job tasks as identified by practitioners.

The Maine State Department of Educational and Cultural Services, Bureau of Adult and Secondary Vocational Education, must take the lead in this endeavor by developing

the core competencies for all vocational disciplines offered in this state to assure consistency.

The bureau must provide in-service activities on competency-based curriculum development and implementation for the instructors.

Infused in these curricula must be those basic employment competencies, and integrated studies (reading comprehension, writing, mathematics) where appropriate. There must be dialogue between secondary and post-secondary educational institutions to assure relevant instruction.

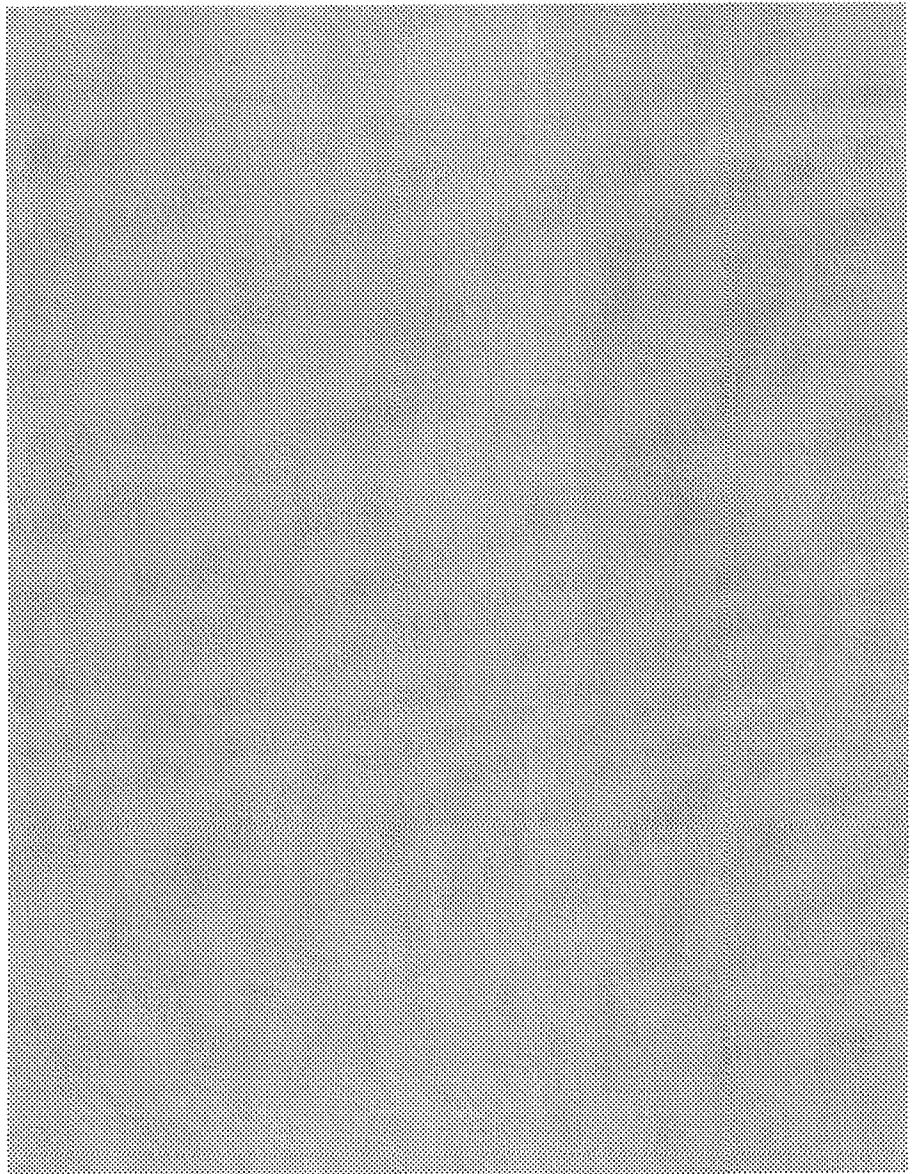
Recent bureau initiatives have begun to address these issues (e.g., development of a full-time curriculum resource center housed at KVTI, scheduled curriculum workshops, and competency identification sessions). But the task is great and will take time to evolve into a vital curriculum network. A network which instructs,

measures, and informs the instructor, student, and prospective employer of the student's abilities through written and applied assessment.

7. The Department of Educational and Cultural Services will conduct a review of Maine's statutes as they pertain to secondary vocational education to ensure their relevance to today's needs in the delivery of effective, relevant occupational education.

Such a review would include, but not be limited to, governance, funding, and delivery mechanisms.

8. In recognition of the need to assure physical accessibility to Maine's vocational education facilities, the Department of Educational and Cultural Services will conduct a comprehensive review of plants and equipment and develop a plan of action to address critical needs.



SUMMARY

Michael Aube, a State Board member and Chair of the Commissioner's Task Force to Study Secondary Vocational Education in Maine, provided the most appropriate closure to this document in his letter of transmittal of the Task Force document entitled *Education for the World of Work in the State of Maine*:

"Linkage of education and economic development has been a cornerstone of Governor McKernan's efforts to make Maine an 'opportunity' state. This report complements those efforts to advance education reform and economic opportunity in the state of Maine. The recommendations contained in this report are based in a belief that 'educational investment' in Maine citizens will result in a prepared workforce for the year 2000 as well as increase economic benefits for Maine's citizens."

These initiatives represent a cornerstone from which to advance Maine's educational opportunities for those participating in career and occupational education as we develop the workforce and citizens of Maine for the year 2000.

The Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services insures equal employment/education opportunities/affirmative action regardless of race, sex, color national origin, religion, marital status, age, handicap, or limited English speaking ability.