

A Message from the Director

Rick Peterson

"CTSP Center? Tell Me More!"

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As I was assuming the Director's role of the CTSP Center, my wife, who is a career and technology teacher, asked me what the Career Technology Special Population (CTSP) Training and Resource Center was all about. I explained what the center does—the educational materials and resources we have for career technology teachers and parents of special needs students. She was excited about how she could utilize the center. However, she asked if I had a shorter explanation of what the center is all about so she could share it with her colleagues. She said that I should to have a clear, short message.

This message is more commonly called the "elevator speech"—brief statements capturing the salient features of what a business and/or organization is all about—that can be delivered to a fellow elevator passenger between the sixth floor and the lobby. As the premise goes, the rider sharing your elevator will gain a general understanding of what, in this case, the center is and does. The idea is to leave a lasting impression and to prompt a listener to say, "Tell me more!"

As I thought about these critical elements, several things came to mind. The CTSP Center, since its inception, has had a strong commitment to career and technology teachers and the parents and special population students they serve. This commitment has allowed the center to be focused on what it takes to provide quality educational materials and products for teachers and consumers alike. These core functions enable the Center to assist career and technology teachers in working with special population students.

In response to my wife's request, here is my elevator talk:

"Are you a career and technology teacher who works with special populations? Do you have questions about how to best implement best-practices with special education students? If so, the Career Technology Special Population Center is a valuable resource for you. Think of us as your personal on-line teacher's aid for special populations. The CTSP Center provides access to training, resources, frequently asked questions, newsletters, and live chat to better equip you to serve special needs students. Check out our on-line courses and other resources at: <http://ctsp.tamu.edu/>."

Important Dates	
International Technology Association Conference-San Antonio, TX—March 15-17, 2007 (http://www.iteaconnect.org/Conference/conferenceguide.htm)	
Association for Career and Technical Education Convention and Expo—Atlanta, GA—Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2006 (http://www.acteonline.org)	
Texas Career Education Conference—Austin, TX—Jan. 31 - Feb. 2 (http://www.ctat.org)	
For information on more regional conferences, go to: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/cte/profdev.html	

New Management, New Facility, and New Staff

The CTSP Center, formerly known as the Special Populations and Career Technology Education Center (SPACE), is under new management, with Dr. Rick Peterson as the new Director. He replaces Dr. Linda Parrish (Professor Emeritus), who retired from Texas A&M University. We are grateful to Dr. Parrish for her untiring efforts and hope to continue this initiative with the same passion and dedication as in the past. We are fortunate that Dr. Parrish has agreed to continue in a consultant role for the Center.



External View of Eastmark Center

The CTSP Center continues to be funded by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), but it now is a part of Texas Cooperative Extension. Extension provides quality, relevant outreach and continuing education programs and services to the people of Texas. Our new facility in College Station is located at 7607 Eastmark Drive, Suite 105.

The CTSP Center's mission is to provide access to career and technology and special education-related multimedia information (books, curriculum materials, videos, on-line courses) to teachers,

parents, and education professionals throughout Texas and the nation. The Center provides access to training and resources, answers to career technology teachers' most frequently asked questions related to working with special populations, and a new feature called CTSP Center Updates—a quarterly newsletter.

Dr. Rick Peterson (PhD—Family Life Education) is an Assistant Professor and Parenting Specialist with Texas Cooperative Extension at Texas A&M University. Dr. Peterson has program development experience in family life, parenting, child care, and mental health. Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan, who has a PhD in Career Development Education, serves as the Program Coordinator. Her areas of expertise include multicultural career development, career assessment, and post-secondary planning for students with special needs. Patrick Phillips, a film and media production specialist, has been hired as our Multimedia Production Manager. Kristen Miller serves as our library assistant on a part-time basis.

We are excited about the new developments and look forward to a successful year!

We Want to Hear from You!

The staff at the CTSP Center can provide Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers, special educators, parents, and paraprofessionals with materials, on-line courses, and professional development workshops. To that end, we want to hear from you.

What are your current workshop needs?

What are those topics that you feel are inadequately addressed in workshops/conferences you currently attend?

What areas related to CTE and special needs would you like to know more about?

Please visit our <http://ctsp.tamu.edu> and take our CTE Training Needs Survey to give us your answers.

We hope to use your responses to provide you with workshop opportunities that are tailored to your specific needs.

Perkins Reauthorization

On August 12, 2006, President Bush signed into law the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

The Perkins Act supports career and technical education that prepares students both for postsecondary education and the careers of their choice, making it a critical piece of legislation for our field.



The new law requires:

- using the term “career and technical education” instead of “vocational education”;
- maintenance of the Tech Prep program as a separate federal funding stream within the legislation;

- maintaining state administrative funding at 5 percent of a state’s allocation.
- programs of study linking academic and technical content across secondary and postsecondary education; and,
- strengthened local accountability provisions that will ensure continuous program improvement.

The Perkins Act provides approximately \$1.3 billion in federal support for CTE programs throughout the United States. The reauthorized law will extend through 2012.

For more information on the Perkins reauthorization, visit:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/reauth/perkins.html>

IDEA Final Part B Regulations Announced

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) aligns closely with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), helping to ensure equity, accountability, and excellence in education for children with disabilities.

On August 3, 2006, the U.S. Department of Education announced the final Part B regulations to implement the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

An official copy of the final Part B regulations were published in the Federal Register on August 14, 2006. The new regulations take effect on October 13, 2006.

For a detailed version of the new regulations, refer to:

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-3/081406a.pdf>



Texas Education Agency Law Resources

Have you visited the Texas Education Agency's website recently? There are several points of interest for CTE teachers to look at.

An area that we recommend you visit often is the Texas Education Rules and Laws housed at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/educationlaw.html>. The page details recent updates related to the Texas Administrative Code and the Texas Education Code. Important information regarding Commissioner's hearing decisions, parents' rights, due process procedures, teach-

ers' rights, and a searchable database for local hearing decisions are also provided.

We also recommend that you visit TEA's <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/gir/PublicInfoMain.html> page to gain access to agency records, which all citizens are entitled to by law.



TEA Logo
Courtesy—Texas
Education Agency

Teacher Quality Standards Eased

CNN.COM reports that on September 8, 2006, the Education Department announced that states can rate teachers as "highly qualified" even if their qualifications are below the standards of the current No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates.

NCLB standards include job evaluations, teaching awards, or service on school committees and were meant to mostly benefit veteran teachers. However, with the federal law allowing states to choose applicable standards, CNN reports that the Education Depart-

ment has stated that these standards were often weak or inappropriate.

The current state of standards implementation has led to the issuance of a letter on the part of Education Secretary Margaret Spelling that "strongly encourages," though doesn't require, states to stop using the federally recommended method of rating teachers.

The directive on the part of Secretary Spelling is likely to affect the status of tens of thousands of teachers who were otherwise required to be fully certified in every subject they taught.



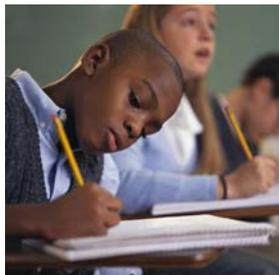
Department spokesman Chad Colby states that it

will take about a year for lawmakers to come up with the regulation legislating this directive. He added that instead, the agency plans to ask Congress to make the change when it renews the law in 2007.

In the meanwhile, about half of the states have begun to phase out the NCLB rating system.

CTE Courses: Academic Courses Ratio and Drop-out Rates

Is it truly the case that exposure to about three CTE courses for every four academic courses lowers the risk of dropping out for many students? Or conversely, do students who persist in school (do not drop out) stay enrolled long enough to reach the junior and senior years of high school when CTE offerings and selections tend to be more plentiful?



Stephen Plank, Stefanie DeLuca, and Angela Estacion of Johns Hopkins University conducted a research study, the full report of which is available at <http://www.nccte.org/publications/projectReports.asp>

Based on data of 846 youth who participated in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, Plank et al. concluded that the

phenomenon of drop-out is conditional upon the age at which students enter the CTE program and the CTE course to academic course ratio. For students 15 years and younger, a CTE:academic course ratio of 1:2 was beneficial. For youth who were 15 or older upon high school entry, factors other than course-taking predicted their high rates of dropping out. In a follow-up study, Plank et al. also report that high CTE:academic course ratios also tend to be related to a reduction in college enrollment.

To respond to these questions,

CTE can Enable School Reforms that Work

In a project entitled "Math-in-CTE" currently being undertaken at the University of Minnesota, James Stone, director of the National Center for Career and Technical Education (NCCTE), and colleagues are testing the possibility of improving at-risk students' math aptitude by teaching math, not as a separate subject, but in the context of CTE classes.

Students in the experimental group scored higher in their col-

lege placement exams, improved in individual assessment performance, and displayed greater technical knowledge in two out of six instances when compared to the control group (no change in curriculum). As the year progresses,

Stone and colleagues expect to see greater improvement.

Stone's work can pave the way for significant school reforms by exhibiting specific examples of prac-



tices and learning models that work for

all American students at-risk or otherwise. Find the full report at:

<http://www.education.umn.edu/Pubs/ResearchWorks/Stone.html>

Transportation Safety for Children with Special Needs

The National Center for the Safe Transportation of Children with Special Health Care Needs provides resources for the safety of child passengers and special needs transportation. Located at the Indiana University School of Medicine, the National Center was established in 2004. The Center provides an on-site occupational therapist, a toll-free hotline, an informational website, a special needs listserve,



a database of available technicians, presentations and workshops, and educational materials. In addition to these services, this Center also trains child safety technicians who are interested in helping students with special needs.

In College Station, Texas, child safety technicians, Ms. Bev Kellner and

Ms. Myrna Boren of the Family Development and Resource Management unit of Texas Cooperative Extension, have undergone the training and can provide the relevant information to all interested parties. They can be reached at 979.862.1782 or by e-mail at bkellner@ag.tamu.edu. The National Center's website is located at:

<http://www.preventinjury.org/SpecNeeds.asp>

Did You Know that You can Listen to Free CTE Webcasts and Podcasts?

The National Research and Dissemination Centers for Career and Technical Education serve as primary sources of research-based information that significantly affect the quality of knowledge and understanding necessary to advance career and technical education in the United States.

In a bid to fulfill this vision, the National Dissemination Center provides workforce education web-

casts that are designed to create an interactive learning environment to be used to enrich the professional development experiences of secondary and postsecondary career and technical educators across the country, as well as internationally.

All presentations are webcast live at the time and date listed and archived for on-demand viewing after the event. All events are

closed-captioned for individuals with hearing impairments.

Recently, the center has made provisions for the webcasts to be available as podcasts so that listeners can tune in on the go.

To learn more about the presentations, visit:

<http://www.nccte.org/webcasts/index.asp>

Professional Development Opportunity—High Schools that Work

"High Schools that Work" (HTSW) is program initiative by the Southern Region Educational Board (SREB) since 1987. HTSW's mission is to provide middle school and high school students, teachers, and administrators with a framework for school improvement



High Schools
that Work
Logo.
Courtesy:
SREB

through improved curriculum and instruction. Through the years, HTSW has addressed such issues as transition from middle grades to high school, raising performance in low-performing and urban high schools, and raising standards in career/technical education. To continue to meet the increasing needs, SREB has on-line courses

and professional development workshops for designing effective curriculum in various subject areas are available at <http://www.theTeachercenter.org>.

For more on HTSW visit:

<http://www.sreb.org/Programs/hstw/hstwindex.asp>

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