

2008-09 Tech Prep/Perkins “Report Card”

Each summer, a “report card” edition of the *Career Link Connection* newsletter is published to demonstrate the past year’s accomplishments of the North Iowa Tech Prep/Perkins Consortium.

The Tech Prep and Perkins grants are overseen by the Career Readiness Council (CRC), which establishes policy and provides direction. In addition, the Council provides guidance, support, and assistance to schools and partners.

The CRC is composed of two Workforce Development representatives; three representatives from business, industry, and the professions; a labor representative; two AEA representatives; three superintendents; two NIACC representatives; a Transition Advisory Board representative; six local school educators; and up to three students.

This “report card” edition features progress made toward the 2008-09 Consortium goals.

Consortium Goals

- Develop and Enhance Shared Programs
- Support Local Districts in Their Comprehensive School Improvement Goals
- Strengthen Career Counseling and Career Education Programs
- Meet Increased Needs Associated With Diversity and Globalization



This past spring, agriculture teachers visited Frontier Labs, Inc. in Clear Lake. As agricultural practices change, it is important for students to understand the science and business practices many farming operations experience. Frontier Labs is dedicated to helping farmers stay ahead of changes within the farming community.



Darcie Gayken, Lake Mills High School Agriculture Instructor, commented: “The Frontier Labs tour gave agricultural educators insight on soil testing and field mapping. I applied this experience in my soil science class as part of soil fertility. It’s beneficial to bring key components from various agriculture businesses back into the classroom. This allows me to provide students with up-to-date information as practiced out in the working world.”

As agricultural practices change with innovative technology, teachers will be able to update their curriculum to reflect new technologies and be able to provide their students with up-to-date farming practices.

Above: Area Agriculture teachers view the technology features of soil testing with Jim Finstad, Operations Manager of Frontier Labs.

GOAL:

Develop & Enhance Shared Programs

Opportunities Multiply...

- ◆ 21 high schools offer Career Link programs
- ◆ 879 Career Link students
- ◆ 8 Career Link Academy sites
- ◆ \$133,000 Link Scholarship funds awarded to Career Link students

West Fork High School, in partnership with NIACC, launched a first-ever Industrial Technology Academy in August 2008. During the school year, sixteen juniors and seniors from West Fork and Hampton-Dumont took advantage of four college credit classes: CNC Fundamentals, Intro to Technical Computing and CADD, Maintenance Shop Operations, and Electronic Concepts.

At the Academy, students gain a valuable foundation for careers in Automotive, Building Trades, Climate Control, Industrial Maintenance, Tool and Die, as well as for Engineering. In addition, students with entrepreneurial ideas acquire broad-based, applicable skills to design their future ventures.

The Academy, located in the former Rockwell-Swaledale Ag and Industrial building, provides spacious facilities for the computer lab and shop. Room is available for other districts to join this partnership. Interested administrators may contact superintendents Tom Fey or Darrin Strike.



Above: Industrial Technology Academy students Jared Lupkes and Zach Lewis of Hampton-Dumont work with a Bridgeport mill which shapes metal and other solid materials.

2008-09 Career Link Programs High School	Agriculture	Automotive Service	Building Trades	Climate Control Technology	Industrial Technology	Tool & Die Technology	Welding	Health Careers	Accounting	Entrepreneurship	Information Technology, E-commerce, Web Design	Office Specialist (Admin., Legal, Medical)	Marketing & Sales	Sport Management	General Business	Food Service & Hospitality	Teacher Education
Belmond-Klemme								X									
CAL		X		X	X										X		
Central Springs		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Charles City	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X		X	X		
Clear Lake		X	X			X											
Forest City	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X		X			X
Garner-Hayfield	X	X				X		X			X				X	X	
Hampton-Dumont	X	X			X	X		X			X					X	X
Lake Mills	X	X															
Mason City	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Newman Catholic	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
North Butler															X		X
North Iowa											X						
Northwood-Kensett		X	X	X		X		X	X			X		X	X		X
Osage		X	X	X		X		X			X						
Rockford	X	X	X	X			X	X	X			X			X	X	X
St. Ansgar	X		X														
West Fork	X	X	X	X	X	X											
West Hancock	X		X					X			X				X	X	X
WCLT	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X			X

Building Career Connections For Students



83% Stay in Iowa...Hourly Wage Averages \$15.71

Career Link Outcomes for the High School Class of 2004
Survey Conducted June 2009



Counselors Focus On Career Pathway Initiative

Beginning July 2008, each student enrolled in 8th grade shall develop a core curriculum plan to be completed by high school graduation.

This past year counselors and administrators focused their efforts to develop a plan based upon the ASCA (American School Counselor Association) model.

Counselors attended (4) day-long workshops to develop their local district plans. All student plans shall include:

- Career options.
- 9-12 grade course plan (including core curriculum) supporting postsecondary education and career options.
- A timeline to complete all components of the state-designated career information and decision-making system before graduation.

In June 2009, NIACC staff successfully contacted 65 of 74 former North Iowa Area Community College Career Link (formerly Tech Prep) program students from the high school Class of 2004. The 74 students identified had completed at least six NIACC classes prior to high school graduation. Most students surveyed were 23 years old. Outcomes are detailed below:

Average college credits earned by May 2004 high school graduation	Average NIACC GPA at May 2004 high school graduation	Earned a one-year career diploma	Earned an associate degree	Earned 4-year degree	Still pursuing degrees	Employed in Iowa June 2009	Average hourly wage June 2009
25 semester hours	2.75	6%	47%	24%	15%	83%	\$15.71

May 2009 Career Link Senior Survey Summary

In May 2009, Career Link staff surveyed 352 (48% male, 52% female) high school seniors who took NIACC classes while in high school. Of these students, 39% completed 1-3 NIACC courses, 39% completed 4-6 NIACC courses, and 22% completed 7 or more NIACC courses. Results indicated:

“What changes did you experience as a result of taking NIACC courses during high school?”

(top 4 responses— students could select more than 1 response)

- 32% plan to complete a college degree
- 25% see importance of education in getting a good job
- 19% know more about the job market
- 16% make better grades

	Opinion of NIACC prior to enrollment	Opinion of NIACC now
Excellent	12%	28%
Good	53%	51%
Average	31%	17%
Below Average	2%	1%

 **GOAL:**

Support Local Districts in Their Comprehensive School Improvement Goals

Curricular Resources

In January, districts were notified that the Career Readiness Council approved the use of the Perkins Grant funds for districts to purchase equipment, as well as curricular resources.

CTE teachers, counselors, and administrators then collaborated within their local districts to determine which purchases would complement their programs and support their standards and benchmarks.

The Perkins Grant budget allocated \$77,989 for this activity. Guidelines must be followed when using Grant dollars, and districts' purchases ranged from computer software to tools.



2008-09 Perkins & Tech Prep Consortium Staff Development			
Dates	Events/Initiatives	Districts Invited	Educators Attended
09/15/08	Family & Consumer Science Network	23	16
09/30/08	Industrial Technology Network	23	15
10/01/08	Agriculture Network	23	15
10/14/08	Business Education Network	23	17
10/21/08	Counselor Network	23	32
11/18/08	Choices Workshop	23	9
12/03/08	Counselor Network	23	45
01/27/09	Agriculture Network	23	12
02/09/09	Family & Consumer Science Network	23	13
02/19/09	Counselor Network	23	45
03/11/09	Business Education Network	23	13
03/31/09	Industrial Technology Network	23	12
04/27/09	Counselor Network	23	29
2009 Summer CTE Staff Development			
06/05/09	Access Database Business Teacher Network	23	11
06/08/09	Financial Planning for Youth Family & Consumer Science Teacher Network	23	18
06/10/09	A Day with Dale & Carl Perkins Agriculture Teacher Network	23	8
06/11/09	Increasing Graduation Rates: Overcoming Learning Barriers—All CTE Teacher Network	23	52
06/24-26/09	Concrete Basics/ACI Certification Industrial Technology Teachers	23	5



Left: In June 2009, family and consumer science teachers participated in a day-long workshop at the North Iowa Workforce Development Center in Mason City. The workshop focused on financial literacy, 21st century skills, soft skills, and work ethics.

As districts strive to build employability skills, Iowa Workforce Development serves as a great resource. Financial literacy, 21st century skills, soft skills and work ethic are components essential for districts to continuously improve curriculum goals and outcomes.

GOAL:

Strengthen Career Counseling and Career Education Programs

Falls; Derek and Lizanne Engh, of Britt Lumber; Don Liimatainen, of Ablaze Custom Cleaning, LLC and Red Tie Boutique, LLC in Cloquet, MN; and Spencer Stensrude, of Bert & Ernie's Skateshop in Mason City, all shared their entrepreneurial success stories.

Charles City senior Lanie Klinkel thought the entrepreneurs expressed their many ideas quite well. "I've learned a lot from them," she said. "There are better ideas and opportunities out there."

BE YOUR OWN BOSS

Over 150 high school students attended the NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center *Be Your Own Boss* (BYOB) conference. BYOB emphasized the idea of job creation to North Iowa high school students.

The conference featured breakout sessions led by entrepreneurs in their early 20's who currently own and operate businesses. Keynote speakers, Brad and Angie Barber of Cabin Coffee and entrepreneur presenters, Ben Frein, of E-Holdings in Cedar



Above: BYOB entrepreneur speakers (from left) Brad Barber (Cabin Coffee), Spencer Stensrude (Bert & Ernie's Skateshop), Angie Barber (Cabin Coffee), Don Liimatainen (Ablaze Custom Cleaning), Derek and Lizanne Engh (Britt Lumber), and Tim Putnam (NIACC Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center).

Right: Industrial Technology teachers experienced the world of industrial controls during a network meeting last fall. Bob Franken, NIACC EMST Instructor, introduced the basics of PLC's or Programmable Logic Controls. The teachers learned of the PLC history and the operational structure. Teachers explored the logic element of how the CPU scans digital inputs and sets the digital outputs to make a process work. Each then entered a logic routine into a small pic trainer. This introductory lesson could easily be implemented into the high school classroom.



Left: Business teachers participated in a day-long Microsoft Access Database workshop facilitated by UNI Computer Science Instructor Mark Jacobson. Teachers learned the relational database management system and how it can be used effectively in business.



"Day with Dale & Carl Perkins"

Iowa Department of Education Consultant, Dale Gruis, worked with agriculture teachers on their programs of study, program evaluation, and third-party assessments this past June.

With students now required to have an 8th grade plan, it is important for career and technical teachers to develop a program of study for their career pathway. Agriculture programs of study are geared around core curriculum and aligned with CTE classes that connect to postsecondary education. This helps foster a seamless transition from high school to postsecondary career education.

Right: Over 100 students and teachers attended the 9th Annual Design-Build Event sponsored by the Contractor's Advisory Association (CAA) and NIACC Building Trades Department.

Seven area schools participated and displayed really impressive structures. The structures were built in-part through grants from the CAA of \$400 per school.

Category awards were given to:

- Forest City- Largest Play Area
- North Iowa- Most Original Design
- St. Ansgar- Most Useful
- Rockford- Practical Playhouse.
- Mason City- Most Inventive (pictured above)
- West Hancock- Authentic Architectural Style
- Charles City- Most Versatile



GOAL:

HOW DO TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS HELP STUDENTS OVERCOME LEARNING BARRIERS?

Meet Increased Needs Associated With Diversity & Globalization

This past June, area Career and Technical (CTE) secondary teachers and counselors gathered together to focus on strategies to help students overcome barriers in their learning environments. A discussion of student barriers, characteristics of high-risk students, and intervention strategies were provided by Harold (Jay) Colsch, AEA 267 Special Education Coordinator.

Even though Iowa's graduation rate for 2008 is at 88.7 percent, one of the nation's best; according to Jay Colsch, Area II districts hold an even higher average graduation rate of 94.33 percent. He stated that Iowa's goal is to reach a graduation rate of 95 percent by the year 2012.

According to the Iowa Department of Education, a student who leaves the regular learning environment to attend a General Education Development (GED) program is considered a dropout. However, a student who enrolls in an alternative school or program administered by a public school district is not considered a dropout. It is through the alternative school programs that many of Iowa's students can get themselves back on the learning track.

Mason City Alternative School (MCAS) Supervisor David Ciccetti and Career Education Teacher Rod Zehr shared strategies employed within an alternative learning environment. In addition, two former MCAS graduates shared their reasons for choosing the alternative school, their challenges along the way, and their successes since graduation.

According to Dave Ciccetti and Rod Zehr, there are many reasons why students choose the alternative school environment:

- believe regular education teachers do not teach in a way they can learn
- need more individual help
- think the school day is too structured
- fall too far behind to catch up with classmates
- other barriers such as substance abuse, pregnancy, stressful home life, social immaturity, reading ability, and lack of motivation



Above: Heather Angell (left) and Mikkiha Henriksen shared their Mason City Alternative High School education experiences. Heather is a 1999 graduate and currently completely her master's degree in Electronic Media Communications. Mikkiha, a 2009 graduate, plans to pursue a nursing degree.



Wells Fargo Provides Financial Literacy & Career Pathways Information

Wells Fargo Bank, Mason City, provided the Family and Consumer Science instructors with a half-day Financial Literacy in-service on September 15. In addition, teachers were introduced to hands-on banking units available online at no cost.

Teachers gained financial literacy insight from a personal banker, an investment banker, a mortgage originator, as well as from Andrea Mujica, local Wells Fargo Store Manager and Vice President. To better understand the banking/finance career pathway, each presenter shared their own personal career journey story.

"Wells Fargo facilitated an outstanding workshop," Jean Ostrander, NIACC Director of School Partnerships, said. "Hearing about the critical need for financial literacy from banking professionals reinforced the important role that educators play in teaching these skills."



GOAL:

Foster Business, Industry, and Professional Connections For Our Students, Teachers, and Employers

Career & Technical Educator Network Meetings: Goal— connect teachers to the current world of work, gain knowledge, and build professional relationships.

Educator Internships: Goal— connect educators to the world of work, broaden high school curriculum to incorporate work-based needs, and promote effective and realistic career guidance.

Business & Industry Tours: Goal— enhance educator understanding of all aspects of an industry and encourage business/industry collaboration.



Business Education Teachers Tour Kingland Systems

Last October, high school business education teachers toured Kingland Systems main headquarters located in Clear Lake, Iowa.

Kingland Systems is recognized as a world leader in technology services and outsourcing for the financial sector. They provide software, data, consulting services and solutions to the accounting and financial services industries. In 2008, Kingland Systems global compliance systems supported more than 130,000 users in more than 140 countries.

After the Kingland Systems tour, the teachers had the opportunity to learn about the purpose and expertise available to entrepreneurs in marketing, finances, and operations of the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC) Business Incubator. Owners of two companies that rent space in the JPEC Incubator shared the successes and challenges of starting a new business and told how the Business Incubator provided the assistance they needed.

2008-09 Career Connections

Dates	Events/Initiatives	Districts Invited	Students Attended	Educators, Parents & Others
11/12/08	Explore 2009	23	92	140
02/09/09	MCHS Career Link Information Night	1	36	40
02/16/09	Automotive/Agriculture/Industrial Tech Open House	23	180	70
03/11/09	Be Your Own Boss	23	150	35
04/02/09	Career Link Information Night (2 locations)	5	44	68
05/06/09	9th Annual Design-Build Service Learning Project	23	68	52
05/06/09	College Fair & Career Day	23	827	150

Concrete Basics Training ACI Certification For Industrial Tech Teachers

Industrial Technology teachers participated in a Concrete Basics/ACI Certification class sponsored by the University of Northern Iowa at Waterloo East High School on June 24–26. Led by Jerry Woods, Iowa Ready Mix Association Training Director, this class covered the chemical, structural, and working properties of plastic concrete. It also prepared participants for their American Concrete Instructors (ACI) certificate.

Activities include adding mixtures, as well as, placing, finishing, and curing of concrete. Teachers also participated in a hands-on activity of concrete stamping and coloring.

CAREER

LINK

CONNECTION

2008-09 Career Readiness Council Members

Darrin Strike, Chairperson—Superintendent, SCMT District

Dr. Anita Micich—Superintendent, Mason City Schools

Todd Lettow—Superintendent, Hampton-Dumont Schools

Dr. Debra Derr—President, NIACC

Dr. Mark Johnson—Vice President Academic Affairs, NIACC

Dr. Dean Meier—Chief Administrator, AEA 267

Larry Erion—Ass't Director Educational Services, AEA 267

Ann Lupkes—Work Experience/Transition Coordinator, AEA 267

Nancy Bair—Regional Director, Workforce Development Ctr.

Terry Schumaker—Workforce Development Ctr.

Brian Blodgett—Next Generation Technologies, LLC

Jason Penfold—A to Z Drying, Inc.

Joe Pritchard—Pritchard's of North Iowa

Dan Schmitt—Mill, Inc.

Gayla Toebe—Mercy Medical Center North Iowa

Marian Greiman—FCS Teacher, Garner-Hayfield High School

Andy Johnson—Agriculture Teacher, St. Ansgar High School

Greg Phillips—Industrial Technology Teacher, Lake Mills High School

Tamara Johnson—Business Teacher, Mason City High School

Jim Wolf—Counselor, Ventura High School

Consultants

Jean Ostrander—Director of School Partnerships, NIACC

Fran DeGroote—School Partnerships Coordinator, NIACC

Deb Throne—School Partnerships Coordinator, NIACC

Bev Oppold Blessman—Consultant for Career & Technical Ed., AEA 267