



SACRAMENTO COUNTY GRAND JURY

NEWS RELEASE

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CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION: An Underutilized Pathway to Success for High School Students

The Sacramento County Grand Jury conducted a county-wide investigation into the state of high school career and technical education (CTE) programs, and found school districts generally operate exemplary programs with little funding and support. This is despite a demonstrated need for additional trained workers in numerous occupations throughout Sacramento County.

The 2025-2026 Grand Jury found that 30% of jobs in California will require more than a high school education but less than a four-year degree by 2031. By focusing on high-demand/high wage jobs, CTE oriented programs lead to numerous employment opportunities that pay between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year. This makes strong CTE programs in high schools an obvious benefit for students and their communities. Research also shows students who complete a CTE program in high school tend to have higher graduation rates.

Yet, school districts usually devote only about 2% of their total high school budgets to CTE programs, the Grand Jury wrote in its report, "Career & Technical Education: An Underutilized Pathway to Success for High School Students." The report calls for additional support for CTE programs from various sources, including community businesses and the industrial sector so that such training can be expanded to include more students. Improved marketing of the program would also counter what the report calls a "missed opportunity" for many students.

The Grand Jury's recommendations, along with the full report is available for public review on the Grand Jury website: <https://www.sacgrandjury.org/reports.aspx>.