

LEGISLATIVE GRANT
TITLE OF PROJECT: RURAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CONSORTIUM GRANT
ANNUAL REPORT – JANUARY 2019

The SWWC Service Cooperatives and its partners received a \$3 Million Minnesota Legislative award at the conclusion of the 2017 Legislative Session. The award is being coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Project partners submitted a grant application to MDE in September of 2017 and the application was approved in October 2017. The original grant application indicated a June 30, 2019 project end date. After reviewing the Legislative Statute, it was determined that funds could be available through June 30, 2022. In order to use the \$3 Million grant in the most efficient manner and to have the best opportunity to create a new model for the delivery of rural CTE programs, a request was made to MDE on July 13, 2018 that the use of funds be extended to June 30, 2022. That request was granted on August 8, 2018.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

Current Rural CTE Advisory Committee

Ann Trochilla, Adult Basic Education

See Moua-Leske, Adult Basic Education

Eric Day, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training

Luke Greiner, DEED

Jessica Miller, DEED

Susan Knutson, Eden Valley-Watkins School Counselor

Donn Winkler, Mid Minnesota Development Commission

Jodi Jordon, Mid Minnesota Carl Perkins Consortium

Bruce Bergeson, Minnesota River Valley CTE Collaborative

Theresa Ireland, Minnesota West

Kayla Westra, Minnesota West

Dr. Jeff Williamson, Minnesota West

Gail Polejewski, Minnesota West Carl Perkins Consortium

Paul Carlson, New London-Spicer School Superintendent

Eriann Faris, Private Industry Council

Sam Bowen, Ridgewater College

Judy Tebben, Ridgewater College

Dr. Dwight Watson, Southwest Minnesota State University

Jay Trusty, Southwest Regional Development Commission

Scott Marquardt, Southwest Minnesota Initiative Foundation

Dawn Hegland, Upper Minnesota River Valley Development Commission

Ryan Luft, YME High School Principal

Lisa Gregoire, SWWC

Tom Hoff, SWWC

Cliff Carmody, SWWC

Cheryl K. Glaeser, Facilitator, Achieve TFC



The Rural CTE Advisory Committee was formed and began meeting on November 21, 2017 and has met seven times to date. Complete meeting notes can be found at www.LYFTpathways.org The purpose of the committee has been to:

- Provide oversight of the initiative
- Develop the grant application process
- Brand the initiative (Launch Your Future Today - LYFT Career Pathways)
- Coordinate effort and resources to avoid duplication
- Determine website content
- Determine communication strategies
- Review the progress of the initiative
- Assist in marketing LYFT Career Pathways to their colleagues and customers
- Assist in the development and marketing of local and regional workshops

By January 2018 the committee had provided input for the development of the LYFT Career Pathways website, communication materials, and the application process by which school and business partners could access funds for shared-CTE projects. A sub-committee was formed to act as the Application Review Committee and is responsible for reviewing applications for funding and providing constructive feedback to applicants.

The primary project staff from the SWWC for this grant project include:

- Cliff Carmody, Executive Director of the SWWC has worked with school district superintendents and legislative contacts to keep them updated on the progress of the grant project.
- Lisa Gregoire, Senior Director of Teaching and Learning provides supervision of staff, coordinates professional development, approve contracts, works with budgeting and the advisory committee to assist in developing a regional, sustainable CTE model.
- Tom Hoff, Career and Technical Project Coordinator works with the advisory committee and both of the Carl Perkins Consortia to develop regional management and delivery structures and implementation of the work plan. He will also provides technical assistance to partnerships that are interesting in accessing funds to develop new CTE projects.
- Gail Polejewski, Career Development Coordinator for the Minnesota West Carl Perkins Consortium works with CTE teachers, counselors and school administrators to set CTE program development priorities within the consortium.
- Randy Erdman, Director of Finance oversees the budget, accounts payable and receivable, fiscal reporting, and annual audits.

PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

Based on the Legislative language the following focus areas were determined:

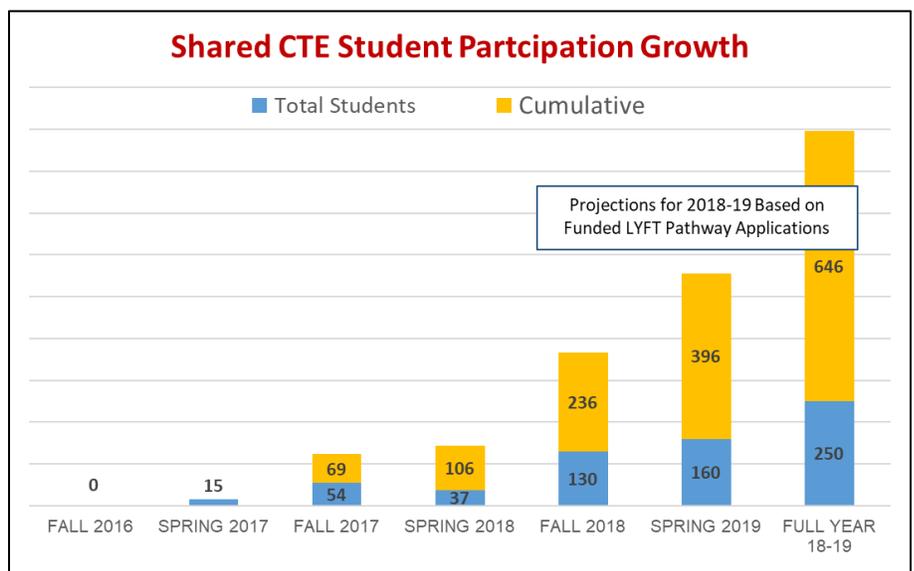
1. Develop courses and programs that encourage collaboration between two or more school districts;
2. Develop new career and technical programs that focus on the industry sections that fuel the rural regional economy;

3. Facilitate the development of highly-trained and knowledgeable students who are equipped with technical and workplace skills needed by regional employers;
4. Improve the access to career and technical education programs for students who attend sparsely populated rural school districts by developing public and private partnerships with business and industry leaders and by increasing coordination of high school and postsecondary program options;
5. Increase family and student awareness of the availability and benefit of career and technical education courses and training opportunities; and
6. Provide capital start-up costs for items including but not limited to a mobile welding lab, medical equipment and lab, and industrial kitchen equipment

PROGRESS AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

Since the LYFT Pathways application for funds was made available to partnerships on January 15, 2018 there have been 21 local applications submitted for review. Nineteen of the 21 have received \$560,000 in funding to develop new CTE experiences for students in the following areas:

- Nursing Assistant
- Intro to Medical Careers
- Aviation
- Auto Technology
- Aquaculture
- Culinary
- Pharmacy Technician
- Engineering
- Precision Manufacturing
- Entrepreneurship
- Project Lead the Way
- Computer Science
- Work-based Learning



In the Fall of 2016 there were no schools involved in a shared-CTE delivery model and no students served. Due to the Rural CTE Consortium Legislative Grant and the formation of LYFT Career Pathways, by the end of the 2018-19 school year about 650 students will have benefited from new CTE courses and experiences. There are more CTE project applications in the process of development; some will serve students in the 2018-19 school, but most are planning for the 2019-20 school year.

Based on current registration data, 188 students will have received transcribed credit from Minnesota public colleges for their participation in the LYFT Pathways funded courses by the end of the 2018-19 school year. All of the other students participating in courses will have access to articulated college credit at a wide variety of Minnesota two-year colleges through the CTECreditMN.com project.

Three promotional videos have been produced to create awareness about LYFT Career Pathways and to showcase some of the projects that were developed or expanded through the Rural CTE Consortium funding. The first video focused largely on shared-CTE courses that were developed by five partnering schools that make up the Minnesota River Valley CTE Collaborative. Pioneer Public Television taped interviews with faculty and students and produced the 3:30 promotional video, which can be found on the www.LYFTpathways.org website. The other two videos were produced by a college student who grew up in southwest Minnesota and has formed his own video production company, Blue Key Media. One of the two videos will be a companion to formal presentations. The second will be a stand-alone video that tells the story of the Rural CTE Consortium Legislation and how it led to LYFT Career Pathways. Each video will feature four currently funded projects and provides perspectives from students, faculty, school board members, and business leaders. The Blue Key Media videos are being finalized and will soon be available on our website.

LESSONS LEARNED

The roll-out of the LYFT Pathways initiative occurred over a several month period of time and has been positively received. One of the reasons the development and launch of the initiative has gone so smoothly is due to the high level of engagement of the regional partners and the Advisory Committee. You will notice in the promotional materials and on the website that LYFT Career Pathways is not branded by any single partner, but is equally owned by all that are involved. This shared ownership is one of the main factors that has led to the partnerships early success. Another reason the initiative has had a successful start is that the Legislative funding has provided a safety net for partnerships to take a risk on new CTE delivery methods.

While there has been a history of sharing CTE programs in the 1970s and 1980s via rural vocational centers, many of the current school administration and staff were not involved in those programs. So, partnering between schools and businesses on the development, implementation, and management of shared-CTE programs is a new endeavor for most. As a result, not all of the first programs will be successful and partnerships will need to make adjustments to improve the process in subsequent years. One of the main purposes of the Legislative Grant is for the development of a new collaborative model for the delivery of rural CTE programs. The model can have variations from school to school and partnership to partnership, but the Legislative funding is allowing schools the opportunity to determine what works best for their situation. The goal is for several successful models to emerge that can be replicated throughout the region and State.

Barriers to Overcome

Several key barriers have been identified by local and regional partners. The four listed below are the ones most commonly voiced during partnership meetings.

- **Student travel for center-based instruction for shared-CTE project.** Schools bussing students the greatest distance for face to face instruction or labs end up bearing the greatest financial burden.
- **Graduation requirements.** Schools would like more local control and flexibility around graduation requirements and mention Algebra II, Chemistry, and Physics most often.

- **Dedicated funding for shared-CTE projects.** Funding is needed to incentivize cooperation between school district and post-secondary partners that will fuel and sustain shared-CTE projects.
- **Shortage of CTE teachers.** There is a significant teacher shortage in all areas, but a severe shortage in all CTE fields. Hopefully the new Minnesota Tiered Licensing system will help provide the much needed flexibility for filling open CTE positions.

BUDGET SUMMARY

To date \$487,000 in Rural CTE Consortium funds have been expended on Shared CTE Project. \$254,890 in Fiscal Year 2018 and \$232,180 so far in Fiscal Year 2019. It is anticipated there will be an additional \$400,000 - \$500,000 expenditures yet in Fiscal year 2019. Budget reports have been sent to the Minnesota Department of Education by the SWWC Finance Department. Expenditure reports for Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 (to date) have been included with this report.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Please visit the www.LYFTpathways.org website for additional information and resources.
- Our most recent LYFT Pathways video can be found at: <https://www.lyftpathways.org/overviewvideo>
- A printed and online Career Guide is being produced and will be forwarded on to MDE and presented during Legislative testimony.