



CAREER PATHWAYS

Launch Your Future Today

LYFT Career Pathways 2018-19 Year End Update

LYFT Pathways Partnership Provides Valuable Career & Technical Education Experiences

There has been a steady growth of career and technical education (CTE) programs since the LYFT Pathways funds were made available to school and business partnership in January 2018. LYFT Pathways funding, which resulted from a \$3 million grant during the 2017 Minnesota Legislative session, has helped to launch nearly 30 projects that provide unique CTE experiences for junior and senior high students in the 18 county service region of southwest and west central Minnesota. Programs have included aquaculture, aviation, manufacturing, nursing assistant, commercial driver's license, culinary, engineering, entrepreneurship and more. So far over 600 students have been impacted when schools and businesses formed partnerships to deliver these meaningful CTE experiences.

When you ask students about their favorite part of these new CTE classes, they all agree that getting to business sites and working directly with employers was the most impactful and interesting. Students want real world experiences and there is no better place to expand their awareness and learn new skills than to spend time with local employers to see first-hand how their learning relates to actual work in the career field. Business leadership is critical to the success of local and regional partners if we want to make sure the skills students are developing in high school match the skills that employers expect in the workplace.

In spite of the success of LYFT Pathways there have also been challenges. Distance between schools can make it difficult for students to meet at a central location for face-to-face instruction and labs. School class schedules might not offer the flexibility for students to miss the beginning or end of a course if they are traveling for a shared-CTE class. Required coursework for high school graduation (and the lack of local control on requirements) can make it difficult for students to fit elective CTE classes into their schedule. Even if schools had the money in their budget, and students had the time in their schedule, the difficulty in finding qualified CTE instructors often prevents the addition of new CTE classes or even the ability to support current programs.

In spite of these obstacles, school and business partnerships are finding innovative solutions and providing valuable CTE experiences for students all across our region. To learn more about the currently funded projects and how to apply for LYFT Pathway funds go to the project home page at www.LYFTpathways.org.