



Adult/High School Student Career Pathways

Creating a Pathway for a Stronger Workforce and Community

By Michelle Noreiga, Assistant Principal, Marshall Public Schools

As assistant principal of a school using an adult/high school student career pathway model (with both adults and high school students learning together), I have seen benefits to both groups and the collaborative partners.

Benefits for the School District

By adding adult students and their revenue sources, we had the ability to:

- Expand the number of class offerings.
- Expand into other career pathways.
- Allow high school students to take advantage of the additional supports offered to adults without any additional cost to the school district, including:
 - Workforce services for employability skills
 - Placement services (help finding work)
 - Opportunity to tap into existing relationships with community businesses
 - Collaborative problem-solving to create a better end product or service for both groups
- Experience the increased level of community respect for the public school as it worked to address the broader needs of the local economy (career trainings are developed to reflect the need of local businesses).
- Show the community that the school district helps fulfilling workforce needs while building a pipeline for the future (keeping the youth in the region).
- Breaks the cycle of poverty for family circles.

Benefits for Students

- High school students learned with a greater sense of urgency and seriousness since their adult classmates were learning and working with that mindset. As a result, they were better behaved and more focused in the classroom.
- Formal and informal interactions within the classroom setting between these two groups lead to conversations encouraging high school students to learn now (when it is easier and more convenient).
- The mixed-aged classroom environment was more reflective of the work place the students will enter after graduation.
- High school students became mentors to the adults in the area of technology.
- Students could attain both high school and college credit (dual enrollment).

Why Was This Model Successful?

Student-Focused

By focusing on both student and adult needs, we have created a richer training opportunity. Both populations learned from each other beyond the class content.

Employer-Driven

The success of adult career pathway training over the past ten years has been due to employer-driven programming. Adult programs recognize that unless local employers are helping design the curriculum, there will not be employer buy-in. An example of this is our Certified Nursing Assistant class design. We include topics that employers want their employees to have but are not included in the course content of CNA. Extra communication skill training to better serve individuals with dementia is one of the added components we have with our employers actively participating in the training. Partnering with adult programs brought this knowledge base to the creation of trainings in the public school.

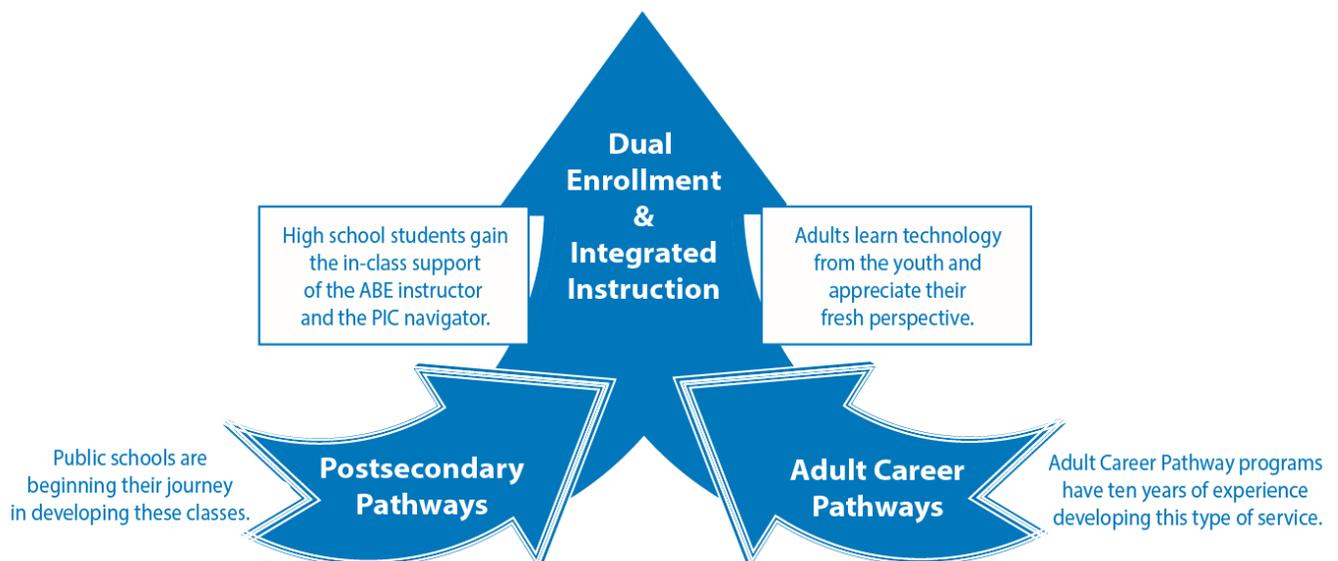
Collaboration

In our collaboration, student success and benefits to each partner were interwoven. All partners were equally invested in the success of the collaboration.

Meeting Employer Needs

“The students we hire from this training are equipped with the technical skills we are looking for and they are far better prepared for work in a diverse work place. We have found mentorships can help harness new creativity and old wisdom, the older generation can pass on their knowledge to new employees to ensure intellectual capital is not lost when an older employee decides to retire.”

Jason Swanson, Regional Director of Operations, Tealwood





Partners in the Marshall Adult/Youth Career Trainings

If you would like more information and/or would like to schedule a visit to see the program in action, please contact one of these partners.

- Marshall Public Schools: Michelle Noriega, michelle.noriega@marshall.k12.mn.us
- SW Adult Basic Education: Pat Thomas, pthomas@starpoint.net
- Private Industry Council: Kary Boerboom, kboerboom@swmnpic.org
- MN West Community & Technical College: Dawn Reginer, dawn.reginer@mnwest.edu
- Local businesses tied to the industry sector can be shared as requested

We are happy to share how we engaged both partners and employers in our career trainings. Due to the fact many of our partners (SW ABE, Workforce/PIC, MN West) have a regional presence, all the ingredients to bring this type of partnership to your community can be accommodated if requested.

More Information

Student Video: <http://www.southwestabe.org/marshall-adult-youth-training>

News Article: *Advancing Career Paths*, <http://www.southwestabe.org/newspaper--publications>

