

For Immediate Release

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Board Hears State Recommendations for Improving Career and Technical Education

PITTSBURGH, September 2, 2009 --- Commendations in four of 23 standards on the State's evaluation of the District's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program were among the findings shared at this evening's Board Education Committee Meeting. Conducted October – December 2008, the evaluation reviews the District and nine of its high schools on a total of 23 standards in categories such as Academics, Articulation Agreements, Local Advisory Committees and Planning. The Pennsylvania Department of Education uses the evaluation to determine a district's compliance with regulations in Chapter 339, which governs the delivery of CTE education to students and the use of funds allocated for CTE. The State's feedback includes commendations, recommendations, and areas for correction where the District has fallen out of compliance. The District received commendations in four standards: Labor Market Needs, Accountability Standards, Local Advisory Committee and Strategic Plan.

In its report the State noted, "...many excellent programs, activities, and support services are available to students. Students were observed actively engaged in the learning process and positive interaction between students and teachers was readily seen..."

In addition to evaluating the District as a whole, schools that offer CTE programming are rated separately on Chapter 339 regulations. The District currently offers CTE programs at nine of its high schools: Pittsburgh Allderdice, Pittsburgh Brashear, Pittsburgh Carrick, Pittsburgh Langleigh, Pittsburgh Oliver, Pittsburgh Peabody, Pittsburgh Perry, Pittsburgh Schenley and Pittsburgh Westinghouse. Each school met Chapter 339 standards in Planning, Personnel and Strategic Planning. All received feedback for corrections on various standards.

"This is the first State evaluation of our Career and Technical programs in over 10 years," said Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane. "These recommendations will help guide our work as we strive to create a 21st Century Career and Technical Education program."

Recommendations and Corrections

Although the evaluation commended the District for the restructuring of its Business Classification of Instructional Programs (CIPS), it recommends basing new programs on a market analysis and input from advisory committees. The evaluation additionally recommended:

- a joint agreement between principals and CTE administration regarding the use of funds allocated for CTE programs;
- articulation agreements for all CIPS; and
- the use of data, performance targets and follow-up surveys of students.

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The State identified several areas for corrections where the District must make changes in order to be in compliance with Chapter 339, including:

- increased vocational teacher participation in students Individualized Education Plans (IEP) in order to better support special education services;
- data on the placement and retention of students in post-secondary training; and
- documentation of committee membership.

The District must submit a plan to the State regarding how it will address any corrections by the end of month. The Board will vote on the District's plan to address all corrections at the school and district level at its September 29th Legislative Meeting.

The public can view tonight's presentation by visiting the Pittsburgh Public Schools web site at www.pps.k12.pa.us, visiting the Division of Communications, Room 201, or by requesting a copy by calling the Parent Hotline at (412)622-7920.