**New Course of Study Information and NCCER Results**

**NCCER Instructors,**

As many of you may already know, we have been in the process of working with industry to “fine tune” our curriculum. Credentialing has never been more important than it is now. To that end and with industry input we have developed a simplified approach to curriculum that provides adequate time for student mastery and establishes a statewide credentialing baseline.

**Please read carefully page one of the attached document and your Pathway Courses.**

This material was first delivered to Career Tech Directors at their meeting January 14th, 2014, but will take more work on everyone’s part to successfully implement. It is important that we put this process in place as soon as possible to insure that we meet the instructional objectives communicated to us by our industry partners.

**Frequently Asked Questions**:

***Are these the only courses in our new Course of Study?***

No, but these courses contain the fundamental knowledge and skills we are using to establish a statewide standard for program credentialing. The 3 course sequence for each pathway, 4 for Welding, can result in as many a 3 Career Ready Indicators (CRI). In addition, the Foundation Course #430004 can be used at the beginning of any pathway and Senior Career Pathway Project #54051 for Manufacturing and #43129 for Arch & Construction can be used as “capstone” courses. More courses are being developed.

***Why are these courses so important?***

 These courses will be the courses that support the credentialing requirements for each LEA. Credentialing for “NCCER Core”, “NCCER Level 1” and “NCCER Level Plus” will also be reported by dropdown menu on each student transcript along with their other high school course work and test scores. This will have a definite and positive impact on AYP.

***Are the old courses still available?***

Yes. Existing courses are still available for use but their use will result in scheduling and sequencing problems we are trying to alleviate.

***What’s in each course?***

Course 1 will include NCCER Core and an introduction to that specific pathway. Course 2 will concentrate on NCCER Level I modules in that pathway, and Course 3 will complete Level I content plus additional material deemed important by our industry partners.

***I heard that students will need Kuder. What is that and how does that pertain to me?***

Yes, students will need Kuder or a similar interest inventory supporting their enrollment in your class. This applies to all C/T programs and will be noted on BIC. It should be kept in each student’s file. We will be checking for the interest inventories next year during NCCER reviews. C/T can no longer be used to “warehouse” students in order to fill a schedule.

***Who knows about these changes?***

Career/Tech Directors were given this attachment when they met January 14th. We are depended on them to pass along that information. Counselors are key to having students appropriately placed in these classes. They will not know how to place students, unless you provide information to them. This FAQ sheet has been developed to address their questions and to best prepare you to assist in the process. It would be good for you to pass this along to everyone who works with scheduling at your school or C/T Center.

***We have existing NCCER students this year. Who do we enroll in each course next year?***

We are aware that initially this task will be a challenge. Once established, scheduling will be a very easy task. The following should guide your initial efforts and that of your counselors. Keep in mind that the primary objective is to put students in the course that will enable them to complete NCCER Core and Level 1 of their pathway.

**Schedule the student in:**

 **Course 1:** If this is a “first time” student in your pathway or the student has **not completed** NCCER Core in the Foundation Course #430004 or in Agri science.

**Course 2**: If the student has already **completed** NCCER Core in one of your pathway courses this year, in the Foundation Course #430004, or in Agri science. Instructors will need to provide additional assistance to students who have not had pathway-specific modules from Pathway Course 1. This approach is in keeping with NCCER competence-based standards and preferable to having students to repeat NCCER Core material.

**Or**

If the instructor approves, a student who is already established in this pathway, has **completed some** of NCCER Core and some NCCER pathway modules. In this situation, instructors will need to provide additional assistance to such students.

**Course 3:** If the student has already **completed** NCCER Core, and some Level 1 modules in their pathway.

**Course 4 (Welding):** This course was developed to address the additional time required for skills attainment in this pathway. It is for the student who has already **completed** NCCER Core and is in the process of completing Level 1 modules in the Welding pathway.

**Senior Pathway Project:** The intent of this course is to give seniors the opportunity to prepare for their next level of career education and training, whether that is postsecondary education or apprenticeship/employment. It is to address

one or more of the following :

* To complete NCCER Core or Level 1 credentialing
* To complete coursework needed for college articulation
* To prepare for apprenticeship testing
* To prepare for employment testing

***I have some students who may never complete NCCER Core? Where should they be placed?***

We must make every effort to guide all students through this credentialing process keeping in mind individual ability and needs. As an education professional this task will be left up to you. With that said, please keep in mind that by giving a student a “pass” on challenging curriculum we only further the “I can’t do it” mentality so pervasive in education today. Because NCCER is competency based, you will be expected to continue Core and

Level 1 credentialing efforts with all students throughout their participation in your program, regardless of which course they are taking.

***I’m required to meet dual enrollment and/or articulation standards with my community college. What should I do?***

Fundamentals covered in the NCCER Core and Level 1 support what some consider “higher level” college coursework. As K-12 educators, it is our responsibility to see to it that all students receive the foundational instruction needed to meet their future needs. It is best for students to earn their Career Ready Credential and then begin the dual enrollment and/or articulation process. If scheduled properly, Career Ready Credentials can be earned in the first 3 courses of a pathway.

The dual enrollment and/or articulation challenge can be addressed in a number of ways. It begins by carefully reviewing the specific college Plan of Instruction (POI) for that course(s). Consider that:

* All cross walked POI material should be covered and documented.
* Additional college-based material can be added within the first 3 courses of a pathway.
* Additional college-based material can be added within the additional NCCER-based courses.
* Additional college-based material can be added in the Senior Pathway Project course.
* Additional college-based material can be taught in additional Pilot Courses you develop.

***I don’t think we will be able to keep our classes in cohort groups because of what is referred to as “transportation problems”. What should we do?***

Improper scheduling is the single greatest threat to program credibility, student achievement, teacher retention, and Career Ready credentialing we face. Every effort must be made to keep first year students in cohort groups. Experience indicates that Career Ready Indicators will not be met if done otherwise. One only has to note the high number of module completions but the low number of NCCER Core completions to see the dismal results of poor scheduling. The same goes for NIMS and ETA credentialing also. If students are to be mixed, this must be restricted to 2nd and 3rd course students only. Also, C/T Centers are encouraged to clearly communicate which courses will be offered each year or semester and at what time. Only accept students for those courses. This means that some students may have to wait to get into a pathway. Students should be encouraged to take available related course work during this waiting period. An example is to have a student take a drafting course, if he or she cannot get into a construction class for the term.

**A final Note**

We are certain that no state-wide curriculum plan can account for every variable and contingency. We are also certain that if we do not embrace and implement this systematic approach to sensible scheduling, we will continue to jeopardize student achievement; derail credentialing; fail to utilize valuable, newly acquired equipment/ resources; and once again frustrate teachers who understand the importance of knowledge/skills mastery in technical programs.

Let me know of any additional questions you may have so we can share answers and ideas.

Best regards,

Myron Laurent, NCCER Sponsor Representative