

DISPELLING A MYTH!

At this point in the month of March, our 10th graders have completed one of the major hurdles associated with the sophomore year of high school. They have taken the Ohio Graduation Test exams for the first time in their high school careers. All will hope that they did well on the mandated series of exams that students must pass as one of the requirements for obtaining a diploma. Many, indeed, will receive word in late spring that they have passed these exams, and are thus finished working toward meeting this one requirement for graduation. To be sure, there has been a lot of work go into preparing students to successfully clear this hurdle in their high school careers.

Now, all sophomores have another hurdle to prepare for as they contemplate how they might complete their high school careers. Some will opt to go the Post Secondary Education Option route, and probably not take another “high school” course offering before graduation. Others will remain at their home high school for their junior and senior years, while still others will attend the Ohio Valley Career and Technical Center the final two years of their high school careers. The important thing to keep in mind here is that “one size does not fit all” when it comes to our sophomores making a decision about how to best invest their final two years of high school. And, it is at this point that I would like to try to dispel a myth.

As sophomores reach the point in which they must make a decision about their final two years of high school, they shouldn't rule out the vast opportunities that are available to them at the OVCTC. One myth about vocational education that exists is that the only students who attend the CTC are those who cannot make it for their final two years of

high school at their home school. This simply isn't true. There are students attending the CTC who have a wide range of interests and abilities, just like at the home high school.

Another myth associated with vocational education is that if you attend the CTC, you won't or can't go to college. This myth is so silly that it is ridiculous. I could personally name several teachers in our district and surrounding districts who attended the CTC. We have all kinds of CTC graduates who have furthered their education through technical school, junior college, or four-year colleges, just like their peers who finish up at the home high school.

I am not about to tell you that vocational education is for everyone, because it isn't. However, I have lived in Adams County my entire life. I have worked in this school system for 32 years. I can guarantee you that more of our students should be attending the OVCTC than what actually do attend. So, what prevents more students from attending the CTC? I think it's a couple of things. First, the fear of change, of doing something different, of being away from some of your friends who may not be attending the CTC. Second, it's that myth that "those who can stay at the home high school, while those who can't attend the CTC."

As with any of the options available to our sophomores, the CTC can provide you with many examples of success stories and some not so successful. That is to be expected anywhere, including the home high schools. I would encourage our sophomores to take the CTC spring visits and orientations seriously. I would also encourage parents of our sophomores to contact the administration of the OVCTC with any concerns or questions that you might have about vocational education as you and your sophomore children

work toward making a decision on the final two years of high school. It's a big decision. Please don't take it lightly. Don't be afraid of change, or of making new friends. Ask questions, and make the decision that is best for you and your future.

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