



Career Technical Education (CTE):

Enrollment and **graduation rates at Nevada's Four-Year colleges remain far below the national average** and also lower than many of the public colleges and universities in the Intermountain West. (Guinn Center, May, 2016)

High school graduation rates in Nevada, while having gradually increased to 72% in 2016, still are significantly below the U.S. high school grad rate of 82%.

The fact is--too many Nevada students are not prepared to attend and complete a four-year degree program in college. But, **there is good news for those Nevada high school students who attend Career-Technical Education (CTE) programs.** CTE high programs in Nevada have a 95%+ graduation rate, and 80-85% of those graduates go to some level of post secondary education. The good news for those "career-focused" grads is--jobs ARE waiting for them in Nevada's growing and ever-diversifying economy.

For decades in Nevada, **employers have voiced their frustration that educators and schools "are not listening to them" about their workforce needs.** CTE career-focused magnet and charter schools routinely partner with businesses to design programs that produce 21st century employable skills. Community colleges aligned with CTE high schools are the most responsive institutions in Nevada to the state's workforce needs.

There is growing evidence that many of those graduates with two-year technical degrees are out-earning many of the average young bachelor's degree holders. (Fordham Institute, July, 2015) As the Fordham study found; **"It's no longer a matter of how much education you have, but what skills you have acquired and how well they match up with the economy."**

With the Governor's Office of Economic development (GOED) targeting future business sector growth in Nevada in--manufacturing, logistics and operations, information technologies--along with the standard bearers of hospitality and mining; Nevada is poised for an economic boom if we just have the ready workforce.

Now is the time for us to **focus on building alternative pathways for Nevada's young people to get some sort of postsecondary credential with real value in today's labor market.** Career-focused magnet and charter schools will be a real solution to the state's graduation rate woes while at the same time helping Nevada realize its economic goals.

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