

## **OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION (Career Education)**

The School Committee embraces the concept that career education is the totality of learning experiences through which a person learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of his/her way of living. Such education should start in early childhood and continue throughout a person's life. It may be viewed as consisting of the following phases:

1. career awareness,
2. career exploration,
3. career decision-making,
4. career preparation,
5. career guidance and counseling, and
6. career placement, follow-up and advancement.

The School Committee believes that the District should develop career education programs that provide experiences and occupational preparation. In addition, services should be provided to assist individuals to develop an understanding of the world of work and to make decisions about careers. For example:

1. Career awareness should be woven into early childhood and elementary school programs to develop and enlarge children's understandings of the working world, to promote a positive attitude about the personal and social significance of work, and to help children think about their own interests and abilities and aspirations. Only after children develop self-awareness can they begin to think about themselves in relation to work and careers.
2. Career exploration should begin in the junior high school -- and may continue much longer. Students should be provided with information about careers and some first-hand experiences. Learning experiences should include examination of careers, observation of work and actual work experiences; and then, self-evaluation to determine his/her own interests, abilities and aptitudes in relation to these experiences.
3. Career decision-making takes place when the student has examined the career information and experiences provided and has considered them in the context of his/her own values, interests, abilities and aptitudes. At this time students should feel ready to make some tentative choices and consider alternatives as to their career and/or career area.
4. Career preparation begins in high school. Students should be prepared to move more deeply into their career choice and to leave the school system for entry into a program of further education and training or with an entry-level employment skill. This can be accomplished through various educational programs and occupational/vocational training. Students should be given an opportunity to participate in work study experience programs designed to give on-the-job training.
5. Career guidance and counseling should be an ongoing part of career education in order to give adequate assistance to students involved in making a decision about careers. Counseling should help the student combine a knowledge of self, a knowledge of work opportunities and a knowledge of alternatives for education and training. Guidance should involve the participation of teachers, professional counselors and parents.

6. Career placement, follow-up and advancement are critical in career education. Along with the traditional function of guidance counselors in placing students in colleges, job placement services should be provided for students who desire either part-time employment while attending school or full-time employment after graduation. Efforts must be made to follow-up our students to discover how well their schooling has served them in their jobs and career preparation. Through adult programs, the schools should provide retraining and career advancement, for advances in technology continually require new skills and society continually demands new services. We can only make guesses about job needs in the future-- but change is certain. Therefore, students should be encouraged to view career education as a lifelong process requiring continuing study and training.

Realizing that there must be a cooperative effort between the schools and communities, the School Committee supports the establishment of career education advisory committees consisting of school and community leaders as well as the involvement of community resource persons at all school levels.

Adopted by the Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee:

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