



## CTE students graduate from high school at higher rate than state average

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Students enrolled in Career Technical Education programs have a better chance of graduating from high school, a recent report from the state showed.

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction report showed that with 30 school districts statewide, the four-year cohort graduation rate was 90 percent or above among students completing a four-course CTE concentration in 2009.

“Career and Technical Education plays an important role in helping prepare students to be globally competitive and college- and career-ready,” State Superintendent June Atkinson said. “Research has shown that CTE courses provide many students with a way to connect what they learn in school with their plans for future education, training and work.”

Lenoir, Greene and Jones County Schools each provide students with CTE opportunities. Jessica Shimer, Lenoir County Schools career development coordinator, said Monday that CTE programs remain popular with students.

“Key components to CTE are the career and technology student organizations,” Shimer said. “These clubs help develop leadership and allow students to compete and get involved with community service.”

Lenoir County Schools celebrated CTE month in February, which highlighted the program’s efforts to prepare students for the workforce after graduation.

“We set goals every year to get students career ready,” Lenoir County Schools Superintendent Terry Cline said. “The CTE program helps keep students from dropping out.”

Students enrolled in the CTE program in Lenoir County Schools had an 83 percent four-year cohort graduation rate in 2009, which was above the state graduation average of 71 percent for all students.

Greene County Schools Superintendent Patrick Miller said that CTE is a valuable tool for students.

“It is more important now than ever before,” Miller said. “We push for everyone to try and go to college but the reality is not everyone can go. CTE provides a way for students to go straight to the workforce.”

Greene County students in the CTE program had an 81 percent four-year cohort graduation rate in 2009 while Jones County students in the program had a 68 percent four-year cohort graduation rate, according to DPI.

CTE students in Lenoir, Greene and Jones graduated at a higher rate from high school than students in their districts who were not enrolled in the CTE program.

Some of the more popular CTE courses are machining, automotive mechanics and health care. Shimer said Lenoir Community College works with Lenoir to develop and teach CTE courses.

“We are going to offer cosmetology courses next year as part of CTE,” Shimer said. “Students will go to

LCC for the cosmetology classes.”

LCC instructors teach machining courses at North Lenoir and Kinston High Schools.

“We are proud of our CTE students and what they have accomplished,” Shimer said.

Statewide, more than 72 percent of high school students, or about 310,000 students, take CTE courses each year. According to DPI, 90 percent of all students take at least one CTE course before they graduate.

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