High-paying jobs for HS graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job title</th>
<th>Median pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior piping designer</td>
<td>$92,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air traffic controller</td>
<td>$90,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevator mechanic</td>
<td>$88,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locomotive engineer</td>
<td>$80,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journeyman lineman</td>
<td>$74,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker</td>
<td>$72,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lineman</td>
<td>$71,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigeration mechanic</td>
<td>$68,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: While some employers may require an associate degree, bachelor's degree or industry certification, many jobs on this list have been available to high school graduates.

The National Schools Association (NSBA) commission identifies 'life ready' skills

By Paul Heiser
SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

The National Schools Association has released a report that identifies six critical "Life Ready Skills" they consider critical for young people to master in preparation for employment, education, and "success in life." The skills are:

1. Dependability and reliability.
2. Adaptability/Trainability.
3. Critical thinking.
4. Decision-making.
5. Customer focus.
6. Teamwork.

The study was authored by NSBA's Commission to Close the Skills Gap, which was created in 2018 and involves major business, trade and membership organizations.

The group made several recommendations on how school boards can ensure students have the opportunity to acquire these six skills. The recommendations are grouped into three categories: policy, programming and industry engagement.

Policy. Consider requiring each student have work-based learning as a condition for graduating high school. Adopt other policies placing a priority on students developing and enhancing the six skills.

Programming. Be sure students are aware of the range of opportunities before them, and the basic skills needed to be successful on any path. Promote work experience as having similar benefits as sports and extracurricular activities. Host annual career awareness events for regional industries to talk about local careers and include educational sessions where young people can discuss and learn about the six skills.

Industry engagement. Survey local employers annually and meet regularly with an advisory board made up of local business leaders. Participate in local Chambers of Commerce, industry trade associations and similar groups.

The state Association of Career and Technical Education Administrators and director of the CTE program at Fulton Montgomery BOCES.

Instead of having all students pursue one path, there is a focus on career exploration, particularly at earlier ages. "CTE is not about location," DeTraglia told On Board, "but rather a type of instruction."

The State Education Department is promoting CTE through its College, Career, and Civic Readiness Index in its ESSA compliance plan, DeTraglia noted. The index is a method of using diplomas, credentials, advanced course credits and enrollment, CTE certifications, and indicators such as bi-literacy to determine how a school is preparing its students to be ready for college, a career, and civic engagement once students leave the school.

For each accountability subgroup, the CCR Index ranges from 0 to 200 and is calculated by awarding extra credit for students who exhibit higher levels of readiness as well as partial credit for students who remain in school to complete a High School Equivalency certificate. Participation in CTE is worth two points in the index.

DeTraglia noted that CTE programs have evolved as computers and artificial intelligence have become major parts of manufacturing and other fields. "Factories are more technologically advanced; they require employees to be problem identifiers as well as problem solvers," he said.

The Association of Career and Technical Education Administrators is running a "CTE Strong" campaign to increase awareness of the benefits of CTE. The website www.CTEstrong.com features a video of a teacher performing slam poetry about how the world has changed, and education must change to suit today’s learners.

A second phase of the campaign is being readied to show students, schools and parents the specific pathways required by individual career cluster, the steps they need to take along that pathway and how those pathways relate to the courses they need to take.

According to Rachelle Romoda, the executive director of the association and supervisor of Instruction at St. Lawrence Lewis BOCES, a cultural shift is under way involving the role of career exploration in every student’s experience. It needs to be part of the school culture, she said.

After years of hearing a steady drumbeat that everyone needs to go to four-year college, career and technical programs are receiving due recognition, according to Joseph Dragne, senior executive officer for Capital Region BOCES.

"We are finally seeing the pendulum swing back to the middle," he said. "Career and technical provides tremendous opportunities for students to go right into the workforce with a highly technical skill set and earn a competitive wage."