

NCES DOVE UPDATE

DATA ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

VOL. 3 NO. 2 AUGUST 2001

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE NCES TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (TRP) ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION



LATEST NEWS

The report *Features of Occupational Programs at the Secondary and Post-secondary Education Levels* (NCES 2001-018), is available on the NCES website: <http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001209>. The hard copy report is due out in early September. The report presents findings from surveys of public high schools and less-than-4-year post-secondary institutions in 1999. The surveys asked about occupational programs offered, use of skill competency lists, educator and industry involvement in the development of these lists, criteria used to determine program completion, and education credentials offered.



ON-GOING PROJECTS

High School Trends Report. This report examines trends in vocational/technical coursetaking in public high schools between 1982 and 1998, including trends in combining academic and vocational/technical coursetaking. At the end of September, a draft of the report will be sent to TRP members who offered to review it. The final report will be completed in January. See "Voced Findings" for some highlights. An adjunct report examining special populations trends will follow the same review schedule.

CCD Work Group. At the secondary level, many states use area vocational schools to deliver vocational education. Because these are "shared-time" facilities that students attend for only part of the school day, these schools are often not identified by NCES' Common Core of Data (CCD). Consequently, when the CCD is used as the sampling frame for surveys of vocational education, activity in area vocational schools may not be accurately reflected. The inclusion of area schools in the CCD has improved over the years, but it appears that a significant number of institutions are still missing in some states. This project, therefore, will review the CCD list of area schools, as well as other specialized high schools offering vocational education, and work with states to identify missing institutions for inclusion in the CCD.

NSOPF Work Group. The National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) uses a single questionnaire to survey faculty in all types of postsecondary institutions. Thus, a part-time automotive instructor in a community college is asked the same questions as a full professor in a university with large-scale research initiatives and the full complement of baccalaureate and advanced degree programs. While this approach simplifies survey administration, a "one size fits all" questionnaire does not effectively address many of the objectives, programs, and policy issues that are characteristic of community colleges. This project, therefore, is exploring the feasibility of developing a separate questionnaire or module tailored more precisely to community colleges generally, and to vocational/technical education specifically.

ELS Work Group. This work group, which will examine potential vocational education-related questions and surveys for the 2004 Education Longitudinal Study (ELS), will begin work in the fall after the 2002 ELS survey instruments have been finalized.

Adult Education and Work Report. Our analyses for this report on adults' participation in work-related education have proceeded slowly. Since the 2001 Adult Education Survey data are due out in September—and these data are a richer source of information than previous Adult Education Surveys—we have decided to have this report use the 2001 data rather than the 1999 and 1995 data, as originally planned. Data analysis will begin as soon as the 2001 data are available.

Guidance Counseling FRSS. In conjunction with OVAE, NCES is developing a Fast-Response Survey System (FRSS) survey asking about schools' guidance and career counseling programs. The survey is designed to be completed by a school's guidance counselor, and is planned to be administered this fall or winter. Some items on the survey will parallel those asked in a 1984 High School and Beyond survey of guidance counselors, allowing for an examination of changes over time.

VOCED FINDINGS

Some highlights from Trends in High School Vocational/Technical Coursetaking: 1982-1998 (draft report, August 2001):

- Between 1982 and 1998, the percentage of public high school graduates concentrating in business services, materials production (metals, woods, and plastics), and mechanics and repair declined, while the percentage of graduates concentrating in communications technology and in child care and education increased. Changes in other program areas were not statistically significant.
- In 1998, public high school graduates took more computer-related coursework in the business services program area than in the computer technology program area.



FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

The *Stats in Brief* report *Employees Who Pursue Postsecondary Study* is scheduled for adjudication (the final step in the NCES review process) on September 7th, and should be released about a month or two after that date. We will notify the TRP when the report is available on the Web.



UPCOMING ANALYSES

A report on public school vocational education teachers is planned using the 2000 Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) as well as previous SASS administrations. The report will examine trends in teacher supply and demand, teacher characteristics, and teaching practices. Specifically, we will address concerns raised at the TRP meeting in April. Analytic work will begin on the report as soon as the 2000 SASS data are available—in September, we hope.