What is CTE?

Career Technical Education (CTE) is an educational model that aligns secondary and post secondary education to labor market demand, and provides students with the technical, academic, and employability knowledge and skills they need for success. Put simply, CTE prepares students for a career of their choice! CTE today is a partner to college–preparatory education and core academic classes. It integrates business and industry perspectives, creates personalized pathways to success and leads to fewer dropouts. Studies indicate that CTE generates an enormous long term return on investment for participants and for society as a whole. Recent polls show that 89 percent of public school parents agree that students should receive more education about career choices while in high school.

The CTE Department at Wilcox High School includes Automotive Technology, Business, Culinary Arts, Fashion Arts, and Digital Media Technology.

Stock Market Game

Our Intro to Business and Marketing courses (both of them one semester) participate in the Stock Market Game sponsored by SIFMA. The game is supported by curriculum that helps the students understand the basics behind investing. The game has the students working in small teams where each team is given 100,000 virtual dollars and can invest it into stocks or bonds. The Stock Market Game provides them with access to any stock listed on the New York Stock Exchange and most domestic bonds. The trades they make are recorded in real time so they pay for the investment as if it were “real-life”. We compete against other high schools both as a school and as individual teams.

Last year one of our individual teams won the Northern California Region Championship (We had 16 teams of approximately 4 students each). There were over 300 teams entered into the year-long competition. The winning team was able to travel along with Mr. Raffetto to the Federal Reserve Building in San Francisco to receive their awards. As an overall school (the scores of all of your teams combined divided by the number of teams your school entered), Wilcox finished 3rd (14 schools in the high school division).

Mr. Raffetto, the teacher, states “It’s an opportunity for students to apply critical thinking skills. It also provides them with quick and relevant feedback on the quality of their decisions. This ultimately helps students improve those critical thinking skills”.

Currently, with 3 months left in the competition, Wilcox is ranked 5th in the high school year-long competition (15 high schools in division). Wilcox has 6 different teams in the top 100 in the standings (420 total teams in competition, we entered 16 teams at Wilcox).
DECA is a professional student organization associated with courses in the Business and Digital Media Technology Department at Wilcox.

Based in Reston, Virginia, DECA is an international organization committed to preparing emerging leaders and entrepreneurs to be college and career ready.

As a new chapter, the members of Wilcox DECA have had an active year. Recruitment for chapter membership began with the Wilcox Club Faire at the start of the school year. Students interested in becoming a chapter officer then submitted applications in early September. Officers were then selected from the candidates.

In November, three officers attended a local three-day leadership conference held at the Double Tree by Hilton in San Jose. The main focus of our chapter this year was preparation for the California State Competitive Events Program, which was held at the end of February in Santa Clara. Over 2300 California DECA members competed at this Career Development Conference. It was exciting to have Wilcox members called to the stage for recognition.

Officers and members bonded throughout the year as they participated in fundraising activities, a community service project, prepared for competitions, and attended conferences. Plans for next school year will soon be underway, as new officers are selected and preparations are made for freshman recruitment in August.

**Did You Know?**

**Digital Media 1** is a year-long course in which students learn to use Adobe software to create a variety of projects on the computer. Learn to draw in Illustrator, design professional layouts in InDesign, and manipulate images in Photoshop. Design a postcard for your favorite vacation spot, compile a photo montage, create a personal logo, and design your own CD cover. These highly marketable skills are just a few of the things students will learn in this class.
**Fashion Design Classes**

This past Fall semester, Fashion Design 1 students gained skills on the sewing machine as they constructed pajama pants or shorts and a knit t-shirt. They also had an introduction to fibers, fabrics, design elements and principles, fashion sketching, and famous fashion designers. During the second semester, they will make a A-line skirts, followed by a project of their own choosing. They will also increase their fashion style vocabulary, learn about the color theory, fashion careers, and job search skills. Year 2 students constructed a free choice garment, learned about wardrobe planning and personal color analysis, and completed a more in-depth study of fibers and textiles. In the Spring they will work together to produce items using industry (assembly-line type) methods, as well as constructing 2 more garments individually. Throughout the semester, they will also be hard at work planning for our annual Fashion Show to be held in May.

**Principles and Priorities**

Our Intro to Business and Marketing courses are also participating in a simulation called Principles and Priorities sponsored by the Concord Coalition. Here is some information regarding the simulation:

Principles & Priorities is an interactive exercise in which participants learn about how difficult it is to balance the federal budget by making many of the policy decisions facing lawmakers today. Working in groups of five to ten, participants review current spending priorities, suggest principles for the future, and then apply their principles by selecting from several dozen priorities currently being discussed in Washington.

By considering issues such as federal spending priorities, tax policy, and entitlement reform, participants gain firsthand experience addressing the difficult issues facing policymakers in today's fiscal environment. They then recommend a package of policies to put America on a sound fiscal foundation for the next several years. Principles & Priorities concludes with a wrap-up discussion of the results from each group and the lessons learned from the exercise.

Principles & Priorities can be used by groups ranging in size from eight to two hundred and is an entertaining way for virtually any audience from students to civic groups to Congressional constituents to learn about the federal budget. It has been used by nonprofits, Members of Congress, high schools, and colleges such as Georgetown University, Rutgers University, the University of Wisconsin, St. Louis University, the University of South Dakota, and the University of Chicago's public policy graduate program.

**Learning Objectives:** The Concord Coalition has developed Principles & Priorities to provide participants with a better understanding of the federal budget and realistic insight into how some of the policy proposals in the news would change the operations of the federal government. The exercise is designed to enable participants to consider the following:

- What is the current composition of the federal budget? How are taxes spent and who pays them?
- What options are being considered to change the federal budget, strengthen the economy, and improve our quality of life?

What kind of political will and compromise will be required of our political leaders to change or even maintain current federal budget priorities?

Mr. Raffetto adds, “Much like the Stock Market Game, this is a great way for students to analyze real world problems. They also learn about working within a team structure to accomplish their goals. Finally, this is a great way to expose them to current events in the world.”
Wilcox Auto Club

Wilcox Automotive Club provides students with opportunities to be involved in the local and regional “car culture.” The Club members have had fun evenings racing electric go-karts at K1-Speed in Santa Clara. The students have attended the Silicon Valley Dealers Auto Show viewing the best new offerings from all the major manufacturers.

The activity that draws the highest level of enthusiasm is the Hot Rodders of Tomorrow Engine Challenge. It is a national contest where a team of five students participate in a timed event to disassemble and reassemble a Chevy small block race engine. Our students are working toward a goal of completing the build under 35 minutes to earn an invitation to the national contest which is held at the SEMA show in Las Vegas. Participation on the teams builds leadership skills and team skills essential to future success in post-secondary education and industry.

The next contest is on May 30, 2015 at the Good Guys Car show in Pleasanton.

Financial Literacy

Wilcox High School is now offering “Principles of Financial Literacy” as an elective offering in the CTE Department. This class was offered for the first time in the fall of 2014 and is designed to increase financial and economic literacy. It focuses upon teaching families and individuals how to be knowledgeable consumers who effectively navigate the marketplace. The course content is from a holistic approach toward managing family finances including decision making skills, career development, creating spending plans, acquiring major expenditures including housing and transportation, saving, understanding consumer credit and insurance. The knowledge gained throughout the course is then applied during a realistic spending plan simulation where participants are provided a scenario and income. Participants are required to develop a spending plan for their scenario using up-to-date expenditure information provided. Upon completion of the course, students will have an awareness of how financial decisions impact all aspects of their life. In addition, they will be instilled with the knowledge to make sound financial decisions as young adults.

The course uses a combination of resources for the curriculum. The primary contributors to the curriculum are the FEFE project from the University of Arizona, Stlouisfed.org and FDIC.org.