



NJDOE News

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School Counts! Initiative Launched at Manasquan High School

Gov. Christie Whitman and Commissioner of Education David C. Hespe traveled to Manasquan High School today to launch a pilot project known as "School Counts!" that will give high school students an added incentive to prepare themselves for success in the workplace.

"School Counts!" is a coordinated effort sponsored by The Business Coalition for Educational Excellence at the New Jersey Chamber of commerce in partnership with the Department of Education. It targets New Jersey employers, asking them to request high school performance records from young adults seeking part-time or full-time employment.

Students who meet specified performance criteria will receive a "School Counts!" certificate that they can use during their job search.

"Our core curriculum content standards recognize the value of workplace readiness standards," noted Commissioner Hespe. "It is not only important to master subjects such as math and science to excel in the workplace. Students need to master the skills that employers believe are crucial to success in the workplace. That is why we are placing a greater emphasis on the use of technology, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills."

Hespe said the "School Counts!" program underscores the Department of Education's continuing efforts to forge partnerships with the business community to prepare students for success in life.

The "School Counts!" certificate will be available to sophomores, juniors and seniors who have achieved specific levels of success in certain common denominators found in all jobs, such as attendance, punctuality, overall effort and a continuum of progress. Employers who see the certificate of merit will know the bearer has:

- Maintained a 95% attendance/punctuality rate,
- Completed or is completing high school in eight consecutive semesters.
- Achieved at least a "C" average in each subject area; and
- Consistently done more than the minimum required course work.

So far, more than 250 business locations have agreed to participate in the pilot program, which will be launched in Salem, Monmouth and Ocean counties.

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