Education Pathways Exploration

05-11

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Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between TOPS University and TOPS Tech pathways

- Explore the benefits of obtaining certification while in high school

- Research college or alternative educational/training/career opportunities for post-high school planning purposes

High School Graduation Pathways

TOPS University

The **TOPS University Diploma** is intended for those students who aspire to enter a 4-year university, immediately or soon following graduation.

Students must choose a total of at least 24 Carnegie Unit credits and maintain a minimum GPA calculated from core subjects and the Foreign Language subject.

TOPS Tech/"Jump Start"

Jump Start/TOPS Tech is Louisiana's Career and Technical Education program. Through Jump Start students earn industry credentials while still in high school.

Jump Start students graduate high school prepared to secure a high-wage job *and* attend a technical or community college.

All students, including those on a TOPS University pathway, can earn industry credentials in high school.

TOPS University Students…

- plan on attending a four-year college or university;

- receive a liberal arts education laying the foundation for scholarly success;

- are competitive for in-state scholarship funding based on course completion and meeting specific GPA requirements;

- can obtain industry credentials while in high school.

Visit the Louisiana Department of Education website to learn more:
https://www.osfa.la.gov/tops_mainlink.html

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TOPS Tech "Jump Start" Students...

- attain industry credentials that employers value when deciding who to hire for entry-level positions;

- complete Introductory Career Essentials courses where students master workplace "soft skills" that help them find good jobs and succeed when they report to their first jobs;

- complete internships (either workplace internships or "virtual workplace experiences") during high school that teach them about the world of work;

- complete course work that enables Jump Start students to continue their education, through employer training, technical college courses and eventually (if they want) at a four year university.

Visit the Louisiana Department of Education website to learn more:
https://www.osfa.la.gov/tops_tech.html

High School Industry Based Certifications

Industry Based Certification. A credential, usually issued by an industry or industry group, that verifies that an individual has met the skill standards established by that industry or industry group, as minimal requirements to successfully enter the workforce and compete in that particular occupational area.

Sample Healthcare Certifications

- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Dental Assistant

Sample Manufacturing Certifications

- Certified Mechanical Drafter
- Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Welder

Visit the Louisiana Department of Education website to learn more:
https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/jump-start-graduation-pathways

Apprenticeship Training

In today's industry, there is a great demand for qualified individuals in a wide variety of occupations. **Apprenticeship training** is an agreement between a person wishing to learn a skill and an employer who can provide the environment for skills training. **Apprentices** are usually paid to learn.

One element that differentiates an Apprenticeship Program from other programs is the alignment and connectivity between academic learning and hands-on, practical on the job training.

Sample Medical Apprenticeships

- Medical Billing and Coding
- Behavioral Health Technician
- Medical Assistant

Sample Manufacturing Apprenticeships

- Mold Maker, Die Casting, and Plastic Molding
- CNC Set-Up Programmer
- Machinist

Visit this site to learn more:
https://www.careeraddict.com/apprenticeships-list-industries

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2-Year/Community College

Community Colleges offer a distinct learning environment, and are recognized for smaller class sizes, more individualized attention and a supportive atmosphere. Oftentimes individuals choose **Community College** in order to attain an Associate's degree for advancement to a four-year university. These individuals also benefit because Community Colleges work in close partnership with employers, leading to industry-aligned coursework.

Sample Healthcare Associate's

- Dental Hygienist
- Radiologic Technologist
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

- **Sample Manufacturing Associate's**
- Manufacturing Engineering
- Manufacturing Production and Operations
- Welding

4-Year/University

4-Year Colleges offer students the opportunity to attain a Bachelor's degree and are a requirement before pursuing any professional diploma pathway. Experiences are very unique and differ in terms of size, type (public or private), degrees offered, cost, and reputation. High school students planning to attend a **4-year college** or university should work diligently with their counselor to learn more about their options.

Sample Healthcare Bachelor's

- Registered Nurse
- Biomedical Engineering
- Radiation Therapist

Sample Manufacturing Bachelor's

- Industrial Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Operations Management

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Resources for College Alternatives

Forbes: "5 Proud Alternatives to Going to College"
http://www.forbes.com/sites/robertfarrington/2014/11/10/5-proud-alternatives-to-going-to-college/#5abfb2393343

The Huffington Post: "How to Build a Successful Life Without a Four-Year Degree"
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/blake-boles/how-to-build-a-successful-life_b_1644107.html

PBS NewsHour: "Why I'm Telling Some of My Students Not to Go to College"
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/im-telling-students-go-college/