

# CTE Plays Role in Building Leadership Skills

■ Career and technical education (CTE) plays a vital role in building student leadership capacity, according to a new issue brief. In *CTE's Role in Leadership Development*, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) explores how these programs support college and career readiness and prepare students to be exceptional leaders.

Thanks to initiatives that focus on teamwork, project-based learning, and access to real-world working situations, CTE is systematically "mitigating the leadership skills gap" that is prevalent in today's workforce, the brief explained. Employers cite leadership as a key skill that they seek in new hires, yet many of those entering the workforce don't have the requisite skills. The brief points to a recent survey from the Society for Human Resource Management in which 39% of human resource professionals said that job applicants in their industry did not have adequate leadership skills. And only 23% of those professionals said that their companies took steps to tackle the problem internally.

Because the workforce is not prepared or equipped to address the leadership skills gap on its own, "More opportunities need to be provided within the education system for students to learn, observe, and practice these skills," ACTE

said. For that to happen, "explicit instruction about leadership must be coupled with opportunities for immersion in leadership."


The brief highlighted several CTE programs that are aggressively paving the way for a better-prepared workforce. One of the more notable programs is the military's JROTC (Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps) program that combines rigorous leadership education and mentoring with the opportunity for students to put learned skills into practice.

Jeff Sherrill, associate director of the National Association of Student Councils, agrees that students need to be engaged in programs that test their leadership abilities and teach them how to succeed in a variety of situations. "In addition to CTE, participation in student councils and programs like RSVP (Raising Student Voice & Participation) empower students to have an active voice in their schools and communities. By giving students access to leadership roles and the opportunity to weigh in on issues that affect them, we're reinforcing leadership skills early on and ultimately contributing to a stronger workforce." **NL**



#### Read the brief:

[www.acteonline.org/issue/briefs](http://www.acteonline.org/issue/briefs)



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