

Overview For decades, Career and Technical Education (CTE) has been stigmatized as an alternative path for students with academic or behavioral challenges. To reshape this perception, Special School Districts External Communications Coordinator Amber Draper and Director of Marketing Chantal Chandler developed an innovative video series to showcase the true value of CTE programs. This engaging content invites students and families into our classrooms, introduces them to instructors and students, and dispels outdated myths about technical education.

Purpose and Implementation The video series was strategically designed to serve as a central feature of our CTE schools website, prominently displayed at the top of program pages and the mobile feed to ensure visibility. Additionally, the videos are:

- Integrated into admission representatives presentations for student, family, and partner district staff groups.
- Used as a personalized tool when meeting with prospective students.
- Promoted across CTE school social media channels, including clips shared as stories.
- Highlighted during preview night events to give families an authentic look into our programs.
- Publicly available to district partners to further amplify the reach.

Each video features real students and instructors from both of our Tech schools to ensure equitable representation. They provide firsthand insights into classroom experiences, explain industry-aligned training, and highlight the opportunities available after graduation. To reinforce accessibility and inclusivity, students are identified by their sending school district, demonstrating that CTE is for everyone, regardless of background.

Supporting Effective Communication Because CTE has often been misunderstood, this video series effectively clarifies its purpose and impact. Each video communicates:

- The real-life experiences of students and instructors.
- The rigorous academics and hands-on training in each program.
- The availability of college credits and industry-recognized credentials.
- The multiple pathways available after graduation, including higher education and workforce opportunities.

By breaking down misconceptions, the series helps families see CTE as a valuable and viable educational pathway.

Results and Outcomes The video series has become one of the highest-performing pieces of content on our YouTube channel, with consistently high engagement rates. Its strategic distribution has contributed to:

- Increased applications to our CTE programs.
- Growing student interest, leading to the district exploring expansion due to waitlists.

Greater awareness and understanding of CTE among families, educators, and community partners. This campaign has successfully positioned CTE as an aspirational and competitive educational choice, opening doors for students to explore their passions while gaining valuable skills. By leveraging digital storytelling, the Special School District has redefined public perception and strengthened its mission to prepare students for success in college and careers.