

“ Connecticut's businesses need workers with the right skills, abilities and drive to keep them competitive in an increasingly global economy. The Connecticut State Scholars program is a perfect match for businesses and students, because it will help both achieve their goals and will ensure a continuously vibrant Connecticut economy in the process.”

Kenneth Decko
President & CEO
CBIA

“ The stronger the course of study in high school, the better prepared students will be for college. And getting into college is just the first step. We want students equipped to succeed and persevere throughout their college years. This program will help us accomplish both goals.”

Dr. Valerie Lewis
Commissioner,
Connecticut Department of
Higher Education

The Connecticut State Scholars Program

Connecticut State Scholars is a simple, low-cost, high-impact program that motivates students to complete rigorous high school courses that prepare them for college and careers. Research shows a direct correlation between challenging high school coursework and success in the modern workforce, the military and postsecondary education.

The State Scholars Initiative began when concerned business-people, educators and researchers noticed that many high school students were not enrolling in or completing essential academic courses such as algebra II, chemistry and advanced English.

CBIA is the statewide business partner for Connecticut State Scholars. We invite you to join us in making the program a success for the benefit of our young people, your business and the future of Connecticut's economy.

Here is an overview of the Connecticut State Scholars program for business leaders.

Today's students are tomorrow's employees

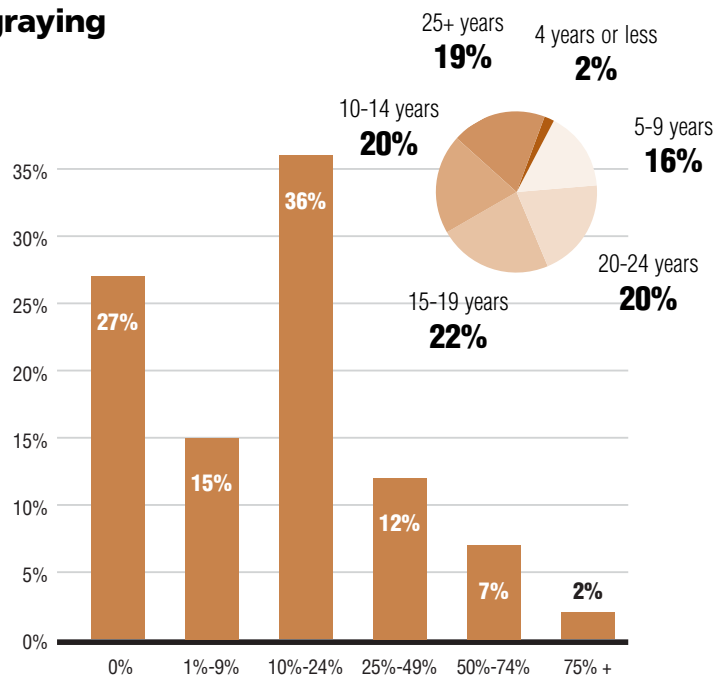
For your company to be successful, you need talented, skilled employees. In order to compete effectively in the global marketplace, your employees must have critical-thinking and problem-solving ability, strong written and verbal communication skills, solid math skills, computer knowledge, and the ability to continue learning.

The Problem

Unfortunately, many companies are having difficulty finding employees with the skills they need, and as jobs continue to require higher level skills, the situation may get worse. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that in the next decade there will be a shortage of 12 million college-educated workers in the United States. What's more, the present workforce is graying quickly.

Connecticut's graying workforce

Perhaps a ticking time bomb for Connecticut's economy is the graying of the workforce. More than half of survey respondents expect at least 10% of their workforce to retire over the next 10 years, and 21% anticipate losing a quarter or more of their workers to retirement over the same period.



Estimated percentage of potential retirees from survey respondents' workforces in the next 10 years. **The pie chart** above reflects the breakdown of average tenure of current employees in these businesses.

2003 Survey of Small and Midsize Connecticut Businesses
CBIA and Blum Shapiro

Not the remedy

Merely enrolling more people in college won't solve the problem because almost half of the students entering college today are not prepared for the demands of higher education. These students must take remedial courses that are costly in both time and money before they can take classes that apply to their degrees. Remedial college students often become discouraged and are much more likely to drop out of school than other students.

So what *is* the solution?

Research indicates that when students take more rigorous classes in high school, they are more likely to graduate and continue with education beyond high school, to receive college degrees and to earn higher salaries.

- In a U.S. Department of Education study of 13,000 high school students, taking rigorous classes was a more accurate predictor of students' future success than grades, test scores or class rank, especially among minority students.
- A study by The College Board found that students who complete a more ambitious course of study score an average of 102 points higher on the SAT.
- Three long-term studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education found that students who took algebra II rather than stopping at geometry, were 40% more likely to receive their college degrees.
- The Department of Education's long-term study showed that students who had completed more challenging high school courses, even if they did not complete college, earned better pay.

Better prepared

Students who take and complete rigorous classes in high school are prepared to be successful after high school, whether in a two- or four-year college, a certificate program, a company training program or the military.

Connecticut State Scholars program

That's why the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA), the Office of the Governor, the Connecticut Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education, are working together to encourage all high school students to complete a rigorous course of study called the Connecticut State Scholars program. The required courses include:

COURSES	CREDITS
English	4
Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or equivalent integrated mathematics curriculum)	3
Lab Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	3
Social Studies (Chosen from U.S. History/1.0, World History/1.0, World Geography/1.0, Economics/0.5, Government/0.5)	3.5
World Language (Two credits of the same language)	2
Total Credits	15.5

It's simple: Students who complete these courses are more successful in college and in the workplace than those who simply meet minimum graduation requirements.

The goals of the Connecticut State Scholars program

- Increase literacy, math and science skills.
- Decrease the drop-out rate.
- Increase the number of students who pass college placement exams (and who are not required to take remedial courses).
- Increase the number of students who receive associate's and bachelor's degrees or complete rigorous apprenticeship requirements.
- Improve the 10th-grade Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) scores in the school district.

Benefits from the business perspective:

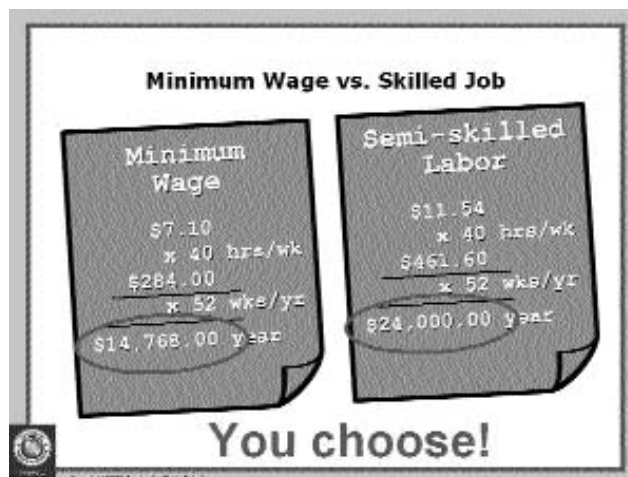
- More students will graduate with strong basic skills.
- More graduating students will be properly prepared for college and the workforce.
- Students will have a better understanding of the connections between school and work.
- Job candidates will have a stronger work ethic.
- Students will develop a commitment to continuous learning.

Model programs

Based on a successful national model, Connecticut State Scholars pilot programs will be launched first in Danbury and New Haven and at Vinal Technical High School in Middletown.

Sending the message:

This is one of the slides from the State Scholars business presentation for students, dramatically illustrating the difference an education can make.



Connecticut State Scholars: The essential role of business

The Connecticut State Scholars program was begun by business leaders to encourage students to take tougher classes in high school. Business volunteers go into eighth-grade classrooms to help students understand the career options and potential financial benefits of taking lab sciences, algebra II and other tougher courses.

Although parents and teachers may have been encouraging students to take these classes, students are more likely to listen to and believe a business person who takes the time to come to their class and tell them about the importance of these classes. These presentations are designed to capture the students' attention and motivate them to sign up for the tougher classes as they enter high school.

The role for business continues throughout the four years of high school by continuing to work with the school system on specific programs that provide academic support and incentives to students who have chosen the Connecticut State Scholars course of study.

Taking these courses is potentially life changing for students, but only if sufficient support is in place so they can succeed.

Target marketing

These bright and attractive posters will appear in eighth-grade classrooms in New Haven and Danbury to call attention to the Connecticut State Scholars program. They reinforce the Connecticut State Scholars brochures each student — and their parents — will receive.



Your support can be in the form of:

Incentives

- Provide discount coupons to area businesses frequented by students.
- Provide recognition awards for students participating in the State Scholars program.
- Hold end-of-year celebrations for all students on track for the Scholars program.

Classroom presentations

- Make presentations to eighth-grade classes of “Great Expectations, Great Rewards” (provided by the program).

Instructional assistance:

- Allow employees to tutor students in math and English.
- Fund an after-school tutoring program.
- Sponsor a Saturday Algebra Academy to ensure that struggling students pass these tougher classes (it works!).

Purchase materials

- Purchase instructional materials such as books, calculators, and math and science materials that have a measurable impact on student achievement.

Connections to the workplace

- Have a place on your company’s employment application to indicate if the applicant is a Connecticut State Scholar.
- Hire a Connecticut State Scholar for a summer internship.
- Allow Connecticut State Scholars to job shadow at your company so they can understand the application of their classes to the workplace.

Why your company should become a Connecticut State Scholars sponsor

As a sponsor of the Connecticut State Scholars program, your company will derive many benefits, including:

- an opportunity to work with other companies and school leaders to collectively bring about measurable change.
- the chance to improve the future workforce in your local community.
- improved employee morale from helping deserving high school students improve their educational achievement.
- positive public relations for your company in the community and throughout Connecticut from your association with the program.

The Connecticut State Scholars Program

For more information, contact:

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