

Washtenaw CTE Partner Spotlight – Jazz Parks Video Transcript

Jazz Parks, Superintendent – Ann Arbor Public Schools:

CTE is not just a catchphrase. It's not just something that is the next new, shiny thing. It's a real game changer for students and for families. Career and technical education is a blend of academic and experiential hands-on learning that gives the students an opportunity to really dive deep into their passions, their interests, and develop the skills that they need to be on a pathway for life and for career. It's happening every single day in our schools, whether it's culinary arts or auto mechanics or students who are programming on computers. For our younger students, it is happening in Project Lead The Way courses through elementary and middle school. So we're very proud to have career and technical education happening in our schools every day. We want our students to be future-ready, and CTE is certainly one of the pathways that we need to be able to have for our students to be able to be so.

It enhances mathematic skills, computation, critical thinking skills, students' ability to be able to hear information, synthesize it, and apply it. So those skills that we don't necessarily think of as content, like science or social studies, it's all of that, but it's also so much more—that experiential component, being able to construct new knowledge and see the results of that in action as they are doing their projects or doing their programming through the CTE courses. That's really amazing to experience and witness as our students are able to learn, explore, and apply new skills. I think CTE is a pathway to college. It's not something that's separate from a college experience the way we used to think about it perhaps in the past. CTE is a pathway to college if that is a student's trajectory.

[Graphic: The Future Moves with Us]

[Graphic: Washtenaw CTE (Career Technical Education) logo]