



The Business Coalition
for Educational Excellence
at the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

the workforce pipeline

Building Your Workforce

Surveys reveal that recent high school graduates, their new employers, and college professors feel they were under-prepared for the demands of both higher education and work. Graduates say that if they had known how hard college or the workforce would be, they would have worked harder in high school.

National Summit Demands More From American High Schools

High schools are 'obsolete' and designed to prepare students for a bygone era in which only a small percentage of citizens needed education beyond high school.

Workforce preparedness is what the BCEE is all about. The BCEE came into existence ten years ago because of the concern

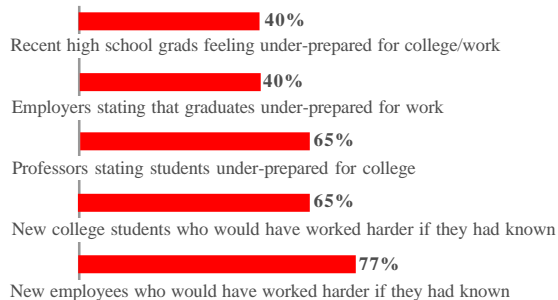
among business leaders around the state that children were coming out of school without the skills necessary to succeed in today's high-demand jobs. Data show that graduating students are also not prepared for higher education, as the average six-year graduation rate for students in college has dropped to barely 50% nationwide.

of another age. "Until we design high schools to meet the needs of the 21st century, we will keep limiting - even ruining - the lives of millions of Americans every year," said Gates. "Frankly, I am terrified for our workforce of tomorrow."

Gates also focused on the disparity of subjects being taught to students living in white, wealthy school districts as compared with the course load for minority students. "In math and science, our fourth-graders rank among the top students in the world, but our 12th-graders are near the bottom," said Gates. "China has six times as many college graduates in engineering."

"Today, most jobs that pay enough to support a family require some post-secondary education. Yet only half of all students who enter high school enroll in a post-secondary institution," he went on to add.

Life Beyond High School. The Survey Says:



Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?

Achieve, Inc. 2005

The BCEE

- Invests in schools with *Just for the Kids - New Jersey*.
- Invests in teachers with the *National Board Campaign*.
- Invests in students with the *Learn More, Do More, Earn More Student Credentialing System*.

www.bcee.org

In fact, just as forecasters predict that over 84% of jobs available in 15 years will require a college degree, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that only 34% of whites, 18% of African Americans, and 9% of Hispanics are earning the necessary degrees.

That concern is not unique to New Jersey's employers. Last month, the subject of student achievement was front and center at the National Education Summit, hosted by the National Governor's Association and Achieve, Inc., which works to raise academic standards and improve student outcomes across the country. In addition to a common agenda, Achieve and the BCEE also share leadership: both are governed by Boards chaired by Arthur Ryan, Chairman and CEO of Prudential Financial.

Summit keynote speaker, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, began his remarks by telling attendees that today's high schools are "obsolete," preparing kids for the needs

There is an unprecedented convergence of the skills required for success in college and in business.

The focus of the Summit is strikingly aligned with programs offered to schools by the BCEE. The New Jersey Scholars program, for example, which is part of our 'Learn, Do, Earn' portfolio of programs, is built upon research that unequivocally indicates that students must take demanding high school courses in order to be successful in college or the workforce. Students need to know that there is an unprecedented convergence of the skills required for success in college and in business.



**The Business Coalition
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at the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

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Our Mission

The Business Coalition for Educational Excellence (BCEE) at the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce is committed to ensuring that all students achieve at high levels, become productive citizens, and are well-prepared to succeed in the workplace.

The BCEE serves as the voice of business in the education policy debate, and supports programs that address the business agenda in education reform. The BCEE is guided by its accountability to the business community. The BCEE is supported by tax-deductible contributions made to the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization.

www.bcee.org

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Kudos to Teachers Earning Most Prestigious Honor

This month, the Business Coalition for Educational Excellence hosts its annual celebration for the newest crop of teachers who have achieved National Board Certification.

We applaud them and encourage other teachers around the state to earn this most prestigious credential. As part of Verizon's long-standing commitment to the communities we serve, we have always recognized the role education – and specifically our teachers – plays in making those communities the best they can be.

National Board Certification is considered a hallmark of excellence for accomplished teachers. To earn this honor, teachers are required to complete an extensive series of performance-based assessments that probe

News12NJ Resumes *Just for the Kids* Top Schools TV Segments

If you receive New Jersey's News 12, the all news cable station, you are currently being treated to profiles of a number of schools around the state who are really making a difference in the education of children.

Thanks to the support of Educational Testing Service (ETS), News 12 is airing its second year of segments on schools that are turning heads with their impressive results, as measured by the state's standard tests to fourth, eighth and eleventh graders. The data on these schools is harvested through the BCEE's unique school performance website, www.just4kids.org.

The 22-week series began in January and is now in the final third of its run for 2005. The two-minute profiles air every Wednesday, seven times a day, throughout the day. They are also archived on the News 12 and BCEE websites following their air dates.

"Some schools are indeed defying the odds and creating outstanding student results with challenging student populations," said Dana Egreczky, BCEE president and vice president at The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, "and think that finding and showcasing these successful schools is critical to our mission. We are finding schools that can get the job done at all socio-economic levels."



Peter Ventimiglia
Vice President
External Affairs
Verizon

the depth of their subject matter knowledge as well as their ability to manage, measure, and improve student learning.

As we mentioned in our last issue of the Pipeline, recent studies of teachers attaining certification reveal that they do a measurably better job in the classroom, and students of these teachers improved 7% more on their year-end math and reading tests than students whose teachers attempted but failed to earn certification. This performance differential was most pronounced for younger and lower-income students whose gains were as high as 15 percent.

While the BCEE's recruitment efforts have helped double the number of newly-minted National Board Certified Teachers, New Jersey still ranks 49th in the proportion of National Board Certified Teachers with only 97 of our 108,000-member teacher corps certified. The National Board mark of excellence is a smart investment for school districts and state policymakers. We hope every parent will ask their local schools to support the National Board Certification process for all of its teachers.

Have a Career Story That Can Teach a Life Lesson to Students?

Did you go from football to finance? Are you a carpenter turned CEO because you could do the math? An entertainer turned entrepreneur?

If you have an interesting story to tell high school students, please let us know. The BCEE is seeking business volunteers to participate in after-school webinars (Internet-enabled teleconferences) that will help them understand that they need to start working hard today to succeed tomorrow and what various careers entail.

Sessions will be available to high schools and after school programs statewide. And you can participate without even leaving your office!

Call Patty Cullinane at 609-989-7888 for more information.