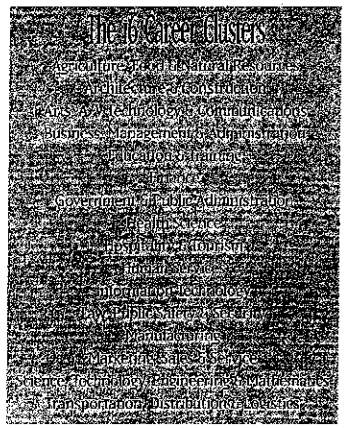

STATE DIRECTORS

National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium

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June 2003

Career Clusters

Focusing Education on the Future

Career Clusters assist learners as they prepare for career success . . .

CC9017

Career Clusters Prepare All Students for College, Technical Training, Apprenticeships and Careers

Technological advances and global competition have transformed the nature of work. Tomorrow's jobs will require more knowledge, better skills, and more flexible workers than ever before. Tomorrow's workers must be prepared to change jobs and careers several times, continually updating their knowledge and skills.

Career Clusters prepare learners of all ages for the information age as schools, colleges and employers strive for higher achievement in science and math as well as communication skills. One key to improving learner achievement is providing learners with relevant contexts for studying and learning. Career Clusters offer these contexts by linking school-based learning with career-related experiences.

Career Clusters identify pathways from high schools to two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, graduate schools, apprenticeship programs and the workplace so that learners can recognize the relationship between what they learn in school and what they can do in the future. This connection to future goals motivates students to work harder and enroll in more rigorous courses.

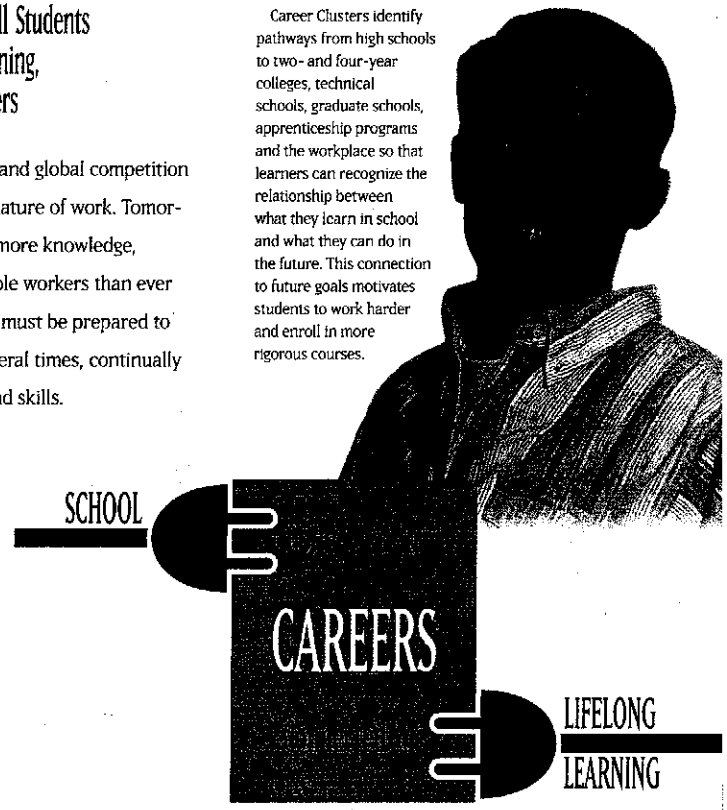

EXHIBIT 8
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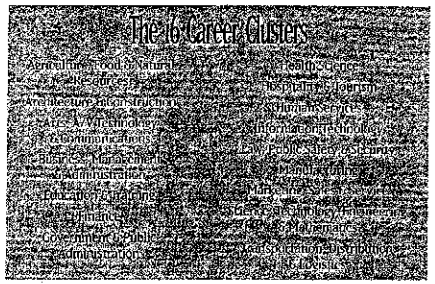
Career Clusters Connect Learning with Earning

The world of careers has been organized into 16 groupings of occupations called Career Clusters. These 16 Career Clusters categorize the economy into related occupational and industry areas.



Career Clusters are a way to organize instruction and learner experiences in community/technical colleges, career academies, work-based learning programs, smaller learning communities, magnet schools, charter schools and high schools that are restructuring around career themes.

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Government & Public Administration

Manufacturing

Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

Education & Training

A/V Technology & Communications

Finance

Health Science

Career Clusters represent a nationwide effort to help schools ensure that learners get the knowledge and skills they need for multiple career choices by matching what is taught in the classroom to business and industry expectations.

With employers as partners, Career Clusters strengthen economic development and economic clusters with education and training.

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Marketing, Sales & Service

Career Clusters Deliver Multiple Benefits

High Schools
Clusters serve as tools for organizing instruction.

Community/Technical Colleges
Clusters facilitate seamless transition to higher education.

Educators
Clusters provide a curriculum framework for assessment/certification and professional development.

Guidance Counselors
Clusters help students explore options for the future.

Employers and Industry Groups
Clusters prepare workers who easily learn new skills, adjust to change and progress in careers.

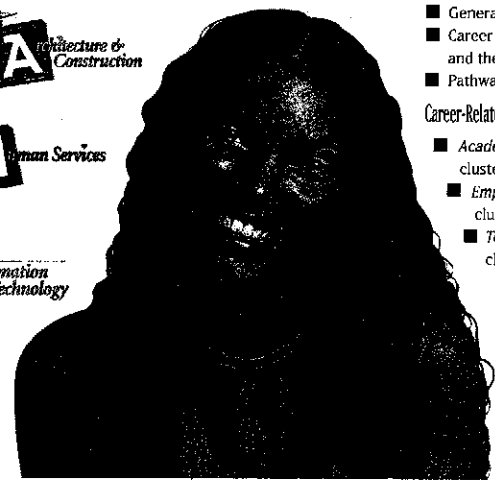
Parents
Clusters reassure parents their children are better prepared for college and the workplace.

Students
Clusters help students make better career choices and motivate students to reach higher academic achievement.

Architecture & Construction

Human Services

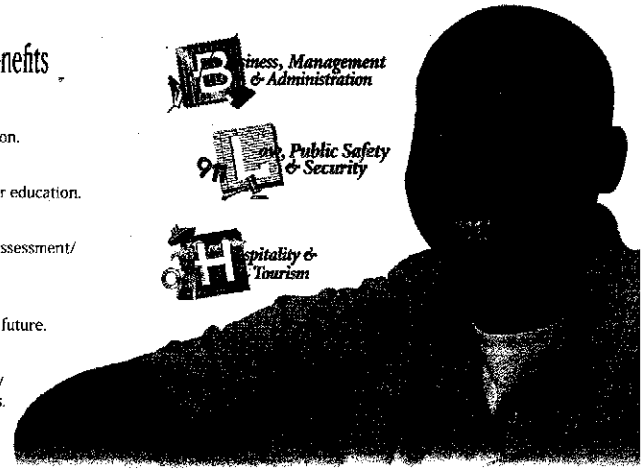
Information Technology



Business, Management & Administration

Law, Public Safety & Security

Hospitality & Tourism



Career Clusters Deliver Multiple Resources

Career Exploration
- General Career Clusters Brochure
- Career Clusters Poster showing all 16 clusters and their pathways
- Pathway Model for each cluster

Career-Related Instruction
- *Academic* knowledge and skills for each cluster and its associated pathways
- *Employability* knowledge and skills for each cluster and its associated pathways
- *Technical* knowledge and skills for each cluster and its associated pathways

Career Preparation Goals
- List of Credentials for each cluster (licenses, certifications, degrees)

See www.careerclusters.org for more information on these resources.