

August 25, 2010

NCSS Enters Articulation Agreement With DeKalb Technical College

Newton County School System on Tuesday officially entered into an articulation agreement with DeKalb Technical College that affords students the opportunity to earn twelve college credits upon completion of the Small Business Development Pathway. The agreement with DeKalb Tech also includes students in four other local school districts—Decatur City, DeKalb, Morgan, and Rockdale County school systems.

According to James Woodard, Director of Career, Technical and Agricultural Education for Newton County Schools, if NCSS students complete the Small Business Development Pathway successfully, they will earn 12 college credits upon enrolling in DeKalb Tech. The pathway is devised of three courses—Business Essentials, Legal Environment of Business, and Entrepreneurial Ventures.

“This is a very rigorous program,” said Woodard. “The student will have to take all three courses, pass each one with a 70 or better, and score at least an 80 or better on the End of Course Test (EOCT) for each class. It’s an all or nothing—they have to meet those requirements for each class. Passing two out of three won’t cut it. You either get all of the credits or none.”

“The courses will be taught by our teachers in our high schools,” added Woodard, noting that the Small Business Development Pathway is closely aligned with DeKalb Tech’s Marketing Program.

According to Woodard, teachers from each of the school districts involved worked together to produce a common syllabus that all agreed to use. In addition, they created a pacing guide so standards being taught at one school are being taught at the same time in all of Newton County’s other high schools. Teachers also worked together to create a bank of questions for progress monitoring exams during weeks nine and 18 and even created an EOCT for each of the three courses. Instructors from DeKalb Tech were also involved in the standards alignment, syllabus creating, and the validating of questions for the tests.

“The goal is to have all of the schools in all of the districts teaching the same thing at the same time,” said Woodard. “Obviously there will be some slight difference depending on the school schedules in the districts. Newton County follows the 4x4 block while others follow an A/B block schedule.”



(L-R) Dr. Robin Hoffman, President of DeKalb Technical College watches as Dr. Gary S. Mathews, Superintendent of Newton County Schools, signs the articulation agreement.

The new articulation program is a win-win for students, parents, and teachers.

“Students have the opportunity of earning 12 college credits before they ever step foot in the door at college and that amounts to a great cost savings for parents in terms of tuition,” said Woodard. “In addition, the teachers have commented on the great professional development experience they have gone through as they really had to dig into the standards. They also know that if they teach to a higher level, their students can earn these college credits before they leave high school. And as a result of taking these classes students should have a seamless transition to college. When they get to DeKalb Tech, they won’t be in classes where the instructor is re-teaching something that has already been taught and validated at the secondary level. All of us—the high schools and DeKalb Tech—will be on the same page.”

“This agreement represents the kind of programming excellence that we must be about,” said Gary Mathews, Superintendent for Newton County Schools. “Whether headed for college or straight to the workforce, this kind of partnership will matter to the life prospects of our students.”

“DeKalb Technical College is committed to a seamless educational system in Georgia,” added Dr. Robin Hoffman, President of DeKalb Technical College. “This articulation agreement will enable students to move from high school to higher education along a career path that ensures a bright future. We look forward to the development of many more such agreements with our high school partners.”

DeKalb Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, promotes a student-centered environment for lifelong learning and development, encompassing academic and technical education for employment in a global community. The college has 8 centers of learning in DeKalb, Newton, Rockdale, and Morgan counties. Established in 1961, DeKalb Technical College currently has more than 4,000 students enrolled in diploma or degree programs and more than 9,000 in adult education classes. Academic and Technical programs at DeKalb Tech cover more than 100 different occupations.

For more information on the school system’s articulation agreement with DeKalb Tech, contact Mr. James Woodard, Director of CTAE for Newton County Schools, at woodard.james@newton.k12.ga.us.

###