

Career and Technical Education Teachers Career Path Exploration

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Introduction

This manuscript provides current information for students and others who might be interested in a career as a career and technical education teacher. The information in this manuscript may benefit those who are thinking of pursuing the education and credentials necessary to teach in this specialty area. The purpose of this manuscript is to report on the intricacies of this career for those who are looking to make an informed decision regarding whether it is right for them. The information regarding the profession of a career and technical education teacher will be presented in the following order: responsibilities, how to become one, pay and benefits, and job outlook.

Responsibilities of Career and Technical Education Teachers

Career and technical education teachers are responsible for delivering content to learners in a variety of technical and vocational subjects so that they will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to enter a specific career. The duties of a career and technical education teacher include preparing assignments and lesson plans; delivering instruction related to specific skills; helping to reinforce classroom knowledge via hands-on activities; supervising students' use of equipment and tools to guarantee safe operation; assessing knowledge and assigning grades; communicating with students, parents, and school counselors; and developing safety procedures and rules to be used in the classroom environment (United States Department of Labor, 2019).

In addition, career and technical education teachers are responsible for collaborating with local businesses and nonprofit organizations. By doing so, teachers are often able to secure employment opportunities for students to help them receive practical professional experience. These teachers also act in service capacities as advisors for career and technical education student organizations. The responsibilities of career and technical education teachers vary depending on the grade level taught, which often influences the amount of practical application that students experience in laboratories and shops (United States Department of Labor, 2019).

How to Become a Career and Technical Education Teacher

A bachelor's degree is typically required to be hired as a career and technical education teacher, along with work experience in the subject area taught. For those who seek employment in public schools, a state-issued license or certification is often required. Please note that the licensure and certification requirements vary by state (United States Department of Labor, 2019).

The work environment should be considered when thinking of the career and technical education teaching career path. These teachers typically find employment in middle schools, high schools, and postsecondary schools. The primary workday is during school hours when teachers work with students. Meeting with parents before or after school is also common, as is the need to work in the evenings and on weekends on lesson plans. It is most common for teachers to work during a traditional ten-month school year with a two-month break during the summer. Some school districts have year-round schedules, which consist of teachers working nine weeks in a row with three-week breaks (United States Department of Labor, 2019).

Pay and Benefits

According to the United States Department of Labor (2019), the median annual wage for career and technical education teachers was \$55,240 in May 2017. The lowest ten percent earned less than \$33,430 and the top ten percent earned more than \$89,880. According to Salary.com (2019), the average salary for a high school teacher is \$59,897 as of January 2019. According to Glassdoor.com (2019), the average base pay for a high school teacher is \$50,000.

Job Outlook

The projected growth for career and technical education teacher employment from 2016 to 2026 is four percent. This growth will vary depending on the type of educational institution. There is projected to be little growth at the post-secondary level as opposed to the middle school and high school level where growth is projected to be as fast as the average for all occupations. It is possible that career and technical education teaching positions may be affected at the middle school and high school level as students continue to take more academic classes and fewer career and technical education classes. Budgets for career and technical education programs are often dependent on government funding; therefore, these programs are reduced as budgets are adjusted. As of 2016, there were 219,400 career and technical education teachers. This is projected to rise by four percent to 227,100 by the year 2026. (United States Department of Labor, 2019).

Interview with Troy Davis at Yorktown High School, Yorktown, Indiana

Troy Davis is career and technical education teacher who teaches in the areas of business, marketing, and information technology (IT). He also is a DECA advisor and student government and junior class sponsor at Yorktown High School in Yorktown, Indiana. According to DECA.org (2019), "*DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and*

colleges around the globe” para. 1. Troy Davis was interviewed by Dr. Edward J. Lazaros on January 25, 2019. The following section presents the questions that Troy Davis was asked about his career along with his responses:

1. What do you like best about your job?

“The best part of job is the ability to be part of the changing world of business and technology. Being engaged with the next generation every day and helping them gain skills and knowledge that they can bring to the next level makes every day great” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

2. What is your advice for high school student looking to get into teaching?

“I would say to someone wanting to go into CTE education to spend some time in industry (either in an internship or part time job) while getting your education. Industry hours are required and every CTE teacher needs real world experience to bring into the classroom” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

3. What type of activities you do on a typical working day?

“My typical work day involves face to face and online classroom instruction, monitoring and mentoring students in work based learning experiences, designing and implementing curriculum, and supporting students and faculty in various extracurricular activities” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

4. What type of fun technology do you get to use on your daily work?

“Most state of the art technology used in the classroom is available to me on a daily basis including: MacBooks and PCs, iPads, Interactive Media Boards and Displays, and all currently widely used software applications” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

5. What are the main challenges you have in your daily work?

“The biggest challenge for most teachers, including myself, in regard to daily work is balancing the layers or change that seem to be mandated monthly to secondary education. Gone are the days of just lesson planning and teachers. Many pockets of the day are not concerned with making sure everyone can check the correct box to meet various new or incoming statutes that have be legislated” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

6. What would you like to see as an improvement in the area of CTE Education?

“I would like to see more opportunities for students to get quality internships and job training. Our system needs to continue to build opportunities between education and industry that help students make quality decisions about what career they want to pursue” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

7. How did you get involved in the world of CTE Education?

“After 25 years as a small business owner, I needed to change careers. When I analyzed my education the logical choice was to teach in the areas of Business, Marketing and IT. Training and developing my own workers seemed to be as great preparation to the classroom which is really education at the retail level” (T. Davis, personal communication, January 25, 2019).

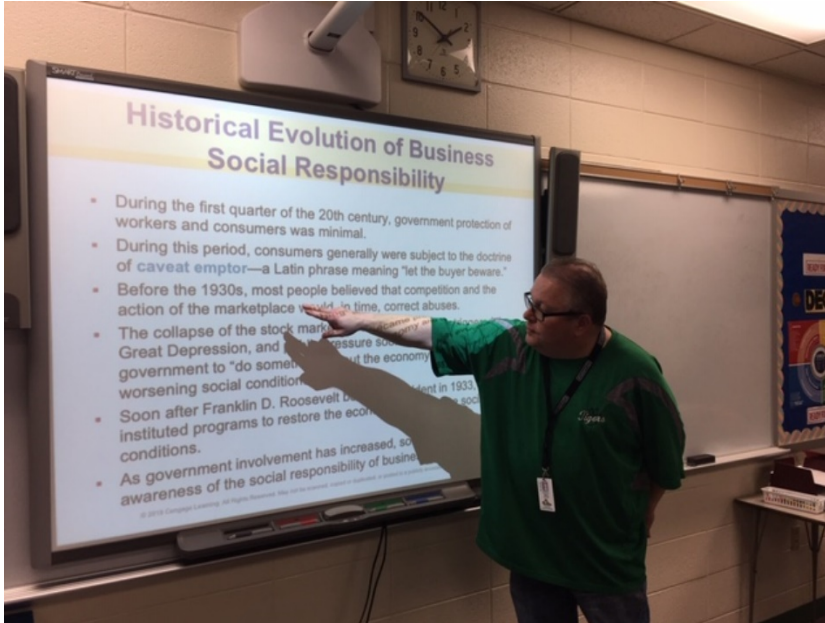
Pictures of Troy Davis at Yorktown High School, Yorktown, Indiana

The following section presents photos of Troy Davis in his classroom along with captions:

Troy Davis is pictured standing in front of the DECA table in his classroom. He is the DECA chapter advisor and State of Indiana Vice Chairperson of the Board. DECA is one of the largest CTE student organizations focusing on marketing, management, finance, entrepreneurship, and hospitality and tourism. DECA gives students the opportunity to put themselves out there and meet with real-world business people who judge them when they compete. It gives them a barometer for the types of people they will compete with for jobs in the workforce.



Troy Davis is pictured using a SMART Board in his dual credit class. He uses technology such as this SMART Board to teach a high school and college course at the same time. The SMART Board helps him to annotate right on the board. He can go to the Internet at a moment's notice. He can also refer to sources that may help with his instruction.



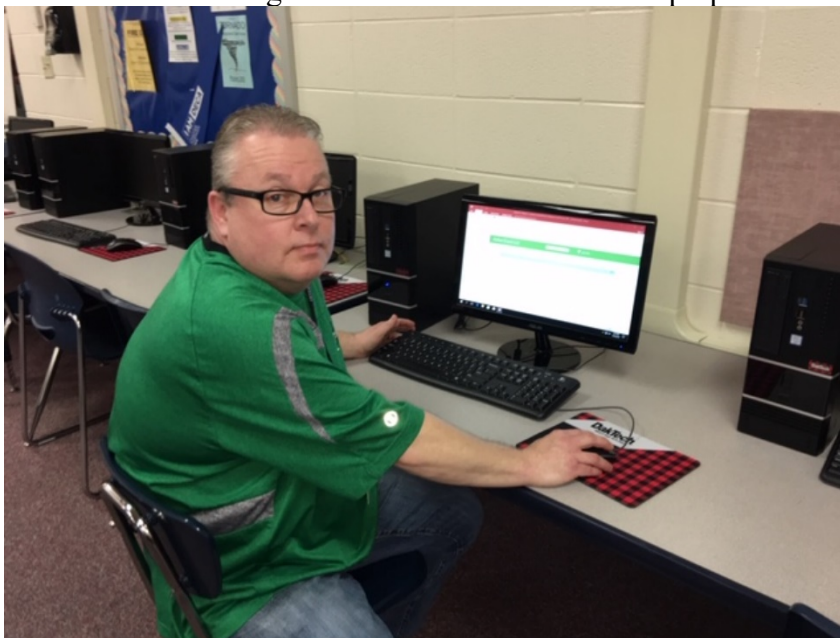
Troy Davis is pictured at his desk, where he often completes tasks such as developing curriculum. He is always looking for current resources for the courses that he is teaching. He also uses his desk computer for grading, taking attendance, and accessing communication tools such as e-mail.



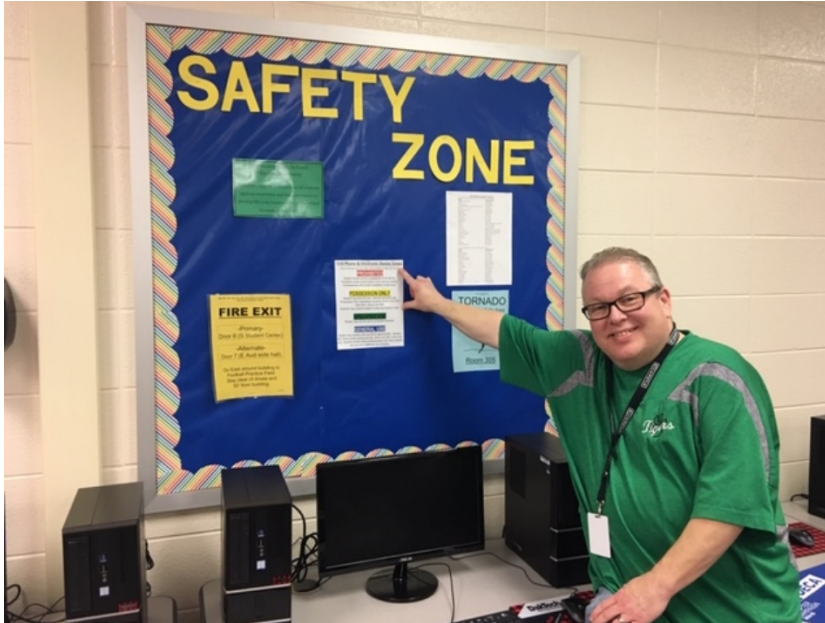
Troy Davis is pictured with three books in his classroom: *Accounting*, *Foundations of Business*, and *Marketing*. These are resources that he uses for the courses that he teaches. Students in his classes use digital versions of the textbooks on MacBook Air computers; however, he still references the physical textbook as needed.



Troy Davis uses computer stations with Microsoft Access when teaching his students. He prefers Microsoft Access because it is used in business and industry. He teaches the software side of things that students will need to be prepared for the business world.



Troy Davis indicates that teachers need to be aware of safety at all times. He has a bulletin board to remind students of important safety information. He also reinforces safety on a daily basis with the students through reminders and drills, such as educational lock-downs and full lock-downs, tornado drills, fire drills, and active shooter drills.



Conclusion

According to ACTE (2019), “*teachers have the capacity to inspire lifelong learning and a passion for knowledge, understanding, and innovation*” para 1.

Career and technical education teachers are able to do this and deliver content to learners in a variety of technical and vocational subjects. This occupation typically requires work experience, a bachelor’s degree, and a state-issued license or certification. The pay range varies from less than \$33,430 to more than \$89,880. There is a projected growth rate of four percent from 2016 to 2026. This career field may interest those who want to work with students at the middle school, high school, or post-secondary level and teach technical and vocational subjects.

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