

my ESB story



The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship Successfully Pilots Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management CTE Program with Certification

ESB CERTIFICATION ADDS CREDIBILITY AND VALIDATION TO HIGH SCHOOL CAREER-READINESS CREDENTIAL

The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) is dedicated to helping young people reap the benefits of entrepreneurial education, and recently set out to pilot the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management Pathway, a career and technical education (CTE) program of study for high school students.

Research shows that entrepreneurial skills and behaviors including innovation, self-reliance, comfort with risk, communication, and problem-solving prepare young people for lifelong success.

The pathway is comprised of two to four courses, which can be offered from seventh to 12th grades, allowing school districts to integrate entrepreneurship into existing CTE pathways, or offer a standalone entrepreneurship pathway.

A critical component of the pathway is providing training and ongoing professional development for teachers. Because entrepreneurship is taught by a wide-range of CTE and non-CTE teachers—many of whom have never launched a business—it is important for entrepreneurship education programs to provide a deep level of teacher support.

Some districts and schools are beginning to introduce entrepreneurship into career-readiness standards and career pathways at an increasing rate, and some are even requiring entrepreneurship courses.

According to the 2015 “The State of Entrepreneurship Education” report from Junior Achievement, from 2009 to 2015, the number of states that include entrepreneurship education in their proficiency, standards or guidelines has more than doubled, and the number of states that require entrepreneurship education to be offered in high school has more than tripled. In addition, a number of states—Nevada, Arkansas, Utah and Arizona, among others—are offering a form of entrepreneurship pathway consisting of one or more courses.

VALIDATING THE PATHWAY WITH CERTIFICATION

NFTE sees the importance of including validation in the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management Pathway, so students walk away with real-world proof they learned the skills included in the course. To earn NFTE’s Career-Readiness credential, students are required to complete the core and advanced entrepreneurship courses. In addition, at the end of each course, students have to successfully complete a business pitch presentation and achieve certification through a credible, third-party certification program.

NFTE feels that Certiport’s Entrepreneurship and Small Business (ESB) certification program provides the credibility and rigor they demand. As a result, they endorse the ESB certification and culminate the pilot career-readiness pathway with the certification exam offered by Certiport.

Shawn K. Osborne, president and CEO, NFTE, says, “Through entrepreneurship, young people discover that what they are learning in the classroom is relevant to the real world – whether they are starting a business or pursuing college and career. We are pleased to endorse the ESB certification as a way to validate that individuals have learned essential entrepreneurship skills that will give them the tools to overcome adversity and address future personal, economic and global challenges.”

A PATHWAY TO ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

This unique pilot includes the implementation of the curriculum as well as the integration of real-world mentors and competitions into the classroom. Each week focuses on a rotation— from experiential learning to foundational concepts to lab work; students progress incrementally from business ideation to development and launch of their business idea.

The NFTE credential demonstrates students’ academic, technical and employability skills, and will be endorsed by corporations and organizations that recognize the value of entrepreneurial skills. The goal of NFTE’s Entrepreneurship and Small Business pathway is to provide students with deep learning of a broad set of demonstrable entrepreneurial skills, mind-set and behaviors that can be applied across the career clusters, regardless of whether a student wants to be an entrepreneur (start a business) or an intrapreneur (an entrepreneurial employee at a company).

Culminating the pathway with the ESB certification has been a very positive experience for students, schools, and NFTE. During the pilot program, four schools have participated and delivered 84 ESB exams. NFTE plans to continue to use ESB in the pathway going forward.

