



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor and Industries

Press Release

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Avakian highlights hands-on learning in visit with local students

Roundtable discussion spotlights Corvallis' success, growing opportunities

CORVALLIS—Local education officials and community partners sat down with Oregon Labor and Industries Commissioner Brad Avakian today for a roundtable discussion on the importance of Career and Technical Education (CTE).

The group, meeting at IBEW Local 280's Training Center in Tangent, discussed the successful model used in Corvallis, the state's new CTE Revitalization Grant Fund that Avakian helped to create, and the next steps in bringing these critical learning opportunities to other Oregon students. The Corvallis program has been the successful result of BOLI's high-school integration initiative and gives students from Corvallis, Crescent Valley, and College Hill High Schools real-world training experience, practicing hands-on skill development.

"We can partner with local businesses, labor unions and others for equipment and expertise to rapidly broaden vocational education options," Avakian explained, emphasizing the success of Corvallis' collaborative efforts and how neighboring school districts are following that example. "Oregon businesses and labor unions consistently tell me they're ready and willing to help, and now that the state is starting to match their efforts we're in a very strong position."

As Labor and Industries Commissioner, Avakian has championed expanded vocational education hands-on learning for middle and high school students, he has empowered Oregonians to join the skilled workforce at a younger age, and he has ensured that Oregon employers will have an available workforce trained with the appropriate skills. Creation of a statewide grant fund in 2011 marked a major win for the coalition Avakian built in support of vocational education and will allow for the expansion of successful programs and the establishment of new ones in communities around the state.

"Career Technical Education is a sound investment with a high rate of return," Avakian noted. "With hand-on learning and exposure to real-world training, we can increase engagement in learning for all levels of students, increase graduation rates, and lay the foundation for a highly skilled, internationally competitive workforce."

"With a good state policy in place, we can capitalize on the potential of our students, teachers and community partners to build the 21st Century workforce that will drive Oregon's economic prosperity."

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