



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor & Industries

Press Release

For Immediate Distribution

October 3, 2012

CONTACT: Bob Estabrook, 503-709-0730

Labor Commissioner Visit Spotlights Churchill CTE Program

New engineering and design program funded by state grant

EUGENE- Joined by Churchill High School Principal Kim Finch and local legislators, Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries Commissioner Brad Avakian today toured three classrooms of students participating in Churchill High School’s new program of career and technical education (CTE) in engineering. As state labor commissioner, Avakian has championed creation and expansion of job skills and career education options around the state—including leading the widely popular effort to establish a state CTE Revitalization Grant Fund, which funded the new Churchill program and similar efforts in 21 schools just this school year.

“I want to congratulate the Churchill and 4J community for offering an exciting and well-planned program to students,” Avakian said. “It’s no accident that this proposal was selected by our grant review committee. I hope that as this program grows it will directly benefit a lot of Eugene students, and can serve as a model for other districts to utilize in their communities.”

Churchill High School and the Eugene 4J School District were awarded \$424,766 from the CTE grant fund to create the new “Relevance and Rigor in New STEM Career Paths” program, which is the first full-scale, coherent pre-engineering program in Eugene. The award enables the district to develop an innovative science, technology, engineering and mathematics curriculum where students engage in authentic, problem-based engineering projects and are connected with local engineers and consulting firms, ensuring direct alignment with the industry.

“Equipping young Oregonians with the hands-on skills to tackle real-world problems is what these programs are all about,” Avakian continued. “It’s why so many legislators are here supporting the effort, why so many Oregon employers and organized labor are involved—the community partners who are already on board around the state are clamoring for more programs like this one, and we’re going to the legislature in January to help make them a reality.”

Avakian is recognized as a champion for “21st century shop classes” in Oregon schools, having led the fight to pass House Bill 3362 in 2011 and establish a dedicated grant fund to help schools and school districts create or expand CTE education options that work in concert with local employers to train young people for high-wage, high-demand jobs at a younger age. The first [eight grants awarded from the Career and Technical Education Grant Fund](#) will benefit 21 schools across Oregon this school year.

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