TECHNICALLY GROWING

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Flint Hills Technical College is preparing students to meet the needs of the technology industry.

During the last five years, the college has increased enrollment numbers and added programs to meet the needs of our technological society.

The introduction of Senate Bill 155 in July 2012 has provided an affordable option for high school students to attend FHTC. The main purpose of SB 155 is to stimulate growth in career and technical education at both the secondary and post-secondary level in Kansas. The Kansas workforce will increasingly demand a more

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highly technical and highly-skilled worker. Senate Bill 155 is aimed at meeting those future demands.

SB 155 has several financial aspects which have helped boost enrollment at FHTC. The bill provides for tuition reimbursement for high school students enrolled in college-level CTE courses. Students can attend classes at FHTC while still in high school free of charge. Many students are able to graduate from high school and FHTC at the same time - obtaining both a high school diploma and certification in skill at the same time.

The initiative is having a significant impact statewide. High school students graduating in 2016 obtained 1,597 certifications compared to only 636 in 2013. Students are eligible to obtain certifications in a number of programs at FHTC, including certified nursing aid, computerized machine tool engineering and business administrative technology.

“We have at least nine programs that offer dual-credit opportunities for high school students,” Steve Loewen, vice president of instruction at FHTC said.

“When people take a tour of our facilities, the first thing we hear is, ‘I didn’t know you did that here,’ and we want to make sure they know what we do.”

DEAN HOLLENBECK, FHTC president

The Kansas State Department of Education strongly supports and empowers schools in developing quality pathways that lead students to college and career readiness. CTE has become an indispensable lever for improving students’ college and career readiness — playing a powerful role in preventing students from dropping out while providing a variety of opportunities for post-secondary success and employment. CTE also provides pathways to a bachelor’s degree.

It is a state priority that all students achieve the objective of the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards through authentic and applied learning experiences. Courses instructed at FHTC help students achieve those outcomes.

FHTC regularly attends recruiting events to meet with high school students and their parents — providing information about what the college offers. FHTC staff members talk to the students about what they can expect to learn and what the opportunities are for employment.

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President of FHTC Dean Hollenbeck said it's important for the college to let people know about the variety of programs available at the college. Giving tours, hosting career days and open houses are all a part of the strategy to inform the public.

“When people take a tour of our facilities, the first thing we hear is, 'I didn't know you did that here,' and we want to make sure they know what we do,” Hollenbeck said. “We want to raise awareness of our institutions and technical education.”