



STRENGTHENING SECONDARY CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION THROUGH INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Career and technical education (CTE) programs align education with industry demands to **improve students' academic and career outcomes while also addressing workforce needs**. Secondary CTE integrates academics with technical skills, emphasizing hands-on learning and real-world experience to ensure graduates are job-ready for in-demand fields. Employers report that CTE programs produce a larger talent pool with individuals who are **better prepared for the workforce, have greater job-specific technical skills, possess more adaptable skill sets, and demonstrate more robust real-world skills**.

LEVERAGING NEVADA'S CULINARY ARTS CTE TO ADDRESS WORKFORCE GAPS

The leisure and hospitality sector is a key driver of Nevada's economy, contributing to ongoing job creation. However, persistent labor shortages continue to challenge many hospitality businesses, making it difficult to fill positions and retain employees.

Nevada's 2022 Culinary CTE Enrollment

- 41 out of 123 schools (33%) offer Culinary Arts CTE programs.
- Culinary Arts CTE has the highest student enrollment, with **9,160 CTE students (8.7%)** enrolled in culinary courses.



Source: [Guinn CBER Report 2023](#), [Nevada CTE Dashboards](#)

Culinary Arts CTE programs rank among the top three in Nevada and offer a promising solution to workforce shortages in the hospitality sector. Currently, there is little evidence to indicate CTE programs meet the immediate demands of the workforce or ensure long-term job security for graduates. This highlights the need for stronger partnerships between employers and secondary CTE schools to better align CTE curricula with the evolving needs of employers and improve long-term employment outcomes for students.



MGM RESORTS COLLABORATES WITH CCSD TO LAUNCH THE 2024 CULINARY SENIOR EVENT

In May 2024, MGM Resorts International and the Clark County School District (CCSD) hosted the Culinary Senior Event aimed at strengthening workforce connections in Nevada by aligning culinary CTE programs with MGM Resorts’ hiring needs and improving student employment and educational outcomes.

THREE DAY CULINARY EVENT

Day One: A virtual info session for CTE students and educators to explore career opportunities at MGM Resorts, including employee benefits and career advancement pathways.

Day Two: Twenty-nine students from seven CCSD CTE programs were nominated to showcase their culinary skills and interview with MGM Resorts chefs for open positions in the culinary department.

Day Three: A signing event celebrating the successful hiring of 25 students, achieving an 86.2% hire rate.

Program Outcomes

- CTE hires filled 25 entry-level cook positions at two MGM Resorts properties in Las Vegas.
- After nine months, 15 CTE hires remain actively employed, achieving a 60% retention rate.
- Retained CTE hires are earning an average of \$26.13 per hour.
- Of the 10 CTE hires no longer employed, eight (80%) resigned voluntarily.

ADDRESSING EQUITY GAPS IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Nearly 80% of CCSD students come from underserved backgrounds and often need to enter the workforce immediately after high school. In Las Vegas, the median salary for cooks at MGM Resorts is \$59,582, which, according to the Pew Research Center, falls within the middle-income category. This program provides CTE graduates with a direct pathway to the middle class by offering immediate job placements, financial stability, and opportunities for career advancement and higher education.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The program’s initial success has encouraged its expansion. In its second year, MGM Resorts plans to hire more CTE graduates to fill nearly 40 cook positions and six baker positions. Looking ahead, MGM Resorts and CCSD continue to explore additional CTE offerings to address staffing needs in other critical roles at MGM Resorts.

“This partnership began with great ideas and collaboration with MGM Resorts and Clark County School District. I see us growing this exponentially over the next few years, with many talented students being hired into great career pathways. This is just the beginning.”

-Gia Moore (Assistant Superintendent, CCSD)