

## Spotlight Strategy: Develop a Cohesive Team

### *Susquehanna County Career and Technology Center*

At Susquehanna County Career and Technology Center (SCCTC), Administrative Director Dr. Alice Davis believes the most important factor contributing to increased student achievement are good instructors. According to Dr. Alice Davis, “The key is hiring the best teachers who believe they can educate all students. Teachers need to be team players, adjust to different learning styles, and keep positive.” Dr. Davis and her staff have created a hiring process and professional development program designed to build and support a cohesive and dedicated team.

At SCCTC, the team building process begins in the hiring stage. Dr. Davis is committed to hiring staff that support the career and technology center’s (CTC) mission to “...provide educational opportunities for all students to reach their full potential by striving towards excellence through academic knowledge, basic skills, and technology taught by a competent and committed staff within a safe environment.” The SCCTC staff has developed a hiring process that takes into consideration many factors, such as extensive content knowledge, wide-based industry experience, a desire to be life-long learners, and most importantly, the belief that all children can learn if we find their unique learning styles. Dr. Davis adheres to a favorite adage, “Students learn in different ways on different days.” She also strongly believes, and reminds her instructors constantly, that “The reason we all have our jobs is to serve our students. We all need to find the ways to open our students’ minds and provide the environment where they can all achieve to their best abilities.”

In most cases, candidates are interviewed three times. This allows the administration to be sure that the answers given are consistent and not just what the candidate thinks the interviewer wants to hear.

Sample interview questions, designed to assess fit, include:

- “We are very fortunate to have a career and technology center here. Tell me what you know about career and technical education?”
- “Student A is giving you everything, but still failing your class. What do you say when you talk with the parent?”
- “We integrate academics into our curriculum at the CTC, meaning literacy, numeracy and science. What is your understanding and belief about this? Give me an example of how you could embed academics into your program.”

In addition, candidates are asked to provide a writing sample. They are assigned a specific question or point to address and asked to write a letter. For example, they may be asked to write an acceptance/thank you letter to a business that made a donation of equipment to the CTC. This writing assignment provides some great insight into the writing style and ability of prospective instructors.

#### **Contact Information:**

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Susquehanna County Career and Technology Center is located in Dimock, Pennsylvania. As a part-time career and technology center, it enrolls 328 students in grades 10 through 12 and provides eight career and technical education programs. Susquehanna serves seven school districts.