

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FUTURE - THE PARADIGM FOR PREPARATION OF STUDENTS FOR CAREERS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY

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K-12 schools as we knew them are no longer stand alone units that prepare students for colleges and careers. That's because the technical training needed to prepare students for today's and tomorrow's careers has changed dramatically.

Bill Gates put it in stronger language when he called American high schools obsolete, saying that elected officials should be ashamed of a system that leaves millions of students unprepared for collage and for technical jobs. Gates stated, "Training the work force of tomorrow with today's high schools is like trying to teach kids about computers on a fifty-year-old mainframe."

Enter planners and architects. Burt Hill is a leader in designing facilities to accommodate the development of new educational programs and philosophies. Our work in the integration of K-12 and community college facilities is unique. This K-14 thinking suggest a curricular approach that totally integrates academic, vocational, and technical education for all students.

The integration of our present K-12 program structure and the new needs for the workforce invite discussion of a K-14 concept. Though the new jobs that will employ millions of our present students do not require a bachelor's degree, they will require an associate's degree or the completion of a post-secondary skill credentialing program. The K-12 program of today needs to evolve to either include or access the essential programs necessary to prepare students for these new, sophisticated specialized careers.

Burt Hill has been in the business of designing K-12 schools for over 70 years. Another powerful niche market of ours has been the planning and construction of community colleges. We have been involved in the planning and construction of over two dozen community colleges throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. This duality of experiences postures Burt Hill as an excellent entity to lead in the planning and development of K-12 programs.

The high schools of the future must consider the preparation of all students: those university bound, those community college bound, and those bound for technical skills training. This assures that the new generation of students can and will become productive members and contributors in our rapidly changing society.

