School Board and Cleveland Community College Waste $3,000 More on Phony Classes and equipment!!! Report and arguendo by Robert A. Williams

There is an item on the School Board meeting agenda for the June 10, 2019 School Board Meeting (tonight) to purchase a high dollar “Simulator” for the controls of a complex high dollar machining center. That’s right a “simulator for the controls”-not an actual machine. There was no indication that either Cleveland County Schools, Cleveland Community College or any industry in Cleveland County has any of the actual machines with controls that this “simulator” will actually simulate.

And that is the good part.

The rest of the story is this.

Remember the discovery that School Board Member Danny Blanton discovered that the CCS schedules and the CCC schedules don’t match? That as much as 30 days of classes for high school students from CCS to be taken at CCC will be lost. Every year.

Remember the effort that Danny Blanton made to try to get a State Law modified so the CCS calendars and the CCC Calendars could be synchronized? Remember that CCS school board member Phillip Glover and others went behind the scenes to undercut that calendar synchronization bill that passed the NC House by a 100-10 vote, but the NC Senate would never vote on the change, killing it. Thanks Senator Ted Alexander.

That is also the good part.

Now for the weenie.

Whether or not there are ZERO such complex machining centers in Cleveland County or 1,000-where do the CCS students learn the basics for machine shop tool operations? Where are they taught to drill a simple hole in a piece of metal on a manual drill press? Where do they learn the simple task of inserting a piece of metal in a lathe or a milling machine? Where do they learn the properties of the metals they are working with? Where do they learn what machining tool or bit to use for each specific machining tool operation? I could go on and on. But the answer, as best I can tell, is NOWHERE!!! Nowhere at CCS anyway.

So, this hair-brained idea of taking totally untrained (in the basics) students and throw them into programming a simulator that simulates operations that they don't have a clue about is totally a waste. And a dangerous waste if they get their certificate on something they don't know about and based on that Certificate they are hired somewhere that does have such a machine they are simulating the controls for, and they are asked to start it up. What happens next? Does the former student get chewed up in the machine or does something expensive in the machine destroy itself? Or both? All very real possibilities.

The answer is very simple. Develop an education plan that starts every student in the first-grade learning to read, write and do math at a first-grade level. Advance through the grades progressively learning more and more complex activities. Somewhere around the Junior High level begin to introduce students to basic "vocational" skills. Like changing lightbulbs around the house, minor home repairs around the house. The use of basic hand tools. How to iron a shirt and fry an egg. Etc.

Then, when the students start high school, offer classes that are basic in more traditional vocational education. Woodworking, principles of welding, how to drill a hole, principles of machining, principles of HVAC, simple electrical circuits, etc. Advance these lessons to a point that high school students are prepared to do basic job functions in the local economy.

Then, offer courses at Cleveland Community College to take those students with basic understandings of vocational processes and advance from that point forward.

Folks, let’s face the facts. The progression just described has a proven track record. It works. Neglecting the basics at CCS and trying to make up for that neglect by having “dual” (bastard) classes at CCC is a band-aid and a scam. Only under emergency circumstances should this even be attempted.

And, that hits the problem right square on the head. CCS has indeed neglected the basic education of our children and these “dual” programs at CCC are only cover-ups, necessary cover-ups, but cover-ups just the same of the original problem. Such programs at CCC should only be temporary until CCS gets their act together and not one minute longer.

And if there is a need for such a simulator, CCCC should be making the purchase; not CCS.

Of course, that is an indication of an additional administration problem that probably only the county commissioners can force any changes to be made. And, that is another story.