



Skills and Employability Enhancement Project Federated States of Micronesia

PROPOSAL: College of Micronesia - FSM

Introduction

The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) submits this proposal for the implementation of the plans and activities provided herein, as part of the collaboration with the National Department of Education (NDOE), FSM for the Skills and Employability Enhancement Project (SEEP). The design and development of pathways, courses, programs and initiatives will be driven by fundamental principles of sustainability to ensure that when the project funding ends, there is a seamless transition to self-sufficiency. Of critical importance to the ongoing success of this program will be the National Government's undertaking to provide the required funding to ensure continuity, especially when the project funding terminates.

The College is informed in this area by selected projects and initiatives that have been undertaken particularly in the Micronesian region like the \$9.1m '[Marshall Islands: Skills Training and Vocational Education Project](#)¹' approved in November 2001 and funded by the Asian Development Bank. The *Performance Evaluation Report* in the Marshall Islands in 2012 stated that the project was "unsuccessful...assessed less than relevant... ineffective...less than efficient...and less likely to be sustainable". Furthermore, prominent findings in the Report included (in italics below):

- *The strategic link between quality basic education and voc-tech [CTE] and college education was not appreciated and considered in the project design.*
- *The duplication and lack of properly sequenced training programs among training providers increased training costs as scale economies were not achieved. There was poor clarity of roles and responsibilities among training providers.*

¹ https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/36052/files/pper-rmi-tve_6.pdf

It is emphatically recommended that the design and creation of any implementation plan for SEEP, be informed by the *Performance Evaluation Report: The Marshall Islands: Skills and Training and Vocational Education Project* (December 2012)².

Proposed CTE Pathways in the FSM

Courses will be streamlined to ensure that there is an easy transition for students from high school to college level Technical Education courses at COM-FSM. High School students should be given the choice to choose Technical education as a major, regardless of GPA.³

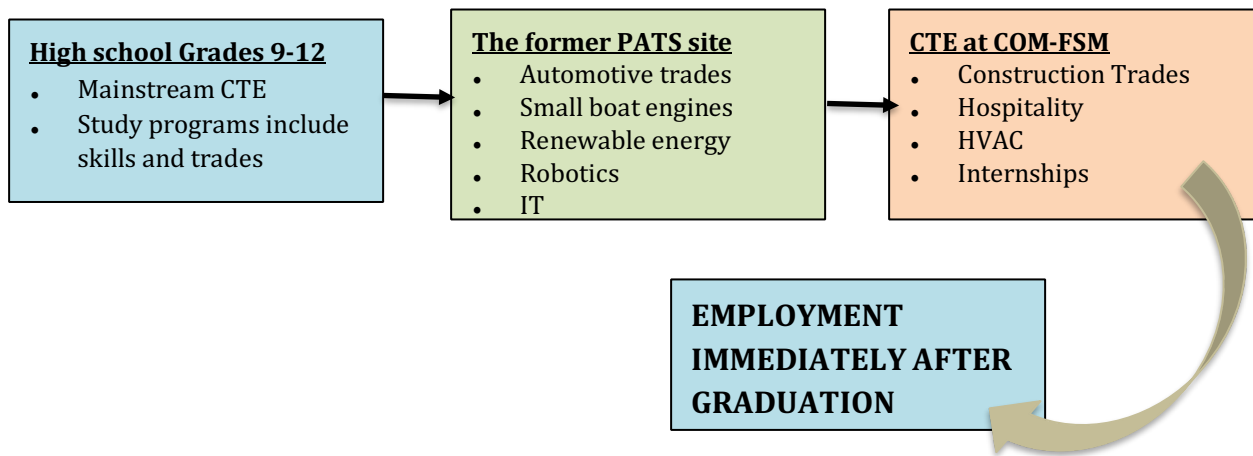


Figure 1: The proposed CTE pathways in the FSM that offer CTE as a choice for students entering high school. In this model CTE is not downgraded to the 'soft option' for students who are not considered strong academically. This approach mainstreams CTE as a viable choice on par with academic programs.

The above model (in Figure 1) represents the kinds of CTE programs that can be made available post high school at PATS and COM-FSM. The exact programs will be further discussed between COM-FSM and NDOE to reflect the employment needs of the FSM. The fundamental characteristic is that **there are no duplications of courses and programs**. It is critically important to create a pathway that mainstreams CTE from high school, that the promotional and awareness-raising activities to educate the community about mainstreaming are effective, relevant, consistent and part of regular semester schedules and that the private sector is a required partner.

² https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/36052/files/pper-rmi-tve_6.pdf

³ The normal practice at public schools is that students placed in higher sections of the class are placed in academic/business majors while the lower ranked sections are placed in vocational and home arts majors. While this is the current practice, creating this pathway should require high schools to develop curricula that require students to take advanced math and science, rather than limiting these courses to only academic majors.

Budgets

A draft operations budget will be provided by COM-FSM Comptroller Roselle Togonon.

Curriculum

Transition from basic training in technical skills (i. e. carpentry, masonry, electrical, small engine, etc.) into degree programs at COM-FSM can be certified in an apprenticeship program. High school teachers and curriculum developers and COM-FSM faculty will establish a Committee that has an annual meeting calendar to oversee, monitor and make the required amendments or changes to curriculum. Seamless and regular communication between the high schools, COM-FSM and employers is key to the success of mainstreaming CTE in the FSM. Market updates especially employment opportunities and industry requirements will inform curriculum development.

Facilities and Equipment

The design of the facilities should be based on the division of programs between COM-FSM and the NDOE **without duplicating the programs** offered at the College and PATS. Flexibility of the design should be based on a multi-purpose approach given rapidly changing educational and training learning spaces and market-driven employment. Maintenance plans, schedules and resources must be part of operational priorities.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

An MOU between NDOE and COM-FSM will state the responsibilities of each entity in alignment with the project goals, activities and outcomes.

Risks and risk mitigation

RISK	MITIGATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strategic misalignment between COM-FSM and NDOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">National CTE Strategic Plan or CTE Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Changes in COM-FSM and NDOE employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">'CTE in the FSM' Website
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Growth of silos between COM-FSM, NDOE and the employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Trades Advisory Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Duplication of courses and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">COM-FSM & NDOE Curriculum Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shortage of trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen relationships with regional colleges and promote trainer exchange initiatives

Submission by the COM-FSM Team

This proposal is an initial submission upon which many more discussions and decisions need to be made between the College and NDOE.

The COM-FSM Team:

- Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono (President)
 - Delihna Ehmes (Vice President, Instructional Affairs)
 - Joseph Habuchmai (Vice President, Administrative Services)
 - Joey Oducado (Vice President, Enrollment Management & Student Services)
 - Phyllis Silbanuz (Dean, Career & Technical Education Campus) • Francisco Mendiola (Director, Facilities & Maintenance)
 - Roselle Togonon (Comptroller).
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