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# HOW CAN DISTRIBUTORS PARTNER WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS?

## LET US COUNT THE WAYS!

There are dozens of ways that distributors can get involved with high schools in their community, according to Mark Smith, an industrial technology educator featured in Channel Connection's recent post "[Not Your Father's Shop Class.](#)"

Check out this comprehensive list of opportunities to begin "vision casting" at local career and technical education (CTE) programs, which serve as a springboard for future workers in the trades. What exactly is vision casting, you might wonder? It is "the process of helping people gain a better understanding of an idea through word, picture, activity and/or story and putting processes in place to move towards that better understanding," Smith explains.

There are 36 pathways included on his list, but the longtime teacher emphasizes that companies need only select one to get started supporting future woodworkers and other tradespersons.

# THE LIST

1. Make a presentation to the administration and school board at a board meeting.
2. Meet with the local teacher(s).
3. Set up a booth at the school College/Career Day event.
4. Make a presentation to the CTE classes.
5. Offer a teacher training day event at your manufacturing facility.
6. Give a tour of your facility to local administration and school board.
7. Offer to host a school board meeting at your manufacturing facility and make a presentation.
8. Send company representative to help give out awards to students during school awards events.
9. Have someone at your company mentor a student.
10. Sponsor a student contest.
11. Meet with school counselors and explain career opportunities (they are the gatekeepers).
12. Give donations to the school program.
13. Offer technical support for student and program projects.
14. Give virtual field trips.
15. Make training materials available to a school program.
16. Support student access to trade show events.
17. Set up apprenticeship opportunities.
18. Support mock interview training.
19. Support student career exploration opportunities.
20. Host a Manufacturing Day event.
21. Start a Student of the Year award.
22. Use your marketing department to help a school program develop a program brochure.
23. Be part of the Freshman Open House event.
24. Help present awards (WCA-Saw Blade Certificate) to students.
25. Offer teacher training that supports certification program.
26. Write a letter of support for the teacher and their program to the school administration and school board.
27. Donate a piece of equipment you are replacing.
28. Invite local government to anything you are doing with the school.
29. Invite the local press to anything you are doing with the school.
30. Help set up an advisory council for the school program.
31. Write letters to local and state government about the good things happening with you and the school program.
32. Invite teacher and students to participate in association events.
33. Set up a booth at freshman open house and meet the gatekeepers, the parents.
34. Help with a fundraiser.
35. Support Trade Show student contest.
36. Participate in initiatives that foster awareness and move industry forward – new DOL apprenticeships.