

PARENTS!

Help your child develop

A Plan of Their Own

“If you are a parent, be an active partner in your child’s education.”

Patricia I. Wright,
Virginia’s Superintendent of
Public Instruction

When Austin was very young, his mother, Vicki, helped him **develop an understanding of career** by explaining why she went to work each day and what she did while she was there. Austin’s father, Gary, says his son exhibited an entrepreneurial spirit that was fueled by **exploring a variety of interests**. “I encouraged his exploration and tried not to put too much pressure on him to stay in one area.”

Austin’s career interests changed frequently; indeed, the more he explored, the more excited he became about learning. When it came time for him to develop a plan, his parents felt comfortable in **letting Austin make it for himself**.



Austin is a freshman at Virginia Tech and founder of Feed by Seed, an international agricultural development advocacy group.

Vicki encourages parents to “**ask questions** about your child’s plans and interests and . . . listen to his/her answers.” Gary advises, “**stay tuned in** to the opportunities that are available for your child today.”

Read more about Austin’s plan in the Virginia Department of Education’s annual career magazine, *R U College and Career Ready?*, available at www.cteresource.org.

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, says...

“It is the responsibility of K–12 educators to prepare all students for both college and career. This must be “both/and” not “either/or.” High school graduates—not the educational system—should be choosing the postsecondary and career paths they want to pursue.”

College and Career Readiness

- Nearly 8 in 10 job openings in the next decade in the U.S. will require education or training after high school.
- A **college-ready** student is prepared for further education or training, including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a certificate, license, or Associates or Bachelor’s degree.
- A **career-ready** student is a high school graduate who has the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in further education, such as a technical program, community college, an apprenticeship, or on-the-job training.

16 Career Clusters...

An organizing tool to help students investigate careers and plan their courses of study.

1. Agriculture & Natural Resources
2. Architecture & Construction
3. Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications
4. Business Management & Administration
5. Education & Training
6. Finance
7. Government & Public Administration
8. Health Science
9. Hospitality & Tourism
10. Human Services
11. Information Technology
12. Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
13. Manufacturing
14. Marketing
15. Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
16. Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Additional Resources for Career Planning

- Virginia Career VIEW: vacareerview.org
- Virginia Education Wizard: vawizard.org
- Career Clusters: careertech.org/career-clusters/

How can parents help?

• Have your child answer the following questions:

- What are your favorite school subjects?
Answer:
- What school activities do you enjoy most?
Answer:
- What hobbies and interests are most valuable to you?
Answer:
- What achievements make you most proud?
Answer:
- What careers most interest you?
Answer:

• Guide your child through the following:

- STEP 1:** Take a career interest assessment in middle school.
- STEP 2:** Identify interest in one or more career clusters.
- STEP 3:** Relate school subjects to career interests.
- STEP 4:** Understand how middle school subjects relate to jobs and careers.
- STEP 5:** Create an academic and career plan in middle school.

“Parents have the **greatest influence** on students’ career development, ahead of teachers and counselors.”

“Parents Have Their Say. . . About Their College-Age Children’s Career Decisions.” Jeffrey Taylor, Marcia B. Harris, and Susan Taylor. Winter 2004 *NACE Journal*.