

Youth Apprenticeship growing at Hilbert High

By Ed Byrne
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HILBERT – One of the more successful programs to get a jump start on adult life is the Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP), which gives high school juniors and seniors a chance to integrate on the job learning into the high school day.

In one school year, YAP participants each log 450 or more hours of learning at work.

Last week, a handful of them showed up at the Hilbert Board of Education meeting to outline what they were doing.

Each student who addressed the school board was also accompanied by a supervisor from his or her workplace.

Dawn Grenzer, who used to be the district counselor at Hilbert and is now working for CESA 6, the regional educational cooperative, said the YAP is organized through the state Department of Workforce Development.

She said students spend half of the school day in the traditional school classroom setting, and the other half learning on the job.

“It allows students to get a jump start on a career path they are looking to potentially pursue after high schools,” she said.

Over 50 different careers are represented through YAP. Many of the students in YAP end up in two-year or four-year professional trade programs at the college level.

The Hilbert participants are involved in health care, financial, construction and manufacturing apprenticeships.

Four YAP students and their employers explained their participation in the program at the May 17 school board meeting:

- McKenna Casper with St Anna Vet Clinic, Dr. Beth Doll Program: Agriculture: Small Animal



CESA 6 Counselor Dawn Grenzer (far right) introduced four Hilbert High School students and their employers/mentors from the Youth Apprenticeship Program at last week's school board meeting. The program is growing, and gives students a chance to learn both in the classroom and at a skilled trades jobsite. (Ed Byrne/BN)

- Jenna Gillis with Century Ridge, Erica Racine: Health Science: CNA

- Zach Ott with Valley Truck Leasing, Rodney Herlache: Transportation: Diesel Technician

- Ethan Graverson with Lee's Welding, Chris Pigeon - Manufacturing: Welding

Three other students in the program were unable to be at the school board meeting. They are:

- Ben Kumbalek with Pioneer Machine, Jacob Brittnacher: welding.

- Theo Polar with Premier Financial Credit Union, Diane Rieder: financial services, and

- Landon Raddatz with Petersen Septic Systems, David Petersen: construction.

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In another pre-employment program, the high school held mock interviews for seniors, where representatives from area businesses interviewed students as though they were applicants for a job.

However, with most employers in the area hurting for workers, Superintendent Tony Sweere said most the employers were really looking to hire.