



**JEFCOED**

Career Technical Education

# Launching High School Students into Successful Careers: The Power of Apprenticeships

**Dr. Chris Shaw**

**April 30, 2026**





# JEF COED

**17,000 CTE  
STUDENTS**

**10 MIDDLE  
SCHOOLS**  
Grades 6-8

**4 MIDDLE/HIGH  
SCHOOLS**  
Grades 6-12

**10 HIGH  
SCHOOLS**  
Grades 9-12

**VIRTUAL SCHOOL**  
Jefferson County Virtual  
Academy of Learning  
Grades 4-12



# CTE DEPARTMENT

- 156 CTE Teachers
- 2 CTE Supervisors
- CTE Counselor
- 7 Career Coaches
- Secretary
- Staff Accountant
- Director



# **DR. WALTER B. GONSOULIN, JR.**

**Superintendent**

2025 National  
Superintendent of  
the Year





# CAREER TECH STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS



# CTSO HIGHLIGHTS

- All major CTSOs represented
- Long history of success
- More than 300 students participated in state competitions in 2026
- 75 students have qualified to compete nationally in 2026



# WORK-BASED LEARNING CONTINUUM



HEALTH  
SCIENCE  
CAREER FAIR



JOB  
SHADOWING



FIELD TRIPS



INDUSTRY  
CONNECTION  
DAY



ON THE JOB  
LEARNING

**CAREER  
AWARENESS**  
LEARNING ABOUT WORK

**CAREER  
PREPARATION**  
LEARNING THROUGH WORK

**CAREER  
EXPLORTATION**  
LEARNING FOR WORK

# WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

- Program registered with the US Department of Labor
- Focus is on training
- Offers opportunities for specialized training and industry credentials
- Provides high quality workers
- Helps alleviate worker shortages
- Provides structure and framework for existing training programs
- May offer tax incentives for the employer
- Offers opportunities for training outside the confines of child labor law



# WHAT APPRENTICESHIP IS NOT

- Another Co-op program
- A source of cheap or free labor
- Limited to adults only



# THE NEED

- Shortages of skilled labor
- Workers are retiring with few prospects to replace them
- Average workforce age projected to be 42.4 by 2034<sup>1</sup>



# **SOUTHLAND TRANSPORTATION**

- Commercial truck sales and service
- Multiple locations across Alabama
- Specializes in International, Wabash, IC products
- School buses, tractor trailers, heavy equipment
- Their need: filling diesel mechanic positions



**SOUTHLAND**  
TRANSPORTATION GROUP

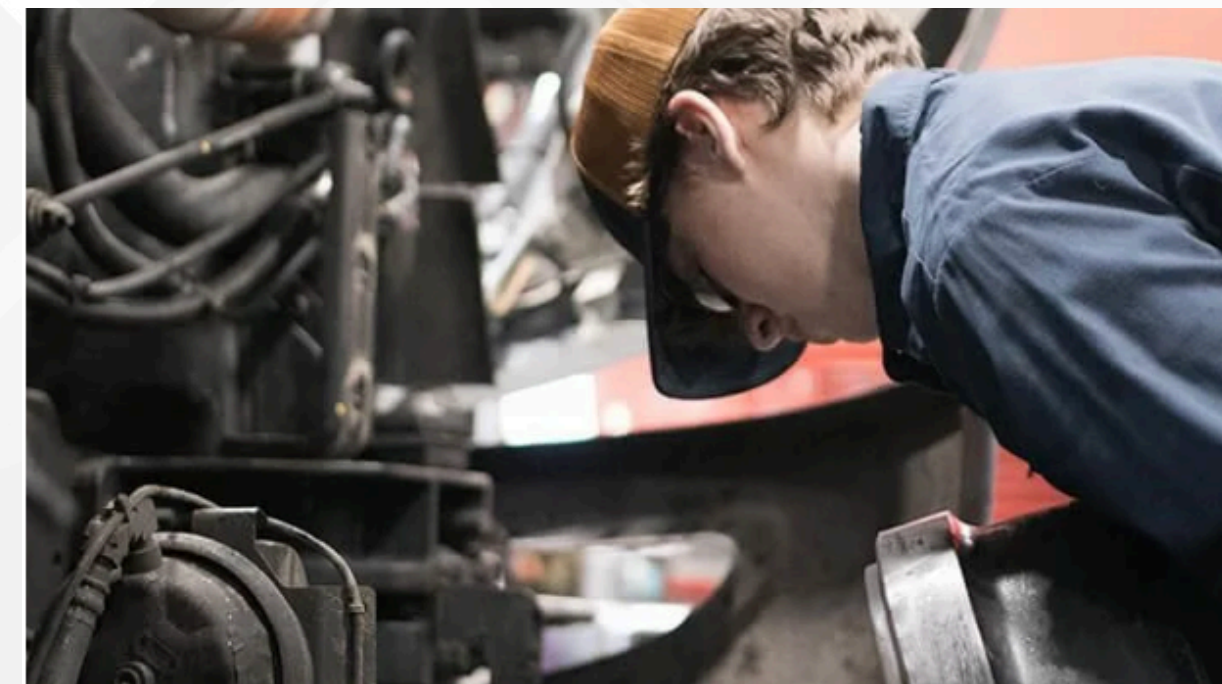
# WHAT DID WE DO?

In conjunction with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, we started the nation's first youth, diesel technician USDOL registered Apprenticeship Program

[Learn More from Southland](#)

**INVESTING IN THE  
FUTURE: SOUTHLAND  
TACKLES DIESEL  
TECHNICIAN SHORTAGE  
WITH IN-HOUSE  
TRAINING**

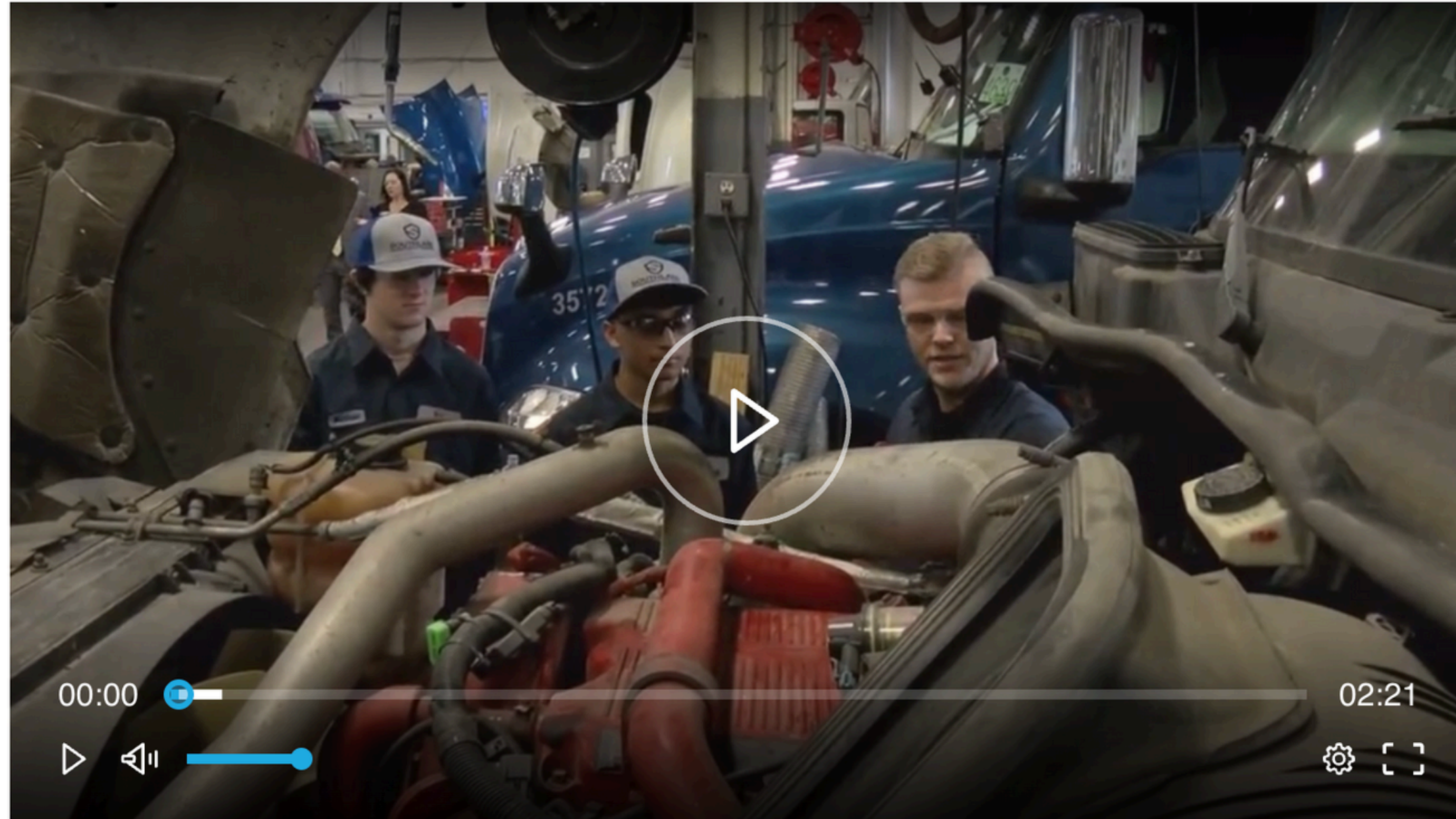
04/21/2025



# Jefferson County Schools introduces new diesel technician apprenticeship program

by Kyra Purvis | Wed, November 15, 2023 at 5:27 AM

Updated Thu, November 16, 2023 at 7:54 AM



# HOW WE DID IT

1

Initial  
Discussions

2

Contacted the  
Alabama Office  
of  
Apprenticeship

3

Recruit students  
and conduct  
interviews

# PROGRAM SUCCESS

- All students who entered the program since 2023 remain employed
- Long-time workers discovered mentorship opportunities
- Economically disadvantaged students given opportunities to succeed
- Program has expanded to other Southland locations and school districts in Alabama
- Program can be used as a model in other organizations

# WHAT IT TAKES TO SUCCEED

- A school district with an open mind
- This is not something K-12 leaders can try to control and manipulate to their standards
- Industries with an open mind and an HR representative willing to do the work

# THANK YOU!



**JEFCOED**

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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ALABAMA  
OFFICE OF  
APPRENTICESHIP