

The Board of Examiners Sheet Metal Workers

Dear Sirs,

My name is Dennis M. Dellascio, as of August 1, 2015, I will have been a member of the Sheet Metal Workers Local 17 for 43 years. I taught in the Local 17 Apprentice Program for 24 years in all years 1-5. I am presently and for the past 26 years have been the Vocational Sheet Metal Instructor at Madison Park High School in Boston.

I am totally in favor of Local 17's 5 year apprentice program. I feel as qualified as anyone to speak on this subject, as I have had the Honor, Privilege and the Pleasure to teach people of all backgrounds ranging in ages of 14 to 55 over the years.

Here are points of observation I have made, over time, in Defense of our 5 year Apprentice Program.

The vocational co-operative programs at the secondary level are not as strong as in previous years. Vocational students would enter a "week in - week out" schedule of alternating academic weeks with vocational employment weeks. A lot of the shops that would employ the students are not around anymore. This was a valuable experience for the young people. Some co-op still exists but, not in the numbers of years ago.

Young people are sometimes distracted by the electronic devices of the day, also the emphasis on the MCAS test which can hinder their graduation.

Some young people in the secondary program I have observed come to school hungry, tired and not prepared to learn. Their lives are more complicated due to unstable home lives, taking care of younger children, some living with grandparents and a fear of the streets.

With all the above I feel that young people Do Not absorb all that is being taught in their Vocational program and therefore need that extra time as apprentices when the opportunity is given to learn what they should have.

What the Apprentice has to know has greatly increased. The computer technology has impacted all areas of our trade. Manual lay-out is supplemented with computerized plasma lay-out. Blue prints are done almost exclusively with CAD programs. Testing and Balancing of systems is computerized. The calculator handles the math for all the above.

The introduction of Green Technologies and Solar Technologies depend greatly on Duct System Design, Air Flows and Temperature Control. All this has to be covered in the Apprentice Program.

There is roofing, kitchen equipment and siding technologies along with PVC technologies to be taught.

The safety aspect in all industries has gone through an evolution. It's not just hard hats and safety glasses anymore there is PPE for fall protection, for protection against dust, fumes, heat and cold. There is Ergonomics, (fitting the job to the person). There is First Aid and CPR training.

There is also training in hoisting and lifting technologies for heavy loads and people.

There is HVAC Servicing and Welding to learn. Welding is an essential part of the industry. There is Forman training, for people skills and mentoring. Estimating, Project Managing, Shop operational skills are also taught.

All of the above takes time to teach; therefore the Apprentice Program has to have enough time to teach this.

The Local 17 Training Center is unmatched anywhere east of the Mississippi River. The facility was financed, built and equipped solely by the Local 17 Membership and the Sheet Metal Workers International Association.

All aspects of our industry are taught here along with all the aforementioned, the welding and related technologies of welding are taught here. The welding shop is unsurpassed anywhere. As was said earlier, all of the above takes time to teach, The Apprentice Program needs time to teach this.

A great investment has been also made in the teaching staff. Many hours of professional development have been attended by the staff, to insure a quality education for our Apprentices. I was privileged to attend many professional development seminars in my years of teaching for Local 17.

A great investment has also been made in the facility and the staff to insure an excellent quality education for our apprentices. This has and will continue to produce quality Journeypersons for Local 17 to do the work required.

Local 17 has played a large part in Boston's building boom. We know how to teach our apprentices to know what they have to know. Our five year apprenticeship program is vital to this teaching. To shorten this program would seriously compromise our Industry.

I hope these observations convince people that our 5 year apprenticeship is Appropriate.

With deepest sincerity,



Dennis M. Dellascio