

Career Technical Education Pathways

A program of study that involves a multiyear sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.

Career technical education (CTE) provides students and adults with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and develop skills they will use throughout their careers.

CTE programs have been organized into 15 industry sectors that identify the knowledge and skills students need as they follow a pathway to their goals. CTE prepares students for the world of work by introducing them to workplace competencies, and makes academic content accessible to students by providing it in a hands-on context.

State CTE programs can be found in comprehensive high schools with CTE programs, high schools solely devoted to CTE and in Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCPs) and California Partnership Academies (CPAs). Some CTE programs are blended with academic programs in what is known as a "linked learning model". Community colleges and technical institutes also offer CTE at the postsecondary level

Why CTE?

College and Career Readiness

Eighty percent of students in college prep and rigorous CTE met college and career readiness goals versus only 63 percent of students taking only college prep. (Southern Regional Education Board, High Schools That Work 2012 Assessment).

Attendance in a CTE program more than doubles the rate of college entrance for minority students. (A Model for Success: CART's Linked Learning Program Increases College Enrollment, Irvine Foundation 2011)

Higher Graduation Rates

Ninety percent CTE student graduation rate in high school versus only 75 percent average nationwide graduation rate. (U.S. Department of Education 2007-2008 data, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc analysis).

At Risk Students Stay in School

High-risk students are eight to ten times less likely to drop out in the 11th and 12th grades if they enroll in a CTE program. (Kulik, "Curriculum Tracks and High School Vocational Studies," University of Michigan, 1998.)

CTE has increased school connectedness, reduced behavioral problems related to suspensions and expulsions, and reduced dropouts in all student groups, but especially among students who are at highest risk of dropping out. (Op. Cite, University of Memphis, 2004)
Success in College

Students who complete a blended academic–career curriculum are more likely to pursue postsecondary education, have a higher GPA in college and are less likely to drop out of college in the first year. (Southern Regional Education Board, “Facts About High School Career/Technical Studies”)

Seventy–nine percent of CTE concentrators enrolled in postsecondary education within 2 years of high school graduation. (NASDCTEc website). **Eighty percent** of CTE concentrators persisted in postsecondary education. (NASDCTEc website). **Twenty–seven percent** of people with less than an associate’s degree (including licenses and certificates) earn more than the average bachelor’s degree recipient. (NASDCTEc website). CTE credentials awarded nationally in 2006: 2,022,885. (NASDCTEc website)

Success in Work and Life

Ninety–five percent of CTE concentrators who did not enroll in postsecondary education worked for pay within two years of high school graduation. (NASDCTEc). Many worked in occupations related to their high school areas of concentration (NASDCTEc):

- Construction and Architecture: 43 percent
- Consumer/Culinary Services: 39 percent
- Repair and Transportation: 39 percent

Experts project 47 million job openings in the decade ending 2018. About one–third will require an associate’s degree or certificate, and nearly all will require real–world skills that can be mastered through CTE (NASDCTEc).

The 15 CTE Industry Sectors in California are:

1. Agriculture
2. Arts, Media, and Entertainment
3. Building Trades and Construction
4. Business and Finance
5. Child Development and Family Services
6. Energy and Utilities
7. Engineering and Design
8. Fashion and Interior Design
9. Health Science and Medical Technology
10. Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation
11. Information Technology
12. Manufacturing and Product Development
13. Marketing, Sales, and Services
14. Public Services
15. Transportation