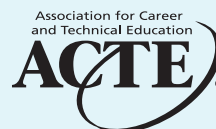




Why CTE?

Through CTE, students gain technical, academic and employability skills like communication and problem solving, apply their learning in the real world and explore careers while planning for their futures.



Benefits for Students

- Students can explore a range of careers as they're forming their vocational identity. ¹
- CTE has positive impacts on academic achievement and high school completion. ²
- Students are more likely to enroll in two-year colleges and just as likely to enroll in four-year colleges as their peers. ³
- CTE is positively linked to postsecondary persistence and degree attainment. ⁴
- Students who take CTE courses have higher employment rates after high school. ⁵

THROUGHOUT
 Marco reviews his individual learning plan twice a year with his school counselor and family, refining his plans and adding completed courses, projects and experiences to his portfolio.

GRADE 11
 Marco takes a course in media production and shadows a manager at a local news station.

GRADE 12
 Marco takes a dual-credit course in digital animation, earns an Adobe certification and has a six-week internship at a video production company. He plans to attend college in the fall to study graphic design and animation.

GRADE 7
 Marco completes several assessments of his career skills and interests and hears from guest speakers in different industries.

In Action: Exploring Careers Through CTE

Follow Marco as he moves through a pathway that includes CTE coursework, career awareness and planning, work-based learning, industry credentials, early postsecondary credit and more.

GRADE 8
 Marco takes a semester-long career awareness course where he researches careers and interviews adults about their jobs. His class visits the high school to learn about its CTE programs.

GRADE 10
 Marco takes an introductory CTE course in arts, entertainment and design and joins a related career and technical student organization (CTSO).

GRADE 9
 Marco spends a semester rotating through different CTE areas.

Benefits for Employers and Communities

- The nation faces a projected deficit of 6 million workers by 2032 in health care, utilities and other CTE-related industries. ⁶
- Employers in high-demand industries report hiring people because of their CTE experience. ⁷
- CTE programs contribute significantly to the economies of states and local communities. ⁸

Learn more at ACTEonline.org/CTE-101

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Citations

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² Lindsay, J., Hughes, K., Dougherty, S. M., Reese, K., & Joshi, M. (2024). *What we know about the impact of career and technical education: A systematic review of the research*. Career and Technical Education Research Network. Retrieved from <https://cteresearchnetwork.org/resources/2024-systematic-review>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Blagg, K. (2025, July 24). *Which college and career readiness standards best align with positive outcomes after high school?* Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/which-college-and-career-readiness-standards-best-align-positive-outcomes>

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⁶ Lightcast. (2024). *The rising storm building a future-ready workforce to withstand the looming labor shortage*. Retrieved from https://www.datocms-assets.com/62658/1726526804-the_rising_storm_lightcast_final.pdf

⁷ Advance CTE. (2021, October). *Shifting the skills conversation: Employer attitudes and outcomes of career technical education*. Retrieved from <https://careertech.org/resource/shifting-the-skills-conversation-employer-attitudes-and-outcomes-of-career-technical-education>

⁸ ACTE. (2023, January). *Investing in CTE yields big returns*. Retrieved from https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ACTE_InvestingInCTE_Jan2023.pdf