***As he assumes the Presidency of NASDCTEc/NCTEF, we took a moment to catch up with recent developments in President Stump's home state of Colorado and get his thoughts on the evolving face of modern CTE.***

It’s an exciting time for CTE in Colorado. Dean of Career and Technical Education at Colorado Community College System Scott Stump takes the helm at NASDCTEc just as Colorado is making major strides in CTE. The state recently approved graduation guidelines giving students the option to prove their math and language arts competency through relevant industry certifications. Higher education admission requirements increasingly value CTE programs of study on students’ applications. CTE is recognized as a proof point for the state’s postsecondary and workforce ready endorsed diploma equal to math, science and language arts.

According to President Stump, the driver of this progress – both in Colorado and nationwide – stems from deepening integration. He points to the [Water Quality Management](http://www.rrcc.edu/wqm/) (WQM) program at Red Rocks Community College in Lakewood, CO and its work with public-private partnership [Get into Water](http://www.getintowaterco.org/) as a model for integration. Get into Water, an informational and instructional nonprofit, helps the community college program link student learning to industry needs, reaching metro area kids with information and guidance and guiding them to a program offering nine professional certifications and an AAS in an in-demand field. It’s projects like these, he says, that give us a window into the future of a multi-dimensional, collaborative effort to offer high-quality programs of study to all students.

President Stump isn’t only speaking about secondary, postsecondary and workforce alignment, though. “We have to change the conversation from ‘are you on a college or career path?’ They are one and the same for more than two in three open jobs today. That means breaking down the walls not just between grades, but between delivery mechanisms. Policy is pushing us in that direction and practice will need to evolve to keep pace.”

Colorado is taking steps to put that ideology into practice. Colorado Community College coordinates with state and local secondary education leaders to check their progress against OCTAE’s technical assistance for developing career pathways. President Stump meets regularly with executive offices in Colorado’s Department of Education and Department of Labor to keep all stakeholders on the same page.

The state continues driving towards the goal of applied learning through CTE. As the 21st century workplace continues to evolve, President Stump says CTE’s unique ability to tie learning to the world of work makes it the best available delivery system for career readiness. “Especially when the work-based, school-based, experiential or exploratory experience looks, feels, tastes and smells like a true work environment.”