Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board Meeting Agenda
Via Zoom
January 12, 2021
3– 4 p.m. EDT

3 – 3:05 p.m.	**Welcome and Introductions**	Sarah Heath *Pages 1-4*
3:05 – 3:08 p.m.	**Review and Approval Minutes** *The Boards will be approving minutes from the Advance CTE, The Center to Advance CTE and Joint Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE November 2020 meetings*	Laura Scheibe *Pages 5-19*
3:08 – 3:38 p.m.	**Review, Discussion and Approval of Proposed New Vision** *Kate will be walking through the final draft of the proposed vision, provide an update on how the draft was developed with input from the Boards and partners and, if agreement, move for an approval of the new vision. The Boards will have an opportunity to give input into the range of supports Advance CTE will be providing to members and the field to support implementation of the new vision.*	*Kate Kreamer Pages 20-27*
3:38 – 3:42 p.m.	**Update and Insights into New Administration and Congress** *Meredith will provide an update on what we can expect from the Biden-Harris administration and new Congress around CTE and our broader priorities, along with an update on our transition memo. The Boards will have an opportunity to provide input in our strategy going forward for engaging the new Administration and Congress.*	Meredith Hills
3:42 – 3:58 p.m.	**Review, Discussion and Approval of Proposed WIOA Recommendations** *The Boards will review the proposed recommendations around the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, provide any final feedback and, if agreement, approve the new recommendations.*	Meredith Hills *Pages 28-32*
3:58 – 4 p.m.	**Wrap up** <u>*Next Meeting*</u>*: February 2, 2021 Advance CTE: 3 – 4 p.m. The Center to Advance CTE: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. EST Via Zoom*	Sarah Heath

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ATTENDEES: Sarah Heath, Bernadette Howard, Laura Scheibe, Angel Malone, Steve Playl, Katie Graham, Thalea Longhurst, Jeralyn Jargo, Donna Lewelling, Victoria Crownover, Cathie Raymond

NOT PRESENT: Marcie Mack, Luke Rhine

STAFF: Kimberly Green, Kate Kreamer, Austin Estes, Katie Fitzgerald, Krissy Haynes, Meghan Wills, Meredith Hills, Stacy Whitehouse, Christina Koch

Welcome: Heath called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM, welcoming everyone to the Advance CTE Board Meeting. Heath introduced the new staff: Christina Koch, Stacy Whitehouse, and Jeran Culina.

Advance CTE Financial Report: Scheibe presented the Advance CTE FY21 financial report. Advance CTE continues to be in a strong position. The financials are reconciled through September 2020 or 25 percent of year. Seventy percent of income has been received, which is mostly membership dues. Advance CTE received a new contract for $14,000 from Opportunity America to support a national community college study. This amount will be applied to "Other Income" in the current budget. Interest is at 50 percent of budget, which is above target. Expenses are at 12 percent of budget, which is on track, and mostly accounts for staff time and organizational expenses. A budget modification for the Board Retreat is anticipated early next year since it will now be held virtually.

Heath asked for approval of the Advance CTE financial report.

MOTION: **To approve the financial report, as presented.**
Playl; Raymond.
MOTION APPROVED.

Spring Meeting Update and Budget Modification: Fitzgerald gave an update of the Advance CTE 2021 Spring Meeting. The meeting will be virtual for the first time ever. It will be professional, well designed and similar to past Spring Meetings in format, and the content will be timely and relevant. The meeting will also be interactive and engaging for all members.

The Spring Meeting will be held on April 14–15, 2021 from 12–5 pm ET daily. It will include plenary sessions, breakout sessions and a workshop. The workshop will be a 90-minute session focused on a key issue with tangible takeaways. Problems of Practice roundtable discussions will also be included.

Haynes explained the budget modification for the Spring Meeting. Both the income and expenses decreased for the Spring Meeting are due to the event being held virtually. The

expenses decreased to $75,685, which is due to the elimination of catering, travel and supply costs. The registration income has been reduced to $43,750 due to decreased registration fees. Our target is 250 attendees register at the rate of $175. Sponsorship income has been reduced to $31,935 due to lower sponsorship pricing. This modification results in a balanced budget.

Heath asked for approval of the proposed Advance CTE budget modification.

MOTION: **To approve the budget modification, as presented.**
Raymond; Jargo.
MOTION APPROVED.

Personnel Policy Revisions: Haynes explained that revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual were necessary due to new technologies adopted by the organization, as well as the hiring of remote workers. The revisions were reviewed and approved by Advance CTE's attorney, who did note that the organization will have to abide by the ADA guidelines once it reaches 15 employees.

There were three sections of the Personnel Policy Manual that were updated based on the adoption of technology: timesheets, expense reimbursements and leave. The organization is now using ClickTime to enter and submit their timesheets online. Expensify and DocuSign are now used by employees to submit their expense reports. Submission and approvals of expense reports also happen online, so receipts no longer have to be original as digital copies are now accepted. BambooHR is now used for annual and sick leave reporting and accrual. BambooHR allows for annual and sick leave accrual to be prorated from the employee start date. This new accrual policy will go into effect for all employees hired starting on December 1, 2020.

There were three sections of the Personnel Policy Manual that were updated due to the hiring of remote employees: health insurance, weather related delays and dismissals and transportation benefits. The health insurance section was updated to include language regarding premium payments for select health plans. Small premium payments are necessary for remote workers as Advance CTE is not able to cover the payments for the employee due to the plan being grandfathered pre-Affordable Care Act. Remote workers are required to get the upgraded BluePreferred healthcare plan as the basic plan is only available for employees located in DC, northern Virginia and Maryland. Language was added to the weather-related delays and dismissals section, as well as the transportation benefits section stating that remote workers are ineligible for these benefits. Transportation benefits will also be paused for employees that telework for longer than a month.

Finally, changes were made to the evaluation system to ensure there was no bias in the evaluation system. The descriptions of the 5 levels of performance got updated.

Heath asked for approval of the personnel policy revisions.

MOTION: **To approve the Personnel Policy revisions, as presented.**
Scheibe; Graham.
MOTION APPROVED.

Postsecondary Strategy: Hills gave an update about the postsecondary strategy. The postsecondary strategy was created to ensure a deliberate focus on postsecondary CTE across the organization and its work. Given significant progress and widespread integration of postsecondary into all aspects of the organization's work, Hills proposed that Advance CTE retires the separate strategy. Staff will continue to be intentional to ensure postsecondary CTE is incorporated into all other strategies.

Green provided context sharing that when the strategies were reviewed, it was clear thre was no work that was unique to the postsecondary strategy, as all of the work was also found in other strategies. Removing this as a separate strategy allows us to streamline the work.

Howard agreed that it is reasonable to have the separate strategy eliminated and have it integrated into the other strategies.

Heath reminded everyone about adult basic education and how career pathways are supported. Green said that the evolving vision will include a focus on postsecondary and adult CTE.

Heath asked for approval to retire a separate postsecondary strategy.

MOTION: **To retire a separate postsecondary strategy.**
Lewelling; Howard.
MOTION APPROVED.

Federal Policy Update: Hills gave an update on the federal policy. Since March the federal landscape has changed significantly. The legislation is solely focused on COVID-19 response and recovery. Since March when the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed, there have been many proposals, but nothing has passed. Politics have turned more partisan than before, and Republicans and Democrats are not coordinating on anything. The environment is now gridlocked.

Advance CTE has been able to grow its advocacy reach and engage with new partners. One new partner is the Homework Gap Coalition, which is focused on the learning and teaching gap. The group has focused on advocating for stimulus funding for broadband. We have also gotten our members involved in targeted state congressional outreach.

Next, Hills spoke about what to expect in a lame duck session, notably the Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations. Congress will either pass a new bill or another continuing resolution. Last week the Senate introduced their appropriations bill that included an increase of $75,000,000 for Perkins funding, but it is not expected to be voted on. Congress will also work on another COVID-19 relief bill, but the likelihood of a bill getting passed during the lame duck is low.

Finally, Hills spoke about the Biden Administration transition planning. All of the transition planning is currently informal due to the General Services Administration funding not being passed to Biden Administration Transition Team. Biden's campaign platform talked about CTE and called for increased CTE funding. However, so far in Biden's transition planning, CTE is

not explicitly called out as part of the education planning. Hills shared that we are hopeful it will be incorporated but that it will be an uphill climb to get it on the Biden radar. Linda Darling-Hammond was named the head of the education transition team. She has an extensive background in education and was also on the Obama transition team, but has not done a lot of work in CTE. There is not a CTE-specific member on the transition team.

Smith noted the overlap with the Obama transition team and asked how optimistic she is that CTE will be integrated into the plan. Hills is hopeful that CTE will be recognized due to the overlap with the Obama transition team as well as our many partners on the team, but stated that without having a CTE-specific person on the team groups will have to advocate for CTE specific language. Green added that the priorities identified fit nicely with what CTE can deliver and noted that the Biden plans often use the term community colleges instead of CTE. The Campaign speaks of tripling of Title I funding, but do not mention new CTE funding. Advance CTE's responsibility is to get the transition team to see CTE as a solution and to name it explicitly.

Administration Transition Priorities: Hills shared the priorities for the new Biden-Harris Administration.

1. **Embrace and promote CTE as a valued pathway for learners.** The purpose of this is to eliminate stigma of CTE through communications and messaging. It also includes investing in and reforming education and workforce systems.

2. **Making CTE a central part of the Administration's economic recovery strategy.** Upskilling and reskilling are going to be critical to the recovery, therefore it is important to invest in CTE, use CTE as a primary strategy for economic recovery and use CTE for an equitable return to full employment.

3. **Promote inter-connected CTE education and workforce development systems.** This includes creating a cross-agency cabinet level collaboration-led by the U.S. Secretary of Education. This will help reduce duplication, increase efficiencies, and align and expand federal investment.

4. **Eliminate structures that embed systemic racism in education and workforce programs.** An equity lens was used throughout all the priorities, but wanted to call it out specifically. There are three subtopics:
   - Develop and support a diverse CTE educator workforce
   - Expand statewide data system capacity, transparency and utilization
   - Promote an education system that values all learning

5. **Ensure that states are fully supported in the implementation of Perkins V During Covid-19.**
   - Adopt the measures in Advance CTE's stimulus priorities document, including CTE-designated funding and statutory flexibility and waivers
   - Adopt the measures needed as the pandemic continues

6. **Attend to CTE-related challenges and supports during COVID-19 response and recovery.** The following supports have been requested:
   - Invest in digital and physical infrastructure
   - Craft new employer-informed curriculum that integrates augmented and virtual reality
   - Provide professional development
   - Expand access to remote learning resources that ensure equity in delivery
   - Expand the delivery of virtual work-based learning and preparation to serve displaced workers

7. **Double the federal investment in CTE.** This includes increasing the federal investment to keep pace with inflation and demand.

8. **Expand Pell grant eligibility.** This topic includes expanding Pell grant eligibility for short-term programs, as well as expanding the eligibility for incarcerated individuals.

Hills opened the floor for discussion of the following questions: Is there anything missing from the list or are there any items on the list that are not a high priority? There were no comments.

Next, Hills asked if Double the Investment should count CTE-adjacent federal program funding increases, such as community college workforce programs and high-quality apprenticeship programs.

Malone said that she was cautious of including CTE-adjacent program in Double the Investment since the Administration does not currently have a CTE champion and she does not want CTE to get lost in the message by including the CTE-adjacent programs. She added that states do not always benefit fully from the CTE-adjacent programs. Raymond agreed with Malone. Heath said that she doesn't feel good about having a differing message from another organization that supports CTE, assuming ACTE would not want to advocate for CTE-adjacent programs. Lewelling thinks we run the risk of watering down what CTE brings to the table and also lose ability to target funding where we have already identified priorities. Playl said that it would be nice to have funding in the other CTE-adjacent areas, but that it shouldn't be our focus. Howard believes it is important to get the funding and ensure we can deliver the programs we need and the training to students, and is less concerned about making CTE separate.

Hills proposed to strike the stipulation language in the double the federal investment in CTE.

Jargo asked for discussion around eliminating the stigma around CTE. A lot of the Minnesota newly elected officials do not use the terms CTE or Career and Technical and do not understand the value of the programing. She recommended approaching as a blank palette that communicates the value of the programs and experiences. Green explained that we included the sentence knowing that Linda Darling-Hammond does think there is a stigma. The sentence is targeted at the transition team since they do have stereotypes and perceptions of CTE, so we wanted to take it on very directly. Green added that we want the transition team to stop thinking about CTE as an elective and start thinking about it as a central part of the design and delivery of

our workforce education system. She intentionally put that language first to establish it as the bedrock for all priorities that follow. Playl said that it makes sense.

Playl is excited to see Pell grant eligibility as a priority, and especially the part around short-term programs. He suggested elevating short-term credentialling and short-term programs into other areas as well, for example, calling it out specifically in the economic recovery section.

Hills summarized the changes:
- Deleting the language in double the investment that is in italics;
- Add in language on short-term programs to the economic recovery section.

Heath asked for approval of proposed transition priorities.

MOTION: **To approve the proposed transition priorities, with modifications.**
Howard; Raymond.
MOTION APPROVED.

Heath adjourned the meeting at 4:06 p.m. ET.

Joint Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board of Directors' Meeting
MINUTES
November 17, 2020
Zoom call

ATTENDEES: Sarah Heath, Bernadette Howard, Laura Scheibe, Steve Playl, Katie Graham, Thalea Longhurst, Jeralyn Jargo, Donna Lewelling, Victoria Crownover, Cathie Raymond, Alex Harris, Luke Rhine, Marcie Mack

NOT PRESENT: Angel Malone, Nicole Smith, Wendi Safstrom

STAFF: Kimberly Green, Kate Kreamer, Austin Estes, Katie Fitzgerald, Krissy Haynes, Meghan Wills

Welcome: Heath called the meeting to order at 3:06 PM, welcoming everyone to the Joint Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board Meeting.

Heath asked for approval of minutes from October 21, 2020.

MOTION: **To approve Advance CTE and The Center to Advance CTE minutes from October 21, 2020, as presented.**
Raymond; Longhurst.
MOTION APPROVED.

Heath asked for approval of consent agenda.

MOTION: **To approve consent agenda, as presented.**
Scheibe; Howard.
MOTION APPROVED.

Development Update: Kreamer gave an update on the organization's major activities. Between May – October 2020, there were 14 active grants and contracts and three new sub-grants/contracts were secured and launched. The new sub-grants are with the College High School Alliance (CHSA) and Opportunity America. Four sponsorships were secured for the CTE Summit, including funding from a new partner, Strada Education Network. A proposal is in the process of being submitted with the ECMC Foundation. The grant would be for $1,200,000 to help diversify the leadership pipeline. Kreamer shared that the PAYA grant is ending later this month and PAYA 2.0 will be launching soon once the new contract is received.

Next, Kreamer reviewed how the grants align with our strategies. The Equity Strategy is supported by grants from Gates and Joyce. Due to this funding, the Making Good on the Promise Perkins mini-briefs were developed, equity working groups and kitchen cabinets were held, and opportunity gap workshops were developed. After the opportunity gap pilot program, there will opportunities for train-the-trainer sessions for members. The Advance CTE internal equity work was funded by ABC.

The State Policy Strategy is supported by grants from JPMC, Gates, Joyce and CHSA. The funding supports the Learning that Works Resource Center, state policy tracking, all major publications, Perkins implementation resources and supports and Career Clusters. Upcoming work that is being funded by CHSA includes expanding CTE-focused early postsecondary opportunities.

The Communications Strategy is supported by grants from Siemens and JPMC. The funding allows the organization to update messaging research for "selling" CTE to learners and families, create related tools/resources, conduct a national survey of employers on the value of CTE, provide sub-grants and technical assistance to states and make improvements to the careertech.org website.

The Data Quality Strategy is supported by grants from ECMC, JPMC, PAYA and Gates. The funding supports the creation of a data quality benchmark tool and related resources, and also allows us to provide sub-grants and technical assistance to states.

The Federal Policy Strategy is supported by grants from Lumina and CHSA. The Economic Recovery Strategy is supported by grants from Gates and Lumina, which enabled us to build economic recovery tools, supports and host a member kitchen cabinet. Finally, the CTE Forward Summit and Vision development is supported by Gates and Strada.

Strategic Plan update: Kreamer presented an update on the strategic plan progress. We are in the third year of the three-year plan. Staff reviewed and updated the strategic plan activities in the summer to ensure alignment with the following key priorities:
- Internal and external commitment to equity and ending racial injustice;
- Support for the new vision;
- Supports to ensure CTE is well-positioned in the economic recovery;
- Virtual learning strategy and member supports.

The strategic plan activities were updated with color scores that reflect progress through October 2020. Green means progress is on track, yellow means progress has been made, but attention is needed, orange means progress has been halted and attention needs to be given to get back on track, and red mean little or no progress has been made. Progress on achieving the existing strategic plan goals has been affected by the current environment as the world has been changed dramatically. The status of each strategy is listed below.

- Strategic Priority 1 - Policy: This strategic priority has changed to yellow because of COVID-19 as federal policy activity has largely halted and state policy is slower as we gear up for a number of major releases in late 2020 and early 2021.

- Strategic Priority 2 – Professional Learning: This strategic priority is now mostly green as the organization was able to redirect capacity to supporting the members through the pandemic. Due to the new virtual environment, there are now more opportunities for cross-state sharing and learning.

- Strategic Priority 3 - Promotion: This strategic priority is mostly yellow due to communications research and state support work being delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Strategic Priority 4 - Partnerships: This strategic priority is yellow across the board since there have not been many meetings over the last six months due to the pandemic. There are no concerns with partnerships as the rating is just due to the slower than normal year.

- Strategic Priority 5 – Process and Protocols: This strategic priority is a mix of green and orange. A lot of work has been happening with this strategic priority in the last few months with a focus on internal equity and culture. More attention needs to be given to the SOPs and knowledge management.

Estes explained the dashboard, which evaluates data to determine the collective reach and impact of the organization. He then gave a snapshot on the organization's current status.

Advance CTE's influence and impact on federal policy has declined in the last two quarters due to COVID-19 since there are fewer engagements with Congress and the Administration.

The number of states receiving direct technical assistance from Advance CTE dipped in the last quarter of FY20 due to the pandemic, but then bounced back in the first quarter of FY21 since the organization was able to successfully pivot to delivering technical assistance virtually. The annual member services survey revealed that number of states working to replicate examples from publications has increased to 56 percent, which is an overall increase of 24 percent from 2019.

Professional learning supports have strengthened in the last year, with 10 events being held between April and September. Participants in the events agreed that they increased understanding and plan to use what they learned.

Member satisfaction and engagement has been strong. The number of states with low engagement score has decreased, which means more states have been regularly engaging with Advance CTE. State Director satisfaction with the membership value has increased to 100 percent.

Advance CTE leadership in the field has decreased due to fewer conferences and presentations happening in the past six months due to the pandemic. Even though there have been fewer presentations, Advance CTE is still looked upon as a leader in the field. The data that is being collected does not reflect this as the traditional metrics are not as relevant at this time.

Advance CTE's digital media reach declined slightly during the pandemic, as people were not visiting the website at the same frequency as they were before the pandemic. In the first quarter of FY21 website traffic picked back up and was almost double the previous quarter.

Partnerships have been stable throughout the pandemic. The Summit is an example of how Advance CTE was able to engage its partners in a meaningful way.

Estes opened up the floor to questions. Playl asked if the dashboard chart was publicly available. Kreamer stated that it was internal only. Playl then asked if there was any thought into making it public. Kreamer said it was not something that has been discussed, but that much of the data appears in the annual report. Jargo stated that the organization has several close partnerships that never get enough highlight like ACTE and NAPE, and recommended highlighting the partnerships more.

Vision working session: Kreamer started the vision working session by reviewing the goals of the session:
- Do the principles and actions align with the major themes and takeaways from the Summit? What did we miss?
- Are we pushing forward enough? Or, where can and should we be bolder?
- Does the draft adequately attend to the foundational commitments of equity, quality, industry involvement and data AND the full continuum of CTE learners from K-12 through adults?
- Are there any "non-starters," either in terms of concepts or verbiage that we need to be aware of?

Foundational cross-cutting commitments were added to the vision. These are themes that show up throughout the vision, which are equity, quality, involvement with industry partners, data and potentially leadership.

- Principal 1: Each learner engages in an integrated career preparation ecosystem, designed to support lifelong success. This is a holistic ecosystem that delivers quality experiences, coordinates wraparound supports and offers more clarity and focus for industry.

- Principal 2: Each learner is the driver of their own career journey. This is about learners needing information and tools that enable them to identify quality CTE programs, access the service and supports they qualify for, and demonstrate their experiences, skills and competencies.

- Principal 3: Each learner feels welcome in, supported by and has the means to be successful in CTE. This is about putting the learner first and designing the systems with them and not for them.

- Principal 4: Each learner's skills and competencies are valued and counted. This is about prioritizing skills and competencies above time, degrees and credits.

- Principal 5: Each learner has access to equitably funded CTE programs, with accountability and funding systems focused on equitable outcomes and innovation. This priority is about building new systems and structures that start with the learner and focus on the positive outcomes we most want to see-including equity and competency-based focus – and that maximize limited resources and encourage collaboration.

To accomplish the vision, states will need to find new ways of working together. They will need to develop new and expanded interstate compacts that enable the flow of data, learners, instructors, credits and degrees across state lines to better reflect the global economy we live in.

Kreamer opened the floor to discussion. Crownover stated that one of the transition priorities included data system capacity, transparency and utilization, and should also be reflected in Principal 5 of the vision. Rhine suggested having language reflect the audience by broadening some of the talking points to show impact and action that can be taken by multiple audiences. Rhine thought the framing of the guiding principles was really strong. Jargo asked if the goals are future-looking enough. She encouraged Advance CTE to think of the next decade and to look at how AI will be in everything we do. Jargo added that Advance CTE did good job speaking to the full spectrum of learners.

Green asked the Board what top two or three priorities they would choose to focus on. Graham shared her selections would be based on her state's readiness and not necessarily those priorities that she would pick if her state was further ahead. Raymond said that some look like they can be combined. For example, the integrated career preparation ecosystem is overarching and the rest of the priorities could be pieces of it. Jargo agreed that there was a lot of cross-over in the priorities. Kreamer explained that this vision is different than the last as there is more overlap and this makes it more cohesive, which has both benefits and limitations.

Kreamer asked if should back away from CTE and focus on education more broadly. Heath said having CTE as the education system the vision is talking about is more helpful as she can have an impact on CTE, but not the entire education system. She added that tailoring the vision to where we are able to be actionable is helpful. Graham said that positioning CTE more prominently is the way to go. Rhine added that the position of CTE is important and that it should be featured prominently but should also challenge what it is and how it is defined.

Kreamer finished the discussion by outlining the next steps. A full draft will be sent in early December with a final draft being sent later in December. A discussion about the draft will be held at the January Board Meeting, and the vision will be released in early March 2021.

Other Items/Next Steps: Next Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board of Directors Meeting is January 12, 2021 at 3:00 pm ET via Zoom.

Heath adjourned the meeting at 4:06 p.m. ET.

ATTENDEES: Sarah Heath, Laura Scheibe, Bernadette Howard, Marcie Mack, Alex Harris

NOT PRESENT: Nicole Smith, Wendi Safstrom

STAFF: Kimberly Green, Kate Kreamer, Austin Estes, Katie Fitzgerald, Krissy Haynes, Meghan Wills

Welcome: Heath called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM, welcoming everyone to the The Center to Advance CTE Board Meeting.

Financial Reports: Scheibe gave an overview of the Center financials, which have been reconciled through September 30, 2020 or 25 percent of the fiscal year. The Center has received 82% of budgeted income for the year and continues to be in strong financial position. The income is mostly carry forward of grant income, and also includes the Siemens payment that came early. Interest is already exceeding budgeted income by 17 percent.

Expenses are at 15 percent of budget, which is typical for this time of year. Expenses are primarily staff related costs and rent. A budget modification for the Board retreat is likely as it will be held virtually instead of in-person.

Heath asked for approval of the financial reports.

MOTION: **To approve financial reports, as presented.**
Mack; Howard.
MOTION APPROVED.

Budget Modification: Kreamer reviewed The Center to Advance CTE proposed budget amendment. The Center will receive three sub-grant agreements as a result of participation on the College High School Alliance (CHSA) Steering Committee. The first sub-grant is from Joyce, which is a two-year grant. The first payment of $30,000 has already been received, and a second payment will be received next fiscal year. The budget amendment would set the income and expenses for the new Joyce CHSA grant at $30,000. The second budget amendment is for the ECMC grant, which will have $16,000 in income and expenses carried forward into FY22. This reduces the income and expense for this fiscal year to $303,250. The Center to Advance CTE budget remains balanced with the total income and expenses now $3,317,193.43.

Heath asked for approval of the budget modification.

MOTION: **To approve proposed budget modification, as presented.**
Mack; Scheibe.
MOTION APPROVED.

Career Clusters® Working Session: Wills kicked off a Career Clusters working session. The purpose of the session is to gather input on required elements of a renewed National Career Clusters Framework, and to discuss and gather input on options for Framework users to submit innovative ideas. The next step of the project is focused on soliciting ideas to ensure The Framework is a modern construct, reflective of the future of work, and adaptable to the current and emerging needs of learners and the workplace. Wills shared the approved renewed purpose statement: The National Career Clusters Framework provides structural alignment and a common language to bridge education and work; empowering each learner to explore, decide, and prepare for dynamic and evolving careers.

The proposed required elements of the renewed Framework are:

- The Framework must be national in scope, yet it must provide flexibility and allow for varied uses at the state and local levels.
- A firm commitment to equity and quality must be part of the renewed Framework.
- No component or construct of The Framework is off-limits for revision and/or reconsideration.
- A process that results in The Framework remaining largely "as-is" with only a few modifications would be perceived as a failure.
- The Framework must be simple and understandable.
- The Framework must provide a common/shared language for multiple audiences and must speak to a variety of stakeholders: business and industry, educators, parents, students, and others.
- The Framework must provide a structure by which to organize CTE programs that encompass the entire world of work.
- The Framework must provide structural alignment to bridge education and work.
- The Framework must be learner-centered and support CTE learners to explore, decide and prepare for dynamic and evolving careers.
- The Framework must accommodate career pathways and advisement across a broad spectrum of careers.
- The Framework must continue to be relevant for the full continuum of CTE (secondary, postsecondary and adult CTE).
- The Framework must accommodate business and industry by being responsive to their needs, as well as be responsive to new and emerging industries and occupations and program expansion.

Wills asked for high level feedback on the concept. She posed the following discussion questions: 1) are there questions about how the required elements will be used; 2) should anything be added to the list – is anything missing; and 3) should any elements be removed from the list.

Howard asked how will the requirement that "the Framework must provide a structure by which to organize CTE programs that encompass the entire world of work" change what we are currently doing? Wills explained that common language is not enough and there needs to be a structure that more clearly aligns education and work, but we are not sure what it might look like

yet. Howard agreed that she was not sure what it would look like, but we need to have it. Howard also said that it would be nice to be able to sort across Clusters and pathways within the Framework.

Kreamer asked if it would be failure if The Framework looked the same in terms of being organized around sectors, but was used differently? Green said it would be failure because the current structure lacks the ability to accomplish the new purpose statement as the current structure is embedded in a linear one-way path. If The Framework is anchored to occupations, then it will be looking back, not forward. Green added that if The Framework is anchored around competencies then there is more of an ability to proactively prepare learners for the future.

Howard noted that if we are doing this in service of the larger universe of users, than revamping it is a great idea, but those in the classrooms need to see similarity to what they are used so it is easier for them to digest. Heath shared that she still sees the need for a piece of collateral that counselors can use as a coaching tool. Howard said if we are going to significantly change the structure and way education is delivered, then we need to start with a blank slate. She finished by saying that The Framework has to be forward thinking and a different way of delivering education.

Scheibe said that it needs to be actionable and that The Framework can't be an aspirational piece that sits on a shelf. She added that the framework needs to be something the field and State Directors can take, use, makes sense and means something. Wills agreed that actionable is a really good addition.

Harris recommended that we should push on how to summarize or aggregate the information in The Framework to a top-level conclusion or finding.

Next, Wills walked through two innovation submission options. The first option is a facilitated ideation workshop similar to the CTE Forward Summit. The second option is an online portal that allows users to submit ideas directly. There would likely be a set of questions that users would respond to through the portal. With both options, Advance CTE staff would synthesize the ideas and engage a Career Clusters advisory group.

Wills shared that one pro of an online portal is that there is not a limit on the number of responses, so we could have a larger audience. Other pros include less time commitment for participants and users could choose the questions they respond to so they can focus on specific aspects on The Framework based on interest or expertise.

Wills also shared cons, including the fact that an online portal is a new approach, so it is not known whether the CTE community would be responsive. Another con is that final submissions may not be as bold if they are focusing on specific components rather than the big picture.

In terms of the facilitated ideation sessions, Wills offered one pro that the audience can interact with one another, which allows people to build off others' ideas and may generate richer and bolder innovations. Also, facilitation would allow staff to guide conversations, synthesize on the

spot and test ideas with users in real-time. The cons of facilitated ideation sessions include: a limit to number of participants, they would invitation only so may not invite people with the most innovative ideas, and meeting fatigue.

Wills opened the floor for discussion. Heath suggested doing a hybrid format that starts with online submission and then goes to facilitated workshop, which would increase accessibility. Howard also thinks hybrid would be a good idea and asked if going to include students. Wills recognized that they should be included.

Kreamer agrees that there is something in between that we can do, such as having three smaller cross-sector groups to build three separate prototypes then get feedback and ideas from a broader group. Howard suggested making it a class assignment for Masters' classes. Heath suggested her colleague, Lauren Jones, could help pull together focus groups of counselors. Green reminded the Board that this approach is timely and need to ensure it can be done by the deadline.

Harris said that if trying to crowdsource then need to have as few barriers as possible for them to contribute. Wills said that the purpose of the innovation portal is to crowd source. Heath said to get responses we need to have really good communications and also need to incentivize and give recognition in some way. Mack said that the online portal is good, but need to tie to incentive to get the response rate we want. Kreamer added that being able to submit ideas in several different formats would also remove barriers. Wills said that they will no longer require videos to be submitted.

Heath adjourned the meeting at 5:02 p.m. ET.

CTE Without Limitations: A Shared Vision for the Future of Career Technical Education

Introduction:

The world is changing at an increasingly rapid pace, with the future of work – or the work of the future – fully upon us. At the same time, our nation is facing a serious economic, workforce and health crisis that offers a critical and necessary opportunity to reflect on how we design and deliver Career Technical Education (CTE) so that it reaches its full impact and promise for each learner.

CTE must, as it has always done, continue to evolve to meet both the emerging and long-standing challenges our country faces. CTE has a central role in securing an inclusive and equitable future that enables each learner to access the education and training they need to be successful in a meaningful career that offers financial security and self-sufficiency. Such a future also means that industry can more readily find the talent they need to thrive. But this will not occur without significant reflection, investment in the systems and programs that are supporting each learner successfully, and fundamental changes to the systems and structures that are limiting learner success.

Looking forward, we need a *cohesive, flexible and responsive career preparation ecosystem* that offers each learner access to and the means to be successful in any high-quality CTE program or experience that leads to success in their career of choice – regardless of where they live, their race or ethnicity, what education path they have taken so far, their circumstances or how they self-identify.

To build out such an ecosystem will require a coordinated set of federal, state, and local systems, structures, policies and practices working in concert. It will also require the intentional removal of systemic barriers that perpetuate inequities and limit opportunity, geographic barriers, and institutional barriers that keep K-12, postsecondary, workforce development and economic development separate and siloed. Finally, it will require that CTE is fully valued as the critical and essential catalyst for this new ecosystem.

This is a bold vision and will take bold action and leadership at all levels to reflect on, refine and even rebuild many of the systems and structures that are limiting the success of each learner.

The five principles of this vision identify the systems and structures that need to be challenged and, in some cases, dismantled to achieve our vision. Supporting these principles are a set of foundational commitments – or the non-negotiables – that must be in place, including a commitment to:

- All dimensions of equity (i.e., educational, racial, socio-economic, gender and geographic, etc.) and meeting the unique needs of each individual learner;
- Quality programs, instructors, instruction, work-based learning and credentials that are responsive to the needs of industry;
- Meaningful public-private partnerships, with industry partners deeply invested and involved in the design, delivery and success of the CTE system;
- Actionable, transparent and trustworthy data; and
- Continuous improvement and collaboration by leaders at all levels within our system.

PRINCIPLE 1: Each Learner Engages in a Cohesive, Flexible and Responsive Career Preparation Ecosystem

Learners need a career preparation ecosystem that recognizes and supports non-linear career progressions and is designed to allow all learners, not just those who opt into CTE programs, to get the skills they need, when they need them, without redundancy or limitations. The career preparation ecosystem must be nimble and offer flexible experiences, including high-quality and equitable CTE programs with clear on- and off-ramps that are reflective of and responsive to industry needs.

To build a career preparation ecosystem that serves every learner without limitations will require statewide, cross-agency commitment, deeper public-private partnerships, and supportive funding and accountability models that reinforce the ecosystem by valuing collaboration, equity and innovation. CTE sits at the nexus of K-12, postsecondary, workforce development and industry, making it uniquely positioned to serve as a catalyst for a learner-centered career preparation system.

To accomplish this, we must:

Establish shared, statewide goals for a cohesive career preparation ecosystem

States must adopt shared goals that recognize the need for more coherence across education and workforce systems to better and more fully meet the diverse needs of learners. States must align their policies, programs, data, metrics and funding to reconcile the silos between delivery systems (education and workforce), learner levels (PreK-12, postsecondary and adult), academic and career-focused instruction, and credit and non-credit programs that create barriers for learners and lead to inefficiencies and redundancies. Each of these systems much understand their role in the new ecosystem and how they will engage with each other to provide best-in-class programs and supports for each learner.

Ensure all CTE programs of study are flexible and responsive

Every CTE program of study and career pathway approved and funded by states – which begin as early as the middle grades and extend into adult upskilling and reskilling opportunities – should have well-articulated on- and off-ramps, be anchored by credentials of value, include opportunities for work-based learning and align with high-skill, high-wage and in-demand careers.

At the same time, industry must not only be a beneficiary of this ecosystem, but also serve as a key partner and contributor in its success. By aligning the career preparation ecosystem with talent pipeline strategies, states, districts, institutions and learners can access better information on the changing nature of work, the most in-demand competencies, and critical learner outcome and labor market data. Industry must partner with the public sector to build and maintain trusted systems for identifying and validating credentials of value, as well as developing and implementing connected work-based learning systems (e.g., exploration through full apprenticeships).

Expand data and accountability models that value collaboration, equity and innovation

Accountability systems and structures must focus on the equitable outcomes we most want to see, including success in a meaningful, well-paying career for each learner and systems that values competencies and skills not just seat time. This will require new state-level and institution-level metrics that measure the full continuum of CTE, starting in middle grades through high school and postsecondary and into adult CTE, with potential flexibility granted by the federal government. States and institutions can also create publicly reported equity indices to better design and evaluate

interventions and supports for marginalized learners. These efforts will enable our systems to be better designed – and funded – to support learners wherever they are in their career journey, and paint a more comprehensive picture for policymakers, practitioners and learners.

Design and implement equitable funding models that direct funding to the learners, communities and programs that need it the most

Our funding structures often perpetuate inequities, at both the learner and system level, with the gaps between well-resourced and under-resourced communities and institutions contributing to different opportunities for learners and limiting options for many. States and institutions should identify and leverage flexibilities within federal funding streams to better target and braid resources to achieve more equitable outcomes. New funding formulas should be incubated, piloted and scaled, moving us away from inequitable practices (such as relying on property taxes and credit hours as the main drivers of funding at the secondary and postsecondary levels, respectively). And, state and federal policymakers must reconsider limitations on financial aid for high-quality, short-term CTE programs, and expand ability to benefit and other learner-focused funding, to allow funding to best support each learner throughout their career progression.

PRINCIPLE 2: Each Learner is a Skilled Navigator on Their Own Career Journey

A key element of the career preparation ecosystem is a coordinated set of supports that enables each learner to navigate their career journey skillfully and successfully. At every stage of their careers, learners need access to information and individuals that help them ask the right questions, identify high-quality CTE programs and access the service and supports they qualify for. To truly empower learners to be more informed consumers will require a comprehensive, accessible, transparent and connected advisement system. This system must start by engaging young learners as they build occupational identities and then span their lifetimes, providing consistent and coordinated support and guidance as they continue to gain skills and progress in their careers.

To accomplish this, we must:

Offer integrated PreK-20W advisement systems

States and institutions must align career advisement and navigational supports, such as individual career and academic plans at the K-12 level, guided pathways at the postsecondary level, and career services for adults seeking upskilling or reskilling opportunities. Such integrated systems must connect learners to meaningful experiential learning opportunities, such as work-based learning and Career Technical Student Organizations, which can build social capital and professional skills. They must also feed into early warning and proactive advisement systems. While such systems exist within some postsecondary institutions, they are not prevalent at the secondary level nor commonly offered to adult learners in shorter-term programs and need to be supported at scale and expanded to include indicators related to CTE.

In addition, by fully connecting the dots between career advisement and wraparound supports, such as childcare and housing and transportation subsidies, learners will be fully supported on their pathways to success. It is more important than ever that our career advisement systems attend to social emotional learning and reflect trauma-informed principles to truly support the whole learner. They must also be flexible and responsive to meet the unique needs of learners who enter our education and training system with different experiences, privileges and resources.

Provide transparent, accessible and consumer-driven cross-state data on CTE options and outcomes

Learners and families must have access to the CTE program outcome data and labor market information they need to guide their decisions and make thoughtful choices. The data should demystify where and how learners can access CTE programs and experiences and support services in their communities and communities across the country. With the right data – easily accessible and presented in the right way – learners will be able to understand the value and outcomes of specific CTE programs, including how that might differ based on a learner's race or ethnicity, gender, educational background or other demographics.

Federal agencies, states and institutions also must expand and improve upon labor market information systems, providing learners with more transparent, reliable and real-time information on career opportunities, earnings, and how their educational decisions will interact with access to support services.

Invest the necessary resources to support integrated advisement systems

Integrated and meaningful advisement systems and consumer-driven data will only happen if we invest in them. To integrate advisement across K-12, postsecondary and workforce development – and attend to each learner's academic needs, career navigation, social emotional supports and wraparound services – will require investments of time, resources and people. Specifically, we cannot support each learner without dedicated federal, state and local investments in counseling professionals, training for any and all individuals working directly with learners (including counselors, instructors and industry partners), data systems, and the wraparound supports themselves. We must also build capacity around data literacy so that counselors, instructors and other leaders and practitioners can both understand and communicate the data to learners and other stakeholders.

PRINCIPLE 3: Each Learner Feels Welcome in, Supported by and Have the Means to Be Successful in the Career Preparation Ecosystem

It is well past time that our systems, leaders and practitioners identify and dismantle the institutional and systemic barriers that limit access, opportunity and outcomes for each learner. For far too long, a disproportionate number of learners of color, low-income learners, learners with disabilities, English language learners, female learners and other historically marginalized populations have been tracked into terminal vocational programs that denied their full potential and left them with limited opportunity.

Every aspect of our new career preparation ecosystem must be designed with an equity lens to ensure it is fully flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of each learner throughout the CTE continuum. This will require deep work to identify the full scope of institutional barriers and systemic racism in our policies and programs, learner-centric programs and interventions, and efforts to build trust with marginalized learners and communities to ensure their voices and perspectives are brought to the forefront of decisions.

To accomplish this, we must:

Fully diagnose and understand the scope of the institutional barriers and systemic racism

States and institutions should conduct equity audits to assess how CTE is serving learners of color and other marginalized populations, such as learners with disabilities and learners from low-income communities. This audit must take into account policies and processes at the state or institution level

that historically and systemically, intentionally or unintentionally, put barriers in place for certain learners due to racism or other forms of discrimination. These analyses must rely on both quantitative and qualitative data and culminate in actionable strategies for dismantling barriers to access and success. Such efforts must be coordinated with equity audits across the broader education and workforce systems. While CTE has its own equity challenges, the work to fully eliminate all barriers put before our learners is a shared responsibility that will require shared solutions.

Recruit, retain and support a diverse and culturally competent workforce

It is critical that there is strong cultural competency within career preparation ecosystem at the state, local and classroom levels and across K-12, postsecondary and workforce development to ensure that CTE instructors, leaders and partners can understand, communicate with and effectively interact with learners across cultures and of different backgrounds.

States and institutions should commit to building recruitment strategies and talent pipeline programs that attract diverse CTE instructors, administrators and leaders who are demographically representative of the learners they teach and have strong industry expertise. In addition, we must also build the capacity of instructors and leaders through pre-service and in-service professional development that addresses trauma-informed practices, culturally responsive teaching methods, inclusivity, and classroom-based and work-based management techniques. Industry partners providing work-based learning or mentorships should also receive supports and training to build their cultural competency as they interact with a diverse group of learners.

Design CTE programs and interventions on the margin while maintaining a commitment to quality

Interventions and services should be built to meet the needs of learners who have the most barriers to access and success. This requires learner input upfront, and ongoing adjustments as needed along the way. States and communities will need to meaningful engage currently hidden populations (justice-connected youth and adults, learners experiencing homelessness, single parents, etc.) as they are often placed on the margins of the education and workforce systems. The end result of this human-centered design process are CTE programs that fully accessible to every learner. Throughout this process, state and local leaders must maintain a strong commitment to the quality of CTE programs so as not to fall into the trap of offering marginalized learners watered down or lower quality programs and experiences as a means of expanding access.

Provide meaningful and ongoing mechanisms for elevating the learner voice

CTE programs and related experiences must be learner centric – designed *with* learners, not simply *for* learners – which can only truly occur if learners have direct and ongoing input into the design and delivery of CTE programs and experiences that lead to meaningful career opportunities. States and institutions should leverage existing opportunities to create ongoing, open spaces to engage learners, families and key community partners to share their unique experiences with the CTE system, such as the comprehensive local needs assessment process, advisory committees and local workforce planning, as well as consider new structures and processes. CTE leaders will need to partner with community organizations and other allies to build trust with learners and their families, and also need to be prepared to lead authentic – and potentially challenging – conversations that have clear opportunities to impact policies, programs and learner supports.

PRINCIPLE 4: Each Learner's Skills Are Counted, Valued and Portable

Many learners enter education and training programs with experiences, skills and competencies that have value in the workplace. Yet, our education and workforce systems – and the funding, accreditation, and accountability systems that undergird them – still overwhelmingly place a premium on seat time over skills and competencies. Our career preparation ecosystem must support more adaptable and flexible learning opportunities that enable and value upskilling, reskilling and lifelong learning by recognizing and counting the skills and competencies learners gain throughout their lifetimes. For such a system to take root, we need industry to play their role in prioritizing skills and competencies in their hiring practices. We also need trusted systems that translate all competencies into credit to ensure learners have the greatest opportunity for success, wherever they live.

To accomplish this, we must:

Capture and value all learning that occurs, wherever and whenever it occurs

Learners gain skills in a variety of spaces – in the classroom, in work-based learning placements, in the military, through service and on the job. The federal government, states and individual institutions should continue to support, expand and scale competency-based policies and programs to capture skills attainment where and when it happens and give institutions more flexibility in the design and delivery of their CTE programs that are not beholden to seat time requirements. Competency-based models, along with integrated education/training programs, can also remove silos between academic and CTE instruction and capture knowledge and skills gained across content areas.

Build and leverage trusted systems to translate skills, competencies and credentials into portable credit

States must expand, simplify and standardize early postsecondary credit, articulation and transfer policies and programs to further enable the full portability of credit within and across states. The current landscape of college in high school and postsecondary transfer policies and programs is overly complicated, often results in loss of credit and does not consistently support equitable access and success. One key lever available is the expansion and standardization of credit for prior learning policies and assessments, a proven strategy for increasing completion, keeping costs down and shortening time to degree, especially for adult and military learners. Currently credit for prior learning is very localized and does not afford learners consistent and equitable opportunities to earn credit within and across institutions.

States have a clear role to play in building out a broader policy infrastructure, embedding credentials of value within the credit for prior learning system, facilitating opportunities for collaboration and statewide articulation, and elevating existing opportunities for learners. States should also consider developing and scaling credit for prior learning policies and assessment at the K-12 level, which can mitigate challenges with learner mobility and support competency-based systems.

Expand skills-based hiring practices that value competencies

To help advance a career preparation ecosystem that focuses on skills and competencies – and does not just continue to default to value degrees, which can limit the diversity of a candidate pool – employers need to develop and implement skills-based hiring practices at scale. Undervaluing non-degree programs has a tremendous cost to employers and can leave behind workers with great experience, but less traditional or no degrees.

To further empower learners, states and communities should provide each learner with a learning and employment record that captures each learner's accomplishments, aptitudes, skills and competencies. Such a tool will empower learners to better communicate about their skills and translate their experiences into competencies when seeking a job or additional education and training. In turn, human resource professionals need to ensure the technology used to screen applications includes provisions for skills-based hiring and does not have any implicit bias built in.

PRINCIPLE 5: Each Learner Can Access CTE without Borders

If we are to truly meet learners' needs across the country, we need to remove geographic barriers as a limitation to access and opportunities for learners, particularly those in rural communities. Learners are increasingly mobile and non-place based, with more learning and work happening remotely across state lines. Our policies and programs should enable, not limit, mobility and access. States must come together to develop and expand new models of collaboration, invest in cross-state, open access systems, and agree to common frameworks for defining and delivering CTE.

To accomplish this, we must:

Leverage a national framework for connecting education and the workforce

There is great value in having a shared framework that supports cross-state collaboration, provides a common language across education and industry, and enables cross-state comparisons and sharing. The work to update National Career Clusters® Framework is focused on providing structural alignment and a common language to bridge education and work and empowering each learner to explore, decide, and prepare for dynamic and evolving careers. Its development and release can provide new opportunities to break down silos within and across systems and states in the years to come, just as the current Framework has provided a consistent federal data collection structure as well as a common way for states to organize, align and promote their CTE programs and experiences.

Develop interstate compacts that support collaboration and remove barriers

States should build on existing interstate compacts efforts, which can enable the flow of learners, data, instructors, credits and credentials across state lines to better reflect the global economy in which our learners and employers live. Such compacts can allow learners to seamlessly access in-person and virtual CTE programs and work-based learning experiences in any community or institution without needing to relocate.

Through such collaborations, states can jointly develop regional programs of study, as well as instructional tools like open educational resources, to reduce redundancies and maximize capacity. By sharing data, policymakers, practitioners and learners can better understand CTE outcomes, especially when learners live and work in different states. Through reciprocity agreements, states can share instructors, technology and other key aspects of CTE delivery. States also must come together to develop cross-state frameworks that consistently translate skills and competencies into credit. These credits can then be transferable within and across schools, postsecondary institutions and states. Such interstate compacts need to be supported by clearer and more consistent data collection and requirements at the federal level, as well as collaboration among regional accreditors.

Invest in research and development to ensure virtual opportunities are quality, equitable and meaningful

In addition to policies and partnerships that support access to CTE programs and work-based learning experiences beyond a learner's community, the federal government, national organizations, states and institutions will also need to invest in research and development to build out the next-generation of technology solutions, instructional design models, open educational resources and instructor supports to ensure that virtual experiences are quality and achieve more equitable access. This is new terrain for the CTE system and one ripe for innovation, if the policies are there to support them.

Conclusion

The vision described above is bold and forward looking. It puts equity at the center and recognizes that we need a CTE system that works for each learner, wherever they are in their career journey and whatever their background. Our systems and leaders must come together to push beyond the status quo and take collective, collaborative and bold action.

This vision is not just calling for updates to our CTE, education and workforce systems. Rather, it is calling for a more *cohesive, flexible and responsive career preparation ecosystem*, with CTE at its nexus, that draws on the capacity of each existing system, leverages their greatest assets, and pushes for new models of collaboration, learner-centric design and delivery, and funding and accountability models that create the right incentives and supports.

We recognize that this is not work that can happen overnight but will require a shared commitment and shared ownership among our leaders and practitioners at the national, state and local levels, across education, workforce development, industry and philanthropy. Only together – through persistence, resilience, bravery, boldness, and commitment – we can realize the possibility and aspiration of a bold new career preparation ecosystem that provides each learner with limitless opportunity.

About *CTE Without Limitations*

CTE Without Limitations: A Shared Vision for the Future of Career Technical Education was developed with input from nearly 200 individuals, representing all stakeholders within the CTE system, through *CTE Forward: A Summit on CTE's Impact & Promise*, an event held in fall 2020. *CTE Without Limitations* was developed with the generous support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Strada Education Network.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization Recommendations
Report submitted by Meredith Hills, Senior Associate for Federal Policy

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In February 2020, Advance CTE formed the WIOA Kitchen Cabinet, comprised of 20 members across 18 states to inform the writing of the reauthorization recommendations. The cabinet included a combination of State CTE Directors and colleagues referred by State CTE Directors who work on WIOA implementation, and convened virtually in February, March, May, July, September and November. Over the course of the conversations, the WIOA Kitchen Cabinet provided insight into the greatest barriers of WIOA, missed opportunities for inclusion of CTE, successes of the legislation and a wish-list for reauthorization. Advance CTE staff used this information to inform the writing of the WIOA reauthorization recommendations and looked to the WIOA Kitchen Cabinet for feedback during the writing process.

The intent of the document is to serve as Advance CTE's member-informed focus for advocacy of the full WIOA reauthorization and related standalone bills. The goals of advancing equity and upholding quality are present in each recommendation and are the foundation of this document. Further, a commitment to the role of the state, inclusion of Career Technical Education (CTE) and alignment with the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Workforce (Perkins V) drive Advance CTE's approach to reauthorization.

Please consider the following questions as you review the draft recommendations:
1. Do these strongly advocate for the state role?
2. Do these strongly advocate for improved alignment with CTE and Perkins V?
3. Is a commitment to equity and quality reflected in this document?
4. Do these priorities cover the most pressing needs of state CTE leaders?

Board Action Required: Approve Advance CTE WIOA Policy Priorities

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Reauthorization Recommendations

As of 2020 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is up for reauthorization. WIOA was last signed into law in 2014 to support workforce development activities and fund job training programs for displaced adult workers and youth. Reauthorization will be informed by the current realities facing our nation's workforce and the urgent need to attend to equity, specifically racial equity, as we upskill and reskill millions of Americans in the post-COVID-19 economy. To attend to these priorities, reauthorization must focus on modernizing the country's workforce development system so that it equitably meets the needs of every worker; seamlessly connects to the education system, including Career Technical Education (CTE); proactively responds to the needs of the economy and leverages and aligns with other federal programs such as the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V).

Advance CTE, representing the state leadership for secondary, postsecondary and adult CTE in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories, offers the following recommendations for the reauthorization of WIOA:

Connect Education and the Workforce

Align WIOA with Perkins V: Perkins V has many ties to WIOA, including: a requirement that CTE programs are responsive to the local, regional or state labor market; inclusion of an aligned vision in both state plans; workforce partners as required stakeholders and common performance indicators. In order to further strengthen the relationship between the two laws and thus the services offered to participants, Advance CTE recommends that WIOA reciprocates by more intentionally connecting to and aligning with Perkins V and CTE. Specifically, the WIOA state plans should be constructed in a manner that is parallel to the state Perkins V plan- even if the state does not submit a combined plan. This means requiring a shared vision for preparing an education and skilled workforce; requiring a shared commitment to transparency and efficiency; requiring a prioritization of funding to be dedicated to underserved communities and populations; ensuring robust stakeholder engagement and use of participant, program and labor market information to guide state and local decisions. Further, to accomplish systems alignment, CTE should be better integrated into the governance of WIOA, with State CTE Directors as a required partner on state workforce boards and local CTE leaders being a required partner on local workforce boards.

Build cross-system collaboration throughout WIOA: To maximize the programs in states that are supported by education and workforce legislation, each title of WIOA must act as the agent for coordination across systems. For example, Title IV of WIOA amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and authorizes funding to be used for employment-related vocational rehabilitation services for those with disabilities, as well as includes these programs in the one-stop systems described above. The nature of Title IV makes it challenging to coordinate with other similar programs that are overseen by the U.S. Department of Education. In particular, there is often overlap with CTE and career readiness programs offered in the state. However, State CTE Directors are not often brought to this table.

Some states have already found success in coordinating WIOA Title II (Adult Education and Literacy) with CTE and adult education through the Integrated Basic and Skills Training (I-BEST) model. I-BEST delivers a combination of technical, academic and workplace skills typically through a statewide partnership led by a state's community and technical college system. The success of I-BEST can be used as an example for how to collaborate across systems.

Advance CTE recommends that WIOA require cross-system alignment for the federal laws implicated throughout all of WIOA and the related state programs. This should include, but is not limited to, common data collection and reporting, cross-system planning and regular consultation.

Align Federal Policy to the 21st Century Workforce

Coordinate federal funding for programs and worker supports: WIOA funding must be coordinated with the other federal funding streams that have aligned or parallel purposes in order to best serve workers, especially those most vulnerable, through cohesive worker supports and programs. State CTE leaders shared that an inability to coordinate or braid funding sources can lead to challenges in most effectively using WIOA money. Advance CTE recommends a requirement in the state plan for how WIOA programs will be aligned with, and not duplicative of, related programs funded by other federal laws. Further, subsequent reporting should require ongoing updates of programmatic alignment to ensure efficacy of implementation.

Update the infrastructure requirements: WIOA supports a one-stop system of workforce development services. 12 federal programs, including postsecondary CTE programs supported by Perkins V, are required to be partners of this one-stop system. As the legislation currently stands, the implication of this required partnership is for each of the 12 partner programs to contribute to infrastructure costs of the one-stops. WIOA statute dictates that these partnerships must exist, and the parameters are outlined in guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor. State CTE leaders have consistently reported that the current structure does not actually support collaboration, and in fact often results in the bare minimum of just sharing of funding, not the aspired systems alignment.

Advance CTE recommends a complete revision of the infrastructure language and related guidance, instead recommending a set-aside funding stream for infrastructure costs. This allows partners to focus efforts on aligning programs and services rather than negotiating cost sharing agreements. Additionally, the statute should more directly invest in and acknowledge the digital infrastructure – virtualization of one-stop services, online program delivery, etc. – that has grown due to natural technologic progression and the investments made to continue to deliver services during the pandemic.

Align basic skills with current workplace needs: The definition of basic skills deficient in current legislation is limited to English reading, writing and computing skills. Advance CTE recommends that this definition be expanded to reflect the skills that are necessary to be

successful in the 21st century workforce, including but not limited to: digital literacy; interpersonal communication; time management; critical thinking; career navigation; cultural competency and financial literacy.

Support Successful Outcomes for In-and Out-of School Youth

States determine the split of funds for in school youth and out of school youth: Currently, WIOA requires that 25% of funds are allocated for in school youth and 75% for out of school youth. This sometimes has the unintended consequence of incentivizing dropping out, since at times only out-of-school youth qualify for a particular program. Rather than this split being dictated at the federal level, Advance CTE believes states are best positioned to determine what is the right allocation between in-school and out-of-school. States have other assets and resources that they bring to the table to support these populations and those assets and resources vary significantly from state to state. In order to ensure that states are adequately addressing both in and out of school youth, Advance CTE recommends that this formula should be determined by each state, with the ability to be re-examined on an annual basis.

Improve Data and Accountability

Expand data system capacity, transparency and utilization: The state data infrastructure for predicting the labor market needs to be expanded so that state and local workforce systems can proactively pivot in response to rapidly changing conditions. This is also essential so that workers can have access to better and more transparent, and real-time, information on career opportunities, earnings, and how decisions will interact with access to support services (e.g. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Child Care Development Fund Subsidies, etc.). Advance CTE recommends an investment to modernize the publicly funded labor market information services and offices. In order for the education and workforce systems to be responsive to state, regional and local labor market demand, there must be an investment in real-time labor market information systems, that aggregate, collaborate with and integrate information and data from other federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education and agencies that provide benefits such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services into a transparent, accessible and forward looking talent and labor market information system.

Expand the scope of data collection: Data collection and reporting is pivotal to identifying inequities in access, delivery and implementation of WIOA programs. To that end, Advance CTE recommends that a model similar to the Perkins V comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) be included in WIOA. Requiring data-driven decision making that labor market demand, participant demographics and outcomes and program outcomes will hold programs accountable to close opportunity gaps and ensure continuous improvement. Further, all collected data should be disaggregated to, at a minimum, reflect gender, race, ethnicity, special population status and age. And any reporting of gender data should offer, at minimum, a "prefer not to disclose" option so that learners who identify outside of the exclusively male and female categories can be represented. Disaggregated short- and long-term program-level outcomes data for learners is critical to continuous improvement.

Adopt common performance metrics and terminology: There are often shared goals between programs that are supported by federal legislation. In these cases, such programs should be coordinated to efficiently use resources, reduce duplication and better serve those utilizing these programs. Advance CTE recommends using common performance metrics across these programs, at a minimum aligning with the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) and the Higher Education Act (HEA), as well as the adoption of related common terminology and measurement methods. This includes but is not limited to credential attainment, postsecondary attainment and employment status. Alignment of performance indicators should occur as makes sense, and with programs that have shared or comparable purposes.

Elevate Career Pathways

Reimagine career pathways: Well-designed high-quality career pathways help learners and workers navigate their acquisition of skills, competencies, work-based experiences and credentials of value. Most career pathways have been constructed linearly, designed to be vertically "stackable." This presumes talent pipelines and transference of skills within an industry sector. The economy our country is facing and the future of work require reconsideration of entire industry sectors. Of note, area technical centers are often left out of workforce training and while some states include them as an eligible training provider, many do not. With nearly 1,400 of them, area technical centers are a vital component of the delivery of skilled training and must be a recognized component of the WIOA delivery system.

Advance CTE recommends that WIOA supports innovation in the design and delivery of career pathway to help workers upskill, reskill or transfer and enhance skills in existing or new industries that offer opportunities and pathways to self-sufficiency. One strategy to accomplish this is by intentionally weaving social services supports with education and workforce development training, including adult basic education, and more systemically recognize learning and competency that is earned through various educational and workplace settings.

Prioritize high-wage, high-skill or in-demand occupations based on real-time labor market data: Any workforce or education program should prepare participants for a job that is part of a career pathway and offers self-sufficiency. In order to achieve this, WIOA must be responsive to high-wage, high-skill or in-demand occupations- determined and updated in real-time according to state, regional and local labor market information. Therefore, Advance CTE recommends that all WIOA funded programs be organized into and delivered through career pathways, leading to a career in in-demand fields and ensure workers achieve self-sufficiency.