

Reflect, Transform, Lead: A New Vision for Career Technical Education

Brought to you by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium

In the spring of 2010, Career Technical Education (CTE) leaders, advocates and partners committed to *Reflect, Transform, Lead: A New Vision for Career Technical Education*, which laid out a progressive agenda to ensure that CTE prepares students of all ages to succeed in education and careers. These leaders sought to position CTE as part of a strategy that enables the United States to flourish in a dynamic and increasingly-competitive global economy.

The CTE vision is defined by five guiding, interconnected principles. Collectively, they serve as guideposts for the CTE community to set priorities and make decisions that affect CTE programs and policies. Ultimately, the vision was designed to chart a new course for CTE and the nation in the 21st century. The five principles are as follows:

- **CTE is critical to ensuring that the United States leads in global competitiveness.**
- **CTE actively partners with employers to design and provide high-quality, dynamic programs.**
- **CTE prepares students to succeed in further education and careers.**
- **CTE is delivered through comprehensive programs of study aligned to The National Career Clusters™ Framework.**
- **CTE is a results-driven system that demonstrates a positive return on investment.**

To mark progress and ensure success in achieving the vision, each of the five principles includes a set of corresponding action steps, committed to by the states and NASDCTEc. In this report, we identify the specific initiatives that were launched to put these action steps in motion. Here, NASDCTEc reflects upon and celebrates the progress made to date and renews our commitment to continuing the pursuit of achieving our vision.

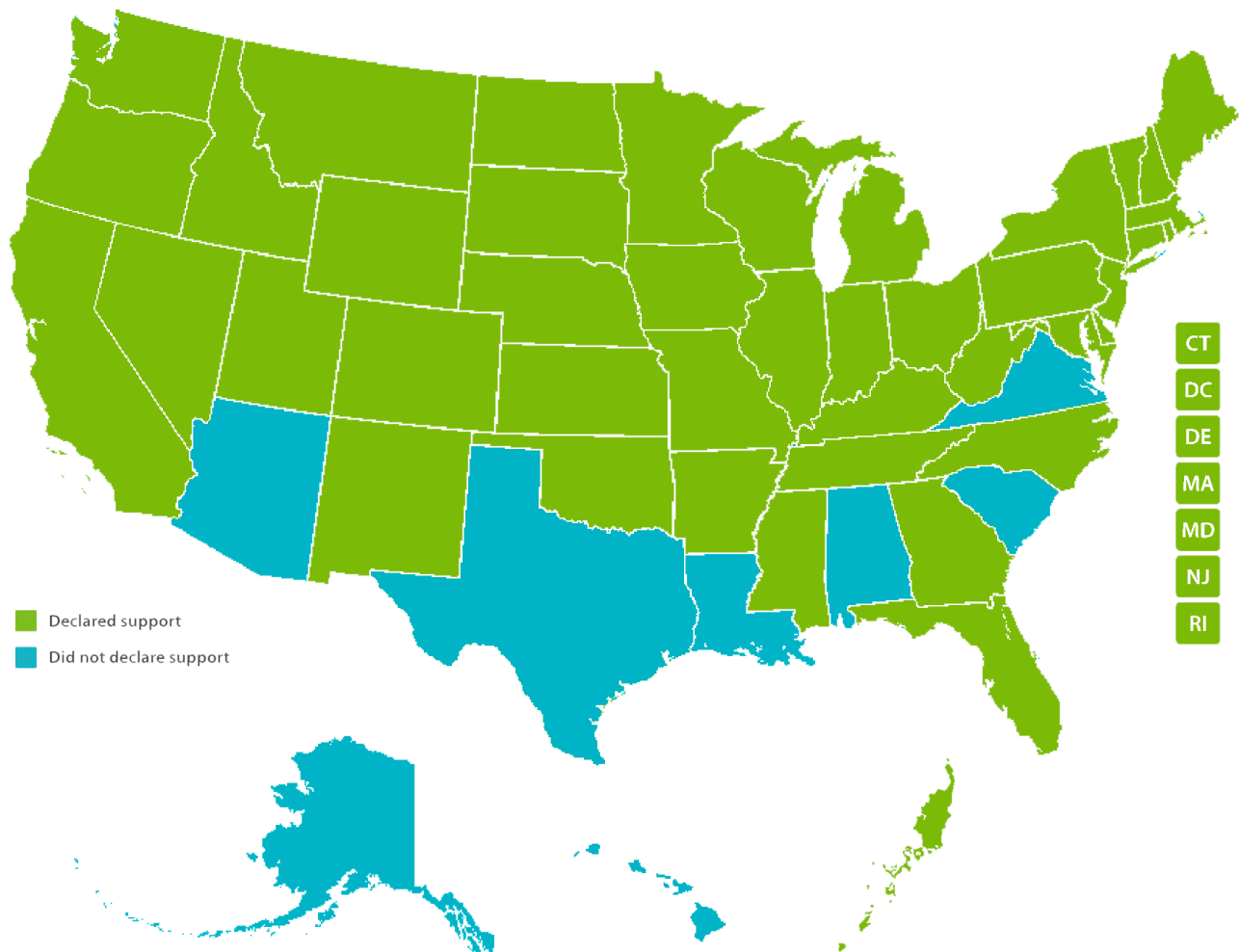


CTE is critical to ensuring that the United States leads in global competitiveness.

CTE has long played a significant role in educating and training our students to succeed in the workforce and help drive the U.S. economy. As the world and economy has evolved, so have many CTE programs. Global competition is shaping the way nations are preparing their workforce. We believe CTE can meet current and anticipate future demands of this dynamic economy by being flexible and quick to respond to employer needs.

NASDCTEc Accomplishments

- NASDCTEc, with voluntary involvement of 42 states, District of Columbia and Palau, developed the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC), a set of program-level standards for CTE programs across the nation. The CCTC illustrates CTE leaders' ambition to ensure consistency in CTE programs and equal access to quality education for all students.
- NASDCTEc has been a leader in advocating for the interests of CTE, ensuring that federal policies and laws reflect our vision. NASDCTEc successfully staved off efforts to allow Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) funds to be consolidated with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Further, NASDCTEc is at the table with the Administration and leaders in Congress to help guide the anticipated Perkins reauthorization bill.
- CTE: Learning that works for America™ has provided the CTE community with a megaphone at a time in our nation's history when understanding the value of CTE and its role in educating and training our workforce has perhaps never been more important. The campaign has energized the CTE community and provided them with tools to tell the great stories about CTE across the nation. Forty-five states officially signed on to the campaign.



CTE actively partners with employers to design and provide high-quality, dynamic programs.

Among CTE's most essential partners are employers, including representatives from business, industry and labor unions. It is only fitting that employers play a significant role in designing and improving the programs in which their future employees will be trained. CTE's comprehensive approach to include employers in program development is what sets us apart from traditional education programs.

NASDCTEc Accomplishments

- NASDCTEc has consistently partnered with business and industry to leverage their voice in advocacy and gain valuable insight to inform the development of CTE programs. Business and industry contributed a valuable perspective to the development of the CCTC, standards that prepare students for the world of work, and they have vocalized their support for CTE through platforms such as the Friends of CTE blog. NASDCTEc partners with industry on multiple initiatives and serve on the advisory committees for CompTia's Global IT Workforce Initiative and the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council.
- NASDCTEc has joined with ACTE in the Industry Workforce Needs Council, which is committed to engaging business and industry in supporting and redefining the image of CTE, and increasing the number of ready-skilled workers. This collaborative initiative aligns to NASDCTEc's current and future projects, including the CTE: Learning that works for America® campaign, which aims to leverage the voice and influence of business and industry partners.

CTE prepares students to succeed in further education and careers.

We believe that the false dichotomy of preparation for work or college is no longer relevant. All workers must be lifelong learners who continue to cultivate and grow their knowledge and skills through further education, which includes an industry credential, apprenticeship or postsecondary degree or credential.

NASDCTEc Accomplishments

- NASDCTEc is a leader in breaking down silos among programs and systems by partnering with CTE and non-CTE groups alike. We have worked with groups such as Achieve, a Washington, DC-based education organization, to bring forth instructional task workshops that integrate the Common Core State Standards and CTE, workshop protocol resources and alignment studies. Also, we have made progress on policy engagement related to career readiness.
- NASDCTEc continues to spearhead efforts on Capitol Hill to ensure that federal policy and key education legislation, like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Perkins, reflects the priority of attaining both career and college experience. NASDCTEc's federal policy priorities include of the use of individual learning plans.



- NASDCTEc convened and facilitated the Career Readiness Partner Council. The Council unites leaders from national education and workforce organizations with the goal of bringing clarity and focus to what it means to be career ready and helping to inform policy and practice in states and communities.
- The Career Cluster™ Knowledge and Skills Statements, a comprehensive collection of industry-validated expectations that have evolved over a decade, were used as the foundation for the development of the CCTC. The CCTC sets a clear, high standard for excellence in CTE programs.
- The Council of Chief State School Officers is working with NASDCTEc to determine the most effective approach to integration and assessment of the CCTC by engaging with the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards network. The partnership provides access to resources and expertise to inform and support the exploration and integration of CTE, elevating the potential impact of the CCTC across states.
- NASDCTEc developed the Green/Sustainability Knowledge and Skills Statements that support an emerging element of career and education opportunities. The new statements are another example of the organization's endeavors to ensure that CTE programs evolve for lifelong learners who must meet the standards of the ever-changing economy.



CTE is delivered through comprehensive programs of study aligned to the National Career Clusters™ Framework.

Students should be empowered to prepare for a lifetime of career and educational choices. The Career Clusters™ Framework positions students to have a comprehensive, seamless educational experience by ensuring that standards, curriculum and assessments are aligned and working together to help them down a path with clear transitions and a range of options.

NASDCTEc Accomplishments

- Annually, NASDCTEc convenes educators, employers, business, industry and government at the Career Clusters™ Institute, a forum to share best practices of the National Career Clusters™ Framework. Stakeholders learn about the most up-to-date strategies and data on effective CTE programs and are empowered to implement quality programs in their states and districts.
- NASDCTEc's policy recommendations for Perkins and ESEA make clear that programs of study are critical to aligning academic and technical content, and are an ideal delivery model for education. Further, Perkins funding should only be allocated to comprehensive programs of study that meet specific criteria and match a standard of quality.

- NASDCTEc partnered with the Center for Occupational Research and Development to bring forth the five vision principles and integrate the 10 components of the programs of study design framework through a published book entitled, *"The Career Pathway Effect: Linking Education and Economic Prosperity."*
- NASDCTEc continues to update products and resources related to the implementation of Career Clusters™ and Rigorous Programs of Study (RPOS) to serve the CTE community. Further, the organization has served as a technical assistance provider through the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE).
- NASDCTEc worked with the NRCCTE to update crosswalk tables and protocol for the Career Clusters™ and the SOC, ONET, and CIP codes.
- NASDCTEc is partnering with ACTE to update the National Center for Education Statistics School Codes for the Exchange of Data to reflect the Career Clusters™ Framework and provide an accurate reflection of the courses and sequences provided in CTE throughout the country.
- NASDCTEc co-authored *Career Clusters: Forecasting Demand for High School through College Jobs 2008-2018* with colleagues from Georgetown's Center on Education and the Workforce and the NRCCTE. The report analyzes how labor market needs relate to the 16 Career Clusters™ and discusses implications for CTE and shines a light on its potential value.

CTE is a results-driven system that demonstrates a positive return on investment.

We are committed to accountability and to using data to drive decisions and ensure programs are aligned to our nation's educational and economic needs. We cannot be a system that operates on emotion or "gut instinct," we must be prepared to demonstrate what we know is true -- quality CTE programs have the potential to make a significant impact on students' lives.

NASDCTEc Accomplishments

- Across the nation, CTE is demonstrating its value. NASDCTEc has developed both national and state-specific advocacy resources that boast the achievements of CTE in graduating students, transitioning them to postsecondary and preparing them with skills for their future. Projects such as the CTE Success Map, CTE State Snapshots and CTE Fact Sheets include state and national data to articulate the positive return on investment of CTE.
- Effective messaging in the CTE: Learning that works for America® campaign includes data that not only communicates but also illustrates the positive impact of CTE. Talking points, videos and publications all highlight data points that position CTE as a solution to our educational and economic needs.
- NASDCTEc has been engaged with Congress to inject CTE in the national conversation regarding data. Our policy recommendations promote data systems that are longitudinal and comparable across states and federal programs, and include common measures and definitions in Perkins, ESEA and WIA.



- *Using Return on Investment and Other Related Tools: Guidelines for Measuring Career and Technical Education Internal Efficiency and External Effectiveness* was developed by the NRCCTE after the group received numerous requests from the field about how to conduct ROI studies. NASDCTEc served as an advisor in the development of the tools to showcase the positive impact of CTE.
- NASDCTEc took the lead as a founding member of the Workforce Data Quality Campaign to help promote the creation and use of a comprehensive data system across the states. The campaign is an effort to develop better education and workforce data systems that measure effectiveness across our workforce development, adult education and postsecondary programs.
- NASDCTEc is engaged in the State Perkins Accountability Congress and Design Team, which supports the U.S. Department of Education's goal to remake the Perkins accountability system. CTE State Directors are providing their expertise and insight on how to best assess student and program outcomes.

Making the Difference

Today, we collectively renew our commitment to this vision. NASDCTEc and the CTE community must recall the level of energy and enthusiasm garnered when crafting and committing to our new vision. Not only does the momentum of our work need to continue, but it is also critical that we build on that energy, using the lessons that we have learned and the perspective and knowledge we continue to gain.

Now, more than ever, our nation, our employers and our students need CTE. To achieve the vision's aspirations, NASDCTEc and its members must be diligent to call attention to the goals of the vision, to work to build partnerships, smash silos and to lead the charge in setting high expectations for CTE. We must continue to make persistent progress toward accomplishing the work defined in the action steps. It will take all of us, working together, to realize this vision. Together, we must lead change, transform expectations and make the difference.

Reflect, Transform and Lead: A New Vision for Career Technical Education

In March 2010, we, the members of the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, unveil a new vision that will guide the future of career technical education (CTE). Our goal is to advance CTE as an innovative education system that prepares individuals to succeed in education and their careers so that the United States flourishes in the dynamic, global economy.

Our vision's core principles are:

- **CTE is critical to ensuring that the United States leads in global competitiveness.**
- **CTE actively partners with employers to design and provide high-quality, dynamic programs.**
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We will work together to transform our education and workforce system into one that rewards innovation, supports different learning styles, equally values different interests and talents, adapts and responds to technology and workplace needs, and prepares all students for career success through multiple pathways. This is our vision for the future of CTE.

With our signatures, we pledge our support to this vision and commit to provide the leadership necessary to ensure its success,

The National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) was established in 1920 to represent the state and territory heads of secondary, postsecondary and adult career technical education (CTE) across the nation. NASDCTEc, through leadership, advocacy and partnerships, aims to support an innovative CTE system that prepares individuals to succeed in education and their careers, and poises the United States to flourish in a global, dynamic economy.