

## Advance CTE/Center to Advance CTE Board Meeting Agenda

**November 17, 2020**

3 – 3:02 p.m.	Welcome	Sarah Heath <i>Page 1</i>
3:02 – 3:03 p.m.	October 21, 2020 minutes *	Laura Scheibe <i>Pages 2-4</i>
3:03 – 3:05 p.m.	Consent agenda *	Sarah Heath <i>Pages 5-53</i>
3:05 – 3:08 p.m.	Development update	Kate Kreamer <i>Pages 54-59</i>
3:08 – 3:23 p.m.	Strategic plan update	Kate Kreamer and Austin Estes <i>Pages 60-62</i>
3:23 – 4 p.m.	Vision working session	Kate Kreamer

\* Denotes items that require a Board vote

**Joint Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board of Directors' Meeting  
MINUTES**

October 21, 2020

Zoom call

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

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

**Welcome:** Heath called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM, welcoming everyone to the Joint Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE Board Meeting.

Heath asked for approval of minutes from September 23, 2020.

**MOTION: To approve Advance CTE and The Center to Advance CTE minutes from September 23, 2020, as presented.  
Raymond; Howard.  
MOTION APPROVED.**

**Finance Manual Update:** Haynes presented the Finance Manual, and explained that the proposed changes are to formalize the pivots that have been made due to coronavirus, recognize the larger role Haynes has undertaken, as well as account for changes due to the increased staff size. Haynes outlined the major changes to the finance manual, which include:

1. Waiving the need for approval by the Secretary/Treasurer for bills over \$10,000 that cover operational expenses such as payroll, benefits and rent;
2. Requiring only the Board President and Secretary/Treasurer to have signature authority on the bank and investment accounts;
3. Changing all references of Bookkeeper to Finance Manager;

Heath asked for approval of the updated Finance Manual.

**MOTION: To approve the updated Finance Manual, as presented.  
Scheibe; Longhurst.  
MOTION APPROVED.**

**Career Clusters Next Steps:** Wills presented on the next steps for the National Career Clusters® Framework refresh. She began by walking through the project timeline for the next two years, which runs from now through September 2022. The timeline is broken out into five phases, which are:

- **Now through March 2021: Community and Stakeholder Engagement**  
This phase of work will include extensive outreach to all stakeholders. Outreach will encompass everyone from counselors to employers, researchers, national organizations,

as well as others. During the outreach, the renewed purpose statement will be shared and they will also be given an update on work completed so far and highlights of what is to come. Information on the innovation portal will also be shared.

- **Now through May 2021: Innovation Portal**

This work is running concurrently with the stakeholder engagement phase, with the launch of the innovation portal planned for May 2021. The purpose of the portal is to solicit submissions of ideas for what a renewed Framework will look like. This will be an online home for information on the project, including introductory text, video, instructions on developing and submitting a pitch, and guidance on what makes a good pitch. The launch is deliberately timed after the new Vision is released.

- **June 2021 through August 2021: Pitch Review and Prototype Development**

The first step of this phase will be to select 20-24 pitches that stand out. Those pitches will then be presented to an Advisory Group or Kitchen Cabinet. The pitches will then be narrowed down to the strongest 1-2 pitches and developed into prototypes.

- **September 2021: Prototype approval**

In September 2021, the prototype will be presented to the Boards for approval. In October 2021, the process to turn the prototype into full Framework will begin.

- **October 2021 through September 2022: Turn Prototype into Full Framework**

After the prototype is approved by the Boards, the process to turn the prototype into a full Framework will begin and is expected to take a year to develop.

After walking through the timeline for the next two years, Wills walked through the timeline for the following two years which will run from September 2022 through July 2024. She explained that in September 2022 the full Framework will be built. The Framework will be presented to the Boards in October 2022. Between October 2022 and January 2023, the project team will develop communications, tools and resources to support the use of the new Framework. The Framework is planned to be launched in February 2023, and technical assistance will be delivered to states from February 2023 through October 2023 to support adoption and implementation. The full implementation of the modernized Framework will begin in July 2024.

Wills asked for questions from the Board and they voiced concerns that the timeline seems too long and drawn out. Due to the long timeline they also wanted to ensure it will be flexible enough that it won't change as we move forward. A number of Board members expressed interest in having the Framework completed before they begin their next four-year Perkins V plan development. There was general consensus that a February 2023 launch is too late for their planning purposes and that a Fall 2022 launch would be more ideal.

Green stated that The Framework will likely be very different from the current Framework based on the renewed purpose statement. The Framework will not prescribe pathways like the original Framework, but will still have value in structure of data, accountability and reporting.

The Board asked if Wills is concerned about not getting enough pitches. Wills explained that the quality of pitches is more important than quantity. Questions were also raised about whether there should be restrictions on who can submit pitches. Harris argued that we should not limit innovation and it is easier to eliminate vendors or other inappropriate pitches on the back end.

Wills asked t who should be part of the stakeholder engagement process. Board responses included HR/Employer perspectives, data teams, and organizations like Consumer Science.

Wills posed a final question to the Board about who should review the pitches. The Board suggested having diverse voices, student and parent voices, as well as educators and workforce representatives.

**Other Items/Next Steps:** Next Advance CTE Board of Directors Meeting is November 17, 2020 via Zoom. The Advance CTE Board will meet from 2-3 p.m. ET, the Joint Board will meet from 3-4 p.m. ET, and The Center to Advance CTE Board will meet from 4-5 p.m. ET.

**Heath adjourned the meeting at 4 p.m. ET.**



**Association for Career and Technical Education**  
**Advance CTE Board Report**  
**October 26, 2020**

This report highlights activities that have taken place since April. In addition to the following, ACTE is pleased with our continuing partnership with Advance CTE including the recent CTE Forward meeting, release of *Broadening the Path, Design Principles for Middle Grades CTE*, and our close working relationship on federal policy matters including the contributions related to Perkins V work.

**Virtual VISION** – ACTE is excited that this year’s [CareerTech VISION](#) has transitioned to a virtual environment! The event, to be held Nov. 30 – Dec. 4) promises the same quality programming including 300+ online concurrent sessions in Live, SimuLive and On-demand formats. All content will remain available to registrants for one year. We are pleased to be partnering with Advance CTE to host the **State Leaders Meeting**, our annual convening of State ACTE Executive Directors and State CTE Directors from 3:00-4:00 p.m. ET on Thursday, November 19. This meeting has been scheduled so that it does not conflict with the Virtual VISION meeting. Please RSVP if you have not already!

**CTE Learn** – The number of users accessing the [CTE Learn](#) online learning network has expanded exponentially since April with 8,000+ new users having taken at least one of the 150 self-paced courses along with additional resources. ACTE has partnered with 22 States on this work. As examples, Georgia and Idaho are implementing the program to provide professional development to all teachers statewide, Kentucky is providing access through its Community and Technical College System for new teachers transitioning from industry and New York is developing a NY-centric set of resources and courses. We are actively seeking content specialists as we expand our course offerings. Please contact us if you are interested.

**Virtual Conference Planning Guide** – ACTE released this [guide](#) in May to support State ACTE and other organizations in planning their events.. ACTE has produced, or provided technical support, for eight virtual conferences since April. Several can be found in the virtual conferences [section](#) of CTE Learn.

**Work-based Learning Section and Conference** – A newly formed Work-based Learning [Section](#) for professionals has been established and is quickly growing. In April, ACTE produced its first National Work-based Learning Conference in unison with Iowa’s Work-based Learning Conference in May. The conference drew 500+ engaged attendees.

**COVID-19 Planning Guide** – In June, ACTE produced a 60+ page [guide](#), “High-Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19-Impacted School Year,” organized around ACTE’s High Quality CTE Program of Student elements. The guide was developed to support CTE administrators and other professionals in the field related to in-person, remote and blended learning options. A [webinar series](#) aligned with each element was also released during the summer.

**Skills to Succeed** – ACTE has partnered with Accenture to offer their [Skills to Succeed Academy](#), online resources focused on high-quality career planning and job exploration. The partnership is providing a \$1,000 incentive for the first 20 institutions that have 500 or more students complete a minimum of one module. Please promote or contact us for more info.

**CTE Distance Learning Resources** – In addition to [resources](#) compiled just following the COVID-19 outbreak, ACTE is pleased to be partnering with the California Department of Education’s Career & College Transitions Division to support the CTE Teaching and Learning monthly [newsletter](#) launched in April. This compilation of resources, originally a weekly publication, continues to highlight some of the best sector-specific resources vetted by the Career & College Transitions Division.

**Inclusion, Access, Equity and Diversity (IAED) Mentorship Program/work**– ACTE has greatly increased its offerings related to this topic. Our new [IAED Mentorship Program](#) was announced in August and Nov. 1 marks the deadline for mentee applications. A new column launched in our *Techniques* magazine and related Pages blog, and we have increased programming for Virtual VISION and other events.

**Zoom Backgrounds** – In June, ACTE developed a series of CTE-themed [Zoom Backgrounds](#) (for Zoom and other platforms) to promote CTE as the number of distance learning communications and meetings have exploded.

**ACTE’s Postsecondary Leadership Success Program sponsored by the ECMC Foundation** – The second cohort of this [fellowship](#) continued programming online through the spring and summer even though in-person events had to be postponed.

**Harbor Freight Tools for Schools** – ACTE continues to support Harbor Freight Tools for Schools’ [Prize for Teaching Excellence](#) by coordinating judging of the first round of review of applicants. The prize includes a significant monetary award (\$100,000 this year!) for each national winner/school and is helping to not only recognize exemplary teachers but also improve the image around skilled trades.

**Horatio Alger CTE Scholarships** – ACTE is a Strategic Partner of the Horatio Alger Association. Remember to promote the [Career & Technical Scholarship](#) opportunity to students. There are 1,020 scholarships available at \$2,500 each and the application deadline for closes on November 16.

# Communications Strategy Update – October 2020

## Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)

### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

Advance CTE has supported a number of efforts related to state and federal policy, especially as it relates to COVID-19 (coronavirus) and economic recovery. In light of the coronavirus, staff adopted four topic areas to focus their research pertaining to CTE policy and practice: work-based learning, credentials, distance learning and equity. Staff developed a robust communications plan to disseminate information and learning around these topics to members. Staff delivered a number of [webinars](#), [Lunch and Learns](#) and held regional calls to discuss key issue areas including Perkins V implementation, CTE as being vital to the economic recovery and more.

Advance CTE has adopted a new digital media strategy that aims to position Advance CTE as the go-to organization for our members, policymakers, the media and other key stakeholders seeking expertise, accurate information and timely resources related to CTE. This strategy began implementation in August 2020 and includes a new CTEWorks Newsletter highlighting CTE state policies and best practices released to all 8,000 of Advance CTE's subscribers, a CTEin3 video series, which highlights State CTE Directors and their accomplishments, a specific strategy around driving traffic to the Learning that Works Resource Center, and other activities.

### **2. Empower members through professional learning**

Advance CTE has executed a robust professional development and communications plan to assist states in navigating CTE during coronavirus. The cancellation of the Spring Meeting offered staff the opportunity to develop and execute a three-pronged professional development strategy including regional calls, topic-based lunch and learns and a summer learning series. See the Membership Engagement and Professional Learning Strategy Update for more information related to that work.

Advance CTE released the [\*State of Career Technical Education: An Analysis of States' Perkins V Priorities\*](#), which is the only comprehensive analysis of Perkins V plans and highlights many state best practices. Additionally, Advance CTE has launched updates [state pages](#) on the [careertech.org](#) website as well as a comparison tool, allowing states and stakeholders to understand how their state may have similarities or differences in Perkins V decisions.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Advance CTE promoted CTE through various platforms, with an increased focus on digital media as mentioned given the lack of in-person meetings over the past seven months.

Staff developed a coronavirus communications plan to better communicate about resources, emerging best practices, solutions and opportunities in CTE during the pandemic. Specifically, Advance CTE:

- Launched a [blog series](#) to communicate about CTE during coronavirus;
- Developed and published an [op-ed](#) to make the case as to why an investment in CTE is critical to the nation's recovery;
- Published a [video](#) positioning CTE as a solutions for learners needing to upskill and reskill, as well as employers needing qualified talent;
- Collected and distributed quality resources to support states and locals in delivering CTE on a new page dedicated to coronavirus on the Advance CTE [website](#);
- Published [COVID-19's Impact on CTE: Defining the Challenge and Opportunity](#);
- Published [Prioritizing CTE Through and Beyond COVID-19](#); and
- Developed a [real-time tool](#) to track and analyze school reopening plans.

Advance CTE is featuring a number of state achievements related to Perkins V state planning through short interviews with State CTE Directors through the CTEin3 video series, a blog series and an op-ed, all planned for November releases.

#### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE continued to leverage partners to help promote resources, collaborate on projects and initiatives and broaden our reach and connections to key stakeholders. Staff has coordinated with partners related to major grant activities to ensure promotion of high-quality CTE and Advance CTE's grant activities including through the JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s New Skills ready network, which was [publicly announced](#) with a new brand in October. We also officially joined the Steering Committee of the College in High School Alliance, announced through a [press release](#), and engaged many of our partners to help promote the new State of CTE report on Perkins V, which a number did via social media and newsletters.

Finally, we also invited partners from the Aspen Institute to present on a webinar this summer on how to attract and recruit diverse students at the postsecondary level, which was very well attended and met with ECMC and Harbor Freights to learn about how we can connect our communications research with their campaigns.

#### **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

Staff developed and is now implementing a website SOP to ensure continual updates and refreshes of the [careertech.org](#) website. Additionally, staff is in the process of implementing the new digital media strategy. Staff also updated the style guide to ensure we are using more inclusive language, in support of our broader equity priorities.



### **Major Accomplishments (April – October 2020)**

- Implemented a communications and professional development plan in light of the Spring Meeting cancellation to best support states as they navigate the coronavirus.
- Developed and implemented a digital media strategy.
- Developed a short video positioning CTE as vital to the economic recovery with accompanying assets.
- Launched a study with a research firm on how to best communicate with families about CTE – specifically those who are Black and Latinx. The firm conducted a series of focus groups and the national survey of about 2,000 learners and guardians is in the field currently.
- Hired a Senior Associate, Communications and State Engagement.
- Developed and launched a new brand for New Skills ready network.
- Created a series of videos highlighting major funders of the [CTE Forward Summit](#).
- Created a series of videos highlighting innovative state CTE plans as part of the State of Career Technical Education report release.

### **Update on Identified Priorities (April – October 2020)**

- **Continue to support all states and members throughout the coronavirus crisis:** Staff successfully supported members through a series of activities detailed in the Member Engagement and Professional Learning strategy update.
- **Plan and launch the third Siemens Foundation grant:**
  - Research: This work was delayed a few months due to COVID-19. However, staff hired a research firm and conducted virtual focus groups over the summer. From the focus groups findings, the firm developed and released a national survey that is currently in the field. The results will be finalized in January 2021. Additionally, the firm is in the process of developing a short survey of 200 business leaders to understand their perceptions of CTE.
  - Career Advising Workshop: Advance CTE did not update the workshop, *Empowering Students to Pursue their Career Goals* due to COVID-19. This will be a priority over the next six months, as staff updates the workshop to be able to be delivered virtually.
  - State Grants: Advance CTE will launch a new RFP for state grantees to pilot communications and recruitment activities in Spring 2021, including an innovation fund for recruiting marginalized populations of learners.
- **Hiring:** Staff successfully hired a Senior Associate, Communications and State Engagement in October.

### **Priorities for Next Six Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Market the new webinar series (“For Each State, For Each Learner”) for members and the general public.
- Market the virtual Advance CTE Spring Meeting to reach sponsorship and registration goals.
- Release the findings from focus groups and a national survey of families, with a focus on marginalized populations, as well as a survey of business leaders to support states in their communications and recruitment efforts.
- Refresh the career advising workshop and update it to be able to be delivered virtually.
- Oversee a marketing and dissemination plan for the new vision to be released in March 2021.
- Launch a microsite detailing findings from Advance CTE’s research on Area Technical Centers in January 2021.
- Launch a microsite featuring the new data quality policy benchmark tool in February 2021.
- Market and disseminate a number of Advance CTE reports, tools and guides being released over the coming months on key topics such as data visualization, work-based learning and our 2020 year in review.
- Continue to position CTE as vital to an equitable economic recovery.

### **Relevant Data:**

- New Twitter followers: +458
- Twitter profile views: 6,909
- New Facebook followers: +162
- Website visitors: 131,879
- Website sessions: 202,067
- Website pageviews: 653,304

Website pageviews related to new and updated resources and promoted sections of the website:

Webpage	Page views from April – October 2020
Resource Center	6,516
Working with Policymakers (i.e., economic recovery resources)	872
COVID-19 State Resources	4,501
CTE Forward Summit	531
Members-Only portal	2,104
<i>New Skills for Youth Innovation Site: Germany</i>	107
<i>New Skills for Youth Innovation Site: Greater Washington Area</i>	119
<i>Making Good on the Promise Series</i>	689
<i>Broadening the Path: Design Principles for Middle Grades CTE</i>	2,091
Webinars	2,494
CTEWorks Newsletter	118

# **CTE Data Quality Strategy Update – October 2020**

## **Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)**

### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

During this time period, Advance CTE coordinated three separate workgroups focused to varying degrees on CTE data quality. These include the CTE Data Quality Workgroup (funded by JPMorgan Chase & Co. and supporting the New Skills ready network and the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative), the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) Youth Apprenticeship Data Quality Workgroup (funded through the PAYA partnership), and the CTE Data Reporting and Visualization Workgroup (funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation).

Collectively, Advance CTE facilitated 10 workgroup meetings between April and October, resulting in the development of several resources. In November, Advance CTE will publish a memo summarizing the PAYA workgroup discussions as well as a pair of resources developed through the CTE Data Reporting & Visualization workgroup to support the reporting and communication of CTE data. Through the CTE Data Quality Workgroup, Advance CTE developed a comprehensive policy benchmark tool for improving career readiness data quality, which is currently undergoing state pilots and is scheduled for release in February 2021. At the same time, Advance CTE is preparing a suite of resources to support the release of the policy benchmark tool, including a series of six case studies, a resource repository of state- and partner-developed artifacts and a CTE metrics framework.

Separately, Advance CTE launched the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative (PDI), a multi-year initiative funded by the ECMC Foundation to build state capacity and improve postsecondary CTE data quality. After coordinating a nationwide competition in which 10 states applied, Advance CTE ultimately selected five states to participate in the initiative. Alabama, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida and Oregon will each receive \$10,000 in 2020 to support a three-month needs assessment and action planning process. In December, they will submit proposed action plans and budgets to Advance CTE and will begin implementation in early 2021. The full grant amount will total \$70,000 per state over the course of the initiative.

The organization is also working to build state capacity for equity data analysis through an opportunity gap analysis workshop. The objective of the workshop is to examine disparities in enrollment across subgroups and special populations and conduct a root cause analysis in order to identify and adopt evidence-based strategies. Advance CTE has now piloted the workshop in three states — New Jersey, Minnesota and Florida — and is developing a strategy to disseminate the workshop and resources more broadly.

### **2. Empower members through professional learning**

Professional learning opportunities have been limited during this period as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the organization has hosted multiple lunch and learn calls and webinars with state leaders, topics for these calls have not focused explicitly on CTE data quality. In the meantime, Advance CTE staff have been active participants in the ongoing Data

Quality Initiative webinar series hosted by RTI and the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and has offered multiple peer engagement and learning opportunities through the shared solutions workgroups.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Earlier this spring, Advance CTE concluded its blog series on CTE research partnerships with the Institute for Education Sciences (IES). The final post included information about IES-funded research opportunities. While it is unclear how many states have applied for research grants as a result of the blog series, Advance CTE and IES did set up an informational call with one state.

Otherwise, promotional efforts related to the CTE data quality and use strategy have been limited in the past several months. This is because the organization has been focused on resource development and planning for the launch of the PDI. With multiple data-related publications on the release calendar, there will be more opportunities to raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE data in the coming months.

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE has built strong relationships through the three data shared solutions workgroups, engaging more than 15 national partners with data expertise. Although the workgroups are coming to an end, Advance CTE plans to engage these partners to support the CTE Data Quality & Use Strategy, including, but not limited to, the dissemination of upcoming publications.

Additionally, Advance CTE was approached by three different partners to write letters of support for a technical assistance contract from OCTAE to support Perkins V data and accountability. While this did not ultimately amount to a formal role in the project, it reflects Advance CTE's standing in the field and the value of the organization's relationships.

### **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

While the organization has well-established data collection practices — including the Impact and Reach Dashboard and regular evaluation of professional learning offerings — much of the data Advance CTE collects has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, we monitor the number of public presentations that staff deliver as a measure of our leadership in the field, but this number has decreased precipitously as partners have called off their regular annual meetings. And despite the established practice of collecting and tracking data, we are taking a step back to reflect on how we use data. We have hit pause on the biannual stocktake process to design a new approach that is anchored in the work and leads us to actionable next steps that are within the organization's control.

### **Major Accomplishments (April– October 2020)**

- **Concluded the PAYA Youth Apprenticeship Data Quality Workgroup:** The last meeting of the workgroup was held in August. Advance CTE has finalized a memo summarizing the workgroup's discussions, which is scheduled for release in November,

and facilitated a panel at the PAYA national summit in October with participants from the workgroup.

- **Concluded the CTE Data Visualization and Reporting Shared Solutions Workgroup:** Similarly, the CTE Data Visualization and Reporting workgroup held its last meeting in October, putting the final touches on the two workgroup deliverables: a design principles framework and a toolkit for communicating CTE data effectively. Both resources will be released in November, and Advance CTE plans to host a public webinar in January 2021.
- **Facilitated a Statewide Competition and Selected Five States to Participate in the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative:** While the launch of the initiative was delayed by approximately two months due to COVID-19, Advance CTE officially launched the PDI in June. After opening the initiative for applications, Advance CTE received applications from, and conducted virtual interviews with, 10 states. The original plan was to select a cohort of four participating states, but we were able to adjust the budget to admit a fifth state based on the quality of applications.
- **Developed a Pilot Draft of the Career Readiness Data Quality Policy Benchmark Tool:** Over the past six months, Advance CTE has been hard at work designing and refining a comprehensive career readiness data quality policy benchmark tool. In October, we finalized a pilot draft of the tool and shared it with PDI states to help them develop their two-year action plans.
- **Piloted the Opportunity Gap Analysis Workshop in Two States:** Continuing the work started earlier this year, Advance CTE facilitated virtual opportunity gap analysis workshops in two states. Based on lessons learned and feedback from those states, Advance CTE plans to finalize the materials and develop a dissemination strategy to train state leaders to deliver the content themselves.

## **Challenges**

- **Providing Technical Assistance and Support Virtually:** The ongoing pandemic has limited Advance CTE's ability to provide in-person support and technical assistance. This has implicated both the design of the opportunity gap analysis workshop, which is currently being delivered virtually, and the launch of the PDI.
- **Uncertainty around Perkins V Data/Accountability Resulting from the Pandemic:** States developed Perkins V performance targets before the pandemic started, and we expect there may be challenges with reaching these goals due to a number of factors. This will likely be a major challenge for states moving into 2021, when they will be required to adjust their performance targets or risk missing them entirely.
- **Positioning Advance CTE's Expertise in the Data/Accountability Space:** Without in-person meetings, it has been challenging for Advance CTE to maintain visibility and

position its expertise in data and accountability. Current partnerships and relationships with members are strong, but it has been challenging to expand outside of our community.

- **Competing Priorities in States:** Between COVID-19 and Perkins V implementation, and with likely state budget cuts on the horizon, states have had very limited capacity. State surveys have required more follow ups than usual during this period, which is pushing Advance CTE to rethink the approach and frequency with which it engages members. And while we did receive multiple high-quality applications for the PDI, many states that expressed interest ultimately did not apply due to capacity limitations.

#### **Update on Identified Priorities for (April – October 2020)**

- **Draft and Pilot the CTE Data Quality Policy Benchmark Tool:** A pilot draft of the tool was shared with PDI states in October to help them develop their two-year action plans.
- **Launch the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative:** States were selected in September and the work is officially underway. A public announcement is scheduled for November.
- **Develop CTE Reporting and Visualization Tools Through the CTE Data Reporting and Visualization Workgroup:** The workgroup held its last meeting in October, and resources will be published in early November.
- **Publish Beta Versions of The Opportunity Gap Analysis Tools Online:** Final drafts of resources have been developed, but they have not yet been finalized. After a final round of review as well as copy editing and design, they will be ready for dissemination. Advance CTE is also taking a new approach to releasing the resources and will hold a train-the-trainer session in the spring to ensure members know how to use the tools effectively.
- **Develop a Virtual Facilitation Strategy for Delivering the Opportunity Gap Analysis Workshop:** After the pandemic limited in-person travel opportunities in the spring, Advance CTE developed a virtual strategy for delivering the workshop and tested the approach with both Florida and Minnesota.
- **Sustain Partnerships Through Regular Workgroup Meetings:** As described above, Advance CTE facilitated 10 meetings across three data-focused workgroups during this reporting period.

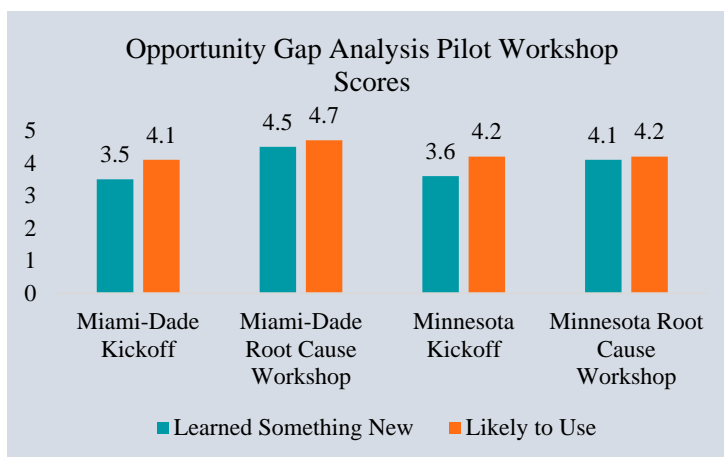
#### **Priorities for Next Five Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Release the PAYA Youth Apprenticeship Data Quality Workgroup Report, *Improving Youth Apprenticeship Data Quality: Challenges and Opportunities*

- Release the two deliverables from the CTE Data Reporting & Visualization Workgroup
- Pilot, refine and finalize the career readiness data quality policy benchmark tool
- Release a comprehensive microsite that includes the data quality policy benchmark tool and supplemental resources
- Finalize materials for the CTE opportunity gap analysis workshop and prepare to host a train-the-trainer workshop
- Review and approve two-year action plans and budgets for participating Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative states and issue year one implementation grants
- Develop a technical assistance strategy for supporting Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative sites
- Launch a peer learning network through the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative
- Develop a CTE accountability support strategy to help members respond to data/accountability challenges in 2021 – including the possibility of resetting performance targets due to COVID-19

### **Relevant Data**

- Hosted four sessions in two states to pilot the CTE opportunity gap analysis workshop.
- Scores for workshop pilots were very positive. We measure the effectiveness of the



workshops by two metrics (both of which use a 5-point scale): 1) the degree to which participants say they learned something new and 2) the degree to which participants say they are likely to use what they learned. The results were 3.5 and 4.1 respectively for the Miami-Dade County kickoff workshop, 4.5 and 4.7 for the Miami-Dade County root cause workshop, 3.6 and 4.2 for the Minnesota kickoff workshop, and 4.1 and 4.2 for the Minnesota root cause workshop.

- Facilitated 10 workgroup meetings between April and October (three for the CTE Data Reporting & Visualization Workgroup; three for the CTE Data Quality Workgroup; and four for the PAYA Youth Apprenticeship Data Quality Workgroup)



- Ten states applied for the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative and five were ultimately selected to participate.

## Equity Strategy Update – October 2020

### Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)

#### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

A lot unfolded during the timeframe covered by this report, including a groundswell, national response to persistent, system racism in our country. Due to the work the Advance CTE team has dedicated itself to over the last few years (training, equity coaching, listening and learning), we were well-positioned to apply an equity lens (albeit novice) to our policy work, strengthening our capacity and voice to lean in. From [our statement](#) on racial injustice, to our advocacy work related to Methods of Administration, the finalization and approval of state plans (and our [subsequent analysis](#)), advocacy for Career Technical Education (CTE) and underserved communities and populations in proposed stimulus bills and CARES, equity was at the heart of our recent federal and state policy work. We joined a new coalition to expand our advocacy to include broadband access, as this was a key equity priority identified by our members. And as we craft reauthorization priorities for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as well as transition priorities for the next Administration, equity is being woven throughout.

The New Skills ready network officially launched and significant work leading up to the official announcement included intensive equity dashboards, which guided the site/state partnerships in determining year one priorities through a robust needs assessment. The state policy staff is working to develop a set of resources and assets to support the network, including a revision to the work-based learning guide which will have a new equity focus.

Our research related to area technical centers (ATCs), supported by the Lumina Foundation, focuses on adult/postsecondary learners. We'll be releasing a map that plots the location of the ATCs and has filters for socio-demographic and economic data. The report will highlight what we could learn about access barrier, and the case studies will speak to demographics of learners who attend ATCs. Finally, we'll have a fact sheet that will be created to inform policymakers of the underutilized public asset ATCs are and feature policy barriers that might be removed (e.g. opening up access to federal financial aid).

#### **2. Empower members through professional learning**

As noted in other strategies, equity was pervasive in our COVID-19 (Coronavirus) response, including a [blog series](#), this [webinar](#) and this [webinar](#). Our Kitchen Cabinet on Equity in CTE was leveraged to support the blog series and is guiding our future assets, which will likely include resources to support state leaders in building their capacity to lead courageous and difficult conversations derived from the comprehensive local needs assessment, specifically racial equity. The opportunity gaps workshop was piloted two more times, finely tuning the resources. A first quarter 2021 releases is anticipated, along with a train-the-trainer workshop for states. As we gear up for the spring meeting, equity will be a priority in the selection of speakers and topics.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Advance CTE launched its work under its third Siemens grant, with a special focus on equity. Focus groups with Black, Latinx and low-income families were conducted. Our Economic Recovery Kitchen Cabinet launched its work in late summer and is charged with maximally positioning CTE to support national and state economic recovery efforts, with a special emphasis on ensuring that those who are most vulnerable are given priority access and support. The Kitchen Cabinet helped to guide the development of this [video](#), which was released with a package of [economic recovery assets](#). These assets were created with the frame that now, more than ever CTE is vital to our nation's learners, employers and America's economic recovery. The impact of the economic downturn has revealed deep fault lines in our support networks and systems, with millions of Americans unemployed and some industry sectors shuttered or undergoing rapid transformation, Black and Latinx workers, workers with a high school education or less and female workers have been disproportionately impacted.

Advance CTE published new reports, listed below, in collaboration with members of our National Equity Committee and continued to contribute assets to the [Learning that Works Resource Center](#).

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE continued to engage the Committee on Equity in CTE, which is comprised of representatives from national civil rights, workforce and education organizations, to support the equity strategy. The Committee met in May 2020 to discuss the impact of Coronavirus on work-based learning. Since then, Advance CTE has partnered with members of the Committee, specifically the Council of State Governments Justice Center, National Center for Homeless Education and National Center for Learning Disabilities, to develop population specific equity resources which were mentioned above and linked to below. Members of the Committee were invited to the CTE Forward Summit and as noted elsewhere in this report, many actively participated. The Urban League, National Skills Coalition, NAPE, NGA, among others, have reached out to share and learn about how CTE learners are coping during the shift to remote learning, with a special emphasis on the disparate impact for at-risk learners and underserved communities and populations. Finally, the CTE Forward Summit invite list was curated with great intentionality to engage diverse partners and individuals, with the Summit content and scenarios placed equity related to financing, diversity of talent, learner supports and voice, etc. at the center of the discussions.

### **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

Advance CTE has worked with a diversity, equity and inclusion coach, who was funded by the ABC grant, to review Advance CTE's internal processes and protocols through an equity lens. The ABC grant has now ended but the work with the DEI coach has been extended through organizational resources. The coach supports the leadership team in advancing equity internally and facilitates equity training sessions to deepen staff's organizational knowledge of diversity, equity and inclusion. Through this process, we:

- updated our hiring practices and position descriptions to attract a more diverse pool of candidates and to mitigate implicit bias;
- revamped our onboarding processes to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment;
- updated our performance evaluation system;
- developed an onboarding equity curriculum ;
- began to establish a set of core values; and
- established an internal DEI advisory committee to identify opportunities and specific actions Advance CTE can take to live up to its “equity statement” and “commitment to ending racial injustice.”

In addition, our leadership team has worked to create spaces and supports for our staff during these difficult times, including offering a seminar on mindfulness, sharing out a set of mental health assets, conducting a full staff survey on remote work needs and priorities for a safe return to the in-person office to guide leadership decisions, allowing for flexible use of annual and sick leave, providing a day of administrative leave to support staff mental health, etc.

### **Major Accomplishments (April - October 2020)**

- Updated our organizational style guide to reflect more inclusive language
- Published a [statement](#) ending racial injustice
- Launched an internal DEI advisory committee that represents all major workstreams and levels of staff
- Updated our performance evaluation system with input from our entire staff and equity coach
- Published three population-specific resources with the following partners the Council of State Governments Justice Center, National Center for Learning Disabilities and National Center for Homeless Education (links listed below)
- Provided a full day’s worth of equity training session to staff that deepened our organizational knowledge of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as an emergency session to help support staff during the summer
- Updated our internal hiring processes to mitigate implicit bias after reviewing the processes through an equity lens.
- Flexibility and resources, as noted above, to support our staff professionally and personally during these difficult times. The groundwork we laid to provide for an inclusive workplace has paid great dividends in building trust and support across our team.
- Piloted the data-driven equity workshop two more times, helping state leaders identify and address opportunity gaps.
- Began to collect demographic data for individuals who choose to provide it, to ensure that members of all races, ethnicities and genders are satisfied with their participation in virtual learning events.

### **Challenges**

The staff member who led our equity strategy left the organization in June, resulting in some capacity challenges and delays in work, notably the convening of the National Equity Committee.

Coronavirus continues to shine a light on the inequities that persist and the related economic downturn has further exacerbated these inequities; systemic solutions – at the national or state level- are not readily evident and the readiness of the CTE community to engage in these solutions varies widely in terms of will, capacity and competency.

### **Update on Identified Priorities for April - October 2020**

- Develop resources and provide support to help states adopt an approach to MOA that maximizes their resources and promotes equity.
  - Staff participated in the MOA training sessions held by OCTAE and the Office of Civils Rights, engaged in communication with both offices to successfully advocate for flexibility in the submission deadline of the state MOA plans, and held a webinar with State CTE Directors to focus the states on the ‘must do’ versus ‘legacy’ expectations of MOA.
- Complete a staff equity training session to deepen our organization knowledge of diversity, equity and inclusion and to help us understand how to identify CTE policies or practices that perpetuate inequities.
  - Staff participated in a day of equity training. While this training was expected to be in person, due to Coronavirus, we shifted to virtual and added an emergency session to give staff space to reflect and respond to the protests and national events occurring after the death of George Floyd.
- Assess Advance CTE’s internal processes and protocols through an equity lens.
  - The hiring and onboarding process continued to be refined including all resumes receiving two unique reviews, expanded phone interviews to intentionally broaden the candidate pool, use of hiring rubrics aligned to position competencies, blind ratings of the hiring rubrics before cross-leadership calibration, etc. While recent hiring has not resulted in more staff diversity, we have been successful in diversifying the candidate pool. Leadership has considered additional efforts to further diversify the qualified candidate pool, including potentially using recruiters for more senior level positions.
- Continue to engage the Committee on Equity in CTE, utilizing these relationships to build content expertise and expand Advance CTE’s presence in this space through strengthened relationships.
  - A call with the Committee was held in May 2020, focusing on work-based learning/hands on learning during the shift to remote learning. In addition, as noted below, we released three publications in partnership with Committee members. All members of the Committee were invited to participate in the CTE Forward Summit, and several (e.g. Achieving the Dream, Asia Society, JPMC, National Skills Coalition, New America, National Governors Association, ACTE, NTACT and the National Council for Homeless Education) were actively engaged and several were participants in the third-day planning session.
- Continue to engage the Equity Kitchen Cabinet, utilizing their input on research and leveraging them to assist in dissemination strategies.

- The Equity Kitchen Cabinet was reconstituted and held two meetings during this reporting window. Representing 20 states, the first call provided an opportunity for group to get to know one another and speak to early perceptions of how the pandemic was impacting underserved, underrepresented communities. The second call allowed the Kitchen Cabinet to help the organization prioritize the focus of future equity-related assets, tools and the Shared Solutions Working Group.
- Develop a resource, through the Gates Foundation grant, highlighting Advance CTE's work on equity.
  - Three publications were released, with partners from the National Equity Committee:
    - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity and Access to High-Quality CTE for Youth and Young Adults in the Justice System;\*](#)
    - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students with Disabilities; and\*](#)
    - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity in and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students Experiencing Homelessness.\*](#)
- Promote equity as a pillar in organization-wide work, particularly our work related to Perkins V.
  - Equity has been one of five key principles driving all of our Perkins V work, in addition to quality, systems alignment, data-driving decision-making and advisement/middle grades). All state plans were reviewed with this lens and the resulting [national report](#) showcases the significant progress states have made to center their state plans around equity. The [state pages](#) also provide an ability to review and compare key elements of state plans, including key aspects related to equity (e.g. set asides, enrollment by race, etc.) We'll be releasing a series of additional related resources over the course of the next few months, all of which will have an equity lens applied to their development.
- Publish Beta Versions of The Opportunity Gap Analysis Tools Online and Develop a Virtual Facilitation Strategy for Delivering the Opportunity Gap Analysis Workshop
  - Two additional pilot workshops were conducted, giving important feedback on the workshop materials. The resources are nearly final and will be ready for dissemination in early 2021. Advance CTE will hold a train-the-trainer session in the spring to ensure members know how to use the tools effectively.

### **Priorities for Next Six Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Finalize equity onboarding curriculum and have new staff complete the curriculum, with the support of the equity coach.
- Conduct at least one of the two FY21 all-staff equity trainings (which will occur after new staff complete their onboarding).
- Finalize organizational core values, which will prominently feature equity.
- Launch the Shared Solutions Working Group on Equity.

- Work with the Equity Kitchen Cabinet to create and release a discussion guide and related assets on build capacity among state leaders on how to lead conversations about racial equity in CTE.
- Finalize materials for the CTE opportunity gap analysis workshop and prepare to host a train-the-trainer workshop.
- Reconstitute and convene the National Equity Committee with a clearer purpose and focus.
- Organizational leadership will continue to work with the equity coach to guide internal culture and policy review, as well as support and cultivate equity expertise.
- Conduct equity training for the Board, in anticipation of strategic planning.
- Launch a new vision that features equity as a foundational tenet and priority.
- Engage the staff DEI advisory committee in its charge to identify opportunities and specific actions Advance CTE can take to live up to its “equity statement” and “commitment to ending racial injustice.”
- Collect and analyze demographic data for individuals who choose to provide it, to ensure that members of all races, ethnicities and genders are satisfied with their participation in virtual learning events.
- For the spring meeting and virtual learning series, attend, intentionally, to the selection of topics and speakers that prioritize equity and ensure speakers represent diverse backgrounds (considering for example, gender, race/ethnicity as well as secondary/postsecondary).
- Conduct the equity workshop as part of the New State Director Institute.
- Build an equity checklist to assist with review and analysis of draft federal policies and their alignment with the Board-approved equity statement.
- Host a set of regional calls with State Directors related to the lessons learned from our Associated Black Charities (ABC) grant, which is the final deliverable for that grant.
- Create a set of infographics and an aligned social media strategy to lift up the [Making Good on the Promise](#) series.
- Submit a proposal to the ECMC foundation to build a program to expand the diversity and capacity of postsecondary state leaders.

### **Relevant Data**

- Advance CTE conducted the ABC Racial Equity Organizational Self-Assessment at the start of the grant and at the end. There is clear evidence of progress with highlights including:
  - Staff competencies rose dramatically from 3/15 to 10.6/15, going from 20% to 70% competency averaged across indicators;
  - Organizational practices rose from 7/18 to 13.2/18
  - From the staff equity training session pre to post surveys, the staff identified growth in 21 out of 25 categories, with the highest average growth in the staff competencies and data categories.

# **Federal Policy Strategy Update – October 2020**

## **Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)**

### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

Since COVID-19 (Coronavirus), the federal legislative outlook has significantly changed. Full focus has been on stimulus packages and securing needed flexibilities for states through U.S. Department of Education (ED) and federal government authority, and it is expected that that will continue to be the case for the time being. Staff is in frequent communication with Advance CTE members, ED and Congressional members and staffers to communicate the needed funding, statutory and regulatory waivers and additional, necessary supports. In April, Advance CTE in partnership with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), [sent a letter](#) to the leadership of the House Committee on Education and Labor and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions detailing member-driven priorities to be included in a stimulus package. The letter includes new investment priorities, requests for statutory flexibility and waivers and policy priorities including advocating to ensure non-State Education Agency (SEA) Perkins eligible agencies get access to the same flexibilities offered to SEAs. The letter covered priorities informed by State CTE Directors, including: reinstate a grant program similar to the Trade Adjustment and Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT); expand Pell Grant eligibility to high-quality short-term programs; reinstate Pell Grant eligibility in prisons and increase support for non-traditional postsecondary learners. Some of Advance CTE's priorities have been incorporated in most federal relief proposals (Perkins V flexibilities for pooling of funds and professional development), but others, such as funding for CTE, has been included in only a few proposals.

In May, the House and Senate introduced the Relaunching America's Workforce Act (RAWA), a Coronavirus response bill that focuses solely on education and workforce development programs. Prior to introduction, Advance CTE was sent the discussion draft by Committee staff and provided feedback on the CTE and Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V)- related language. Advance CTE staff also assisted in coordinating feedback to the House and Senate in both parties. Before the bill was introduced, Advance CTE was invited to participate in a bicameral call led by Committee staff regarding the promoting and messaging of the bill.

Simultaneously, Advance CTE continued to advocate for increased CTE funding for Fiscal Year 2021. Although the appropriations process was largely stalled and put to the bottom of the legislative agenda due to the pandemic, Advance CTE kept appropriators, Congressional leaders and CTE advocates in Congress aware of the urgency for an increase in CTE funding, as well as CTE-dedicated funding in stimulus bills.

### **2. Empower members through professional learning**

Advance CTE communicated federal responses to the Coronavirus in real-time with members, including through use of the State Director and/or member listserv, legislative update newsletters (occurring as many times in a week as necessary) and informational blog posts. Advance CTE



also engaged State Directors in federal advocacy, with targeted outreach to key Congressional offices as well as the distribution of “action alerts” created by ACTE.

Following the CARES Act webinar that Advance CTE hosted in March, a recording of the webinar and the slides were [published to the website](#) for continued member reference. Staff also closely monitored ED guidance on the education portion of funding from the CARES Act, and regularly posted to the Advance CTE blog as new information became available.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Advance CTE spoke to existing and new audiences about the impact of the Coronavirus on CTE, as well as the role that CTE will play in economic recovery and the organization’s federal advocacy work. This included a briefing with the Congressional CTE Caucus on the “Effects of COVID-19 on CTE,” moderated by Advance CTE staff and featuring a State CTE Director and Advance CTE Board Member, an Advance CTE student, a CTE instructor and an industry representative. Advance CTE staff also presented to the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators, Paxton Patterson and the California Department of Education.

The organization also developed and promoted resources about the impact of Coronavirus on CTE and the role that CTE will play in economic recovery. These resources have been, and will continue to be, promoted to Advance CTE’s membership, national organizations and federal partners. Staff were contacted by the White House and IBM in order to link to these assets in their [Find Something New](#) campaign. These assets will continue to be promoted moving forward, including with members of Congress and the administration.

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE’s vision and mission**

Advance CTE was approached by national organizations to learn about the impact of the pandemic on CTE and the federal advocacy plan, including New America, National Skills Coalition (NSC), National Governor’s Association (NGA) and the National Urban League (NUL). Advance CTE also joined new coalitions and working groups to represent CTE in federal advocacy for pandemic response and relief, including the Homework Gap Coalition and the College in High School Alliance (CHSA) COVID-19 Working Group. Staff leveraged the organization’s relationship with Apple to include a representative from Apple Strategic Initiatives in a briefing for the Congressional CTE Caucus (mentioned above). While RAWA was being written, in addition to Advance CTE providing direct feedback to Congressional staff, the organization was invited to join an informal working group of national organizations with a stake in the legislation by NGA.

### **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

Staff submitted all lobbying reports in compliance with federal law. Staff evaluated and began to rebuild internal processes for tracking and sharing back legislative movement and Advance

CTE's impact. This included an attention to ensuring Advance CTE's equity-driven mission is reflected in policies that the organization endorses.

### **Major Accomplishments (April– October 2020)**

- Advance CTE put out real-time Legislative Updates when Congress and the U.S. Department of Education shifted their work to respond to the Coronavirus, with increased open rates from 30 percent to 32 percent.
- Advance CTE provided efficient updates and responses to key Congressional and U.S. Department of Education staff regarding the needs of our members during the pandemic. This was reflected in proposed stimulus legislation.
- Advance CTE developed and circulated a list of CTE priorities for future stimulus packages- including new and increased funding, statutory flexibilities and waivers and general policy changes.
- Advance CTE responded to proposed federal stimulus bills or regulations that would impact our members. This included:
  - A letter to the U.S. Department of Education expressing concerns of student eligibility under Emergency Financial Aid Grants;
  - A letter in support of the Emergency Educational Connections Act of 2020;
  - A letter in response to the proposed Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act; and
  - A letter in response to the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act.
- Advance CTE organized and moderated a briefing for the Congressional CTE Caucus on the effects of COVID-10 on CTE.
- Advance CTE developed and promoted resources, including advocacy tools, about the role of CTE in economic recovery.

**Challenges:** Coronavirus shifted the agenda for Congress and the Administration, thereby forcing a change in priorities for Advance CTE. Although we were aware of the pandemic in March, the magnitude and timeline were unforeseen and so the organization did not originally plan to spend April through October dedicated to Coronavirus relief and recovery advocacy. Additionally, Congress is in a state of gridlock. There is little to no coordination between parties, and even each chamber of Congress is often acting independently. As the months got closer to the presidential and Congressional elections this only increased. The lack of communication and movement in Congress created an enormous challenge for the success of Advance CTE's advocacy. Therefore, federal advocacy efforts were re-thought so as to best support our membership. This included ongoing detailed analysis of the implementation of policy (such as the CARES Act), directing federal policy staff to support the development of Perkins V assets and informational blog posts about how states delivered remote CTE.

### **Update on Identified Priorities for (April – October 2020)**

- Promote and advocate for the importance of CTE in economic recovery.

- Advance CTE’s communications team led the development of [resources](#) to promote the role of CTE in economic recovery. This includes fact sheets, a video and advocacy tools.
- Advocate for dedicated funding for CTE in future stimulus bills.
  - Advance CTE communicated with key Congressional offices about the importance of dedicated funding for CTE in stimulus bills. Staff also acted as a go-between for Congressional staffers in different chambers of Congress and political parties. This information was also shared with education and workforce development national organizations and coalitions, such as CEF, Campaign to Invest in America’s Workforce (CIAW), the Homework Gap Coalition, Title IV-A Coalition and an informal coalition formed by NGA. In this way, Advance CTE was able to carry out targeted advocacy on behalf of the organization and expand our messaging in a unified manner.
- Build resources to help Advance CTE members to understand and take maximum advantage of federal stimulus and emergency spending.
  - Advance CTE followed all updates to CARES Act funding distribution rules and shared this information with the membership. Advance CTE also responded when the regulations were too restrictive for the CTE community. Additionally, staff held a webinar that explained all implications of the CARES Act for the CTE community. Advance CTE also tracked all school reopening plans and how CTE was implicated, and shared out in a public facing [document](#).
- If CTE receives dedicated funding in a forthcoming stimulus package, create a research strategy that captures the reach and impact of those dollars.
  - Advance CTE tracked how states are using funding from the CARES Act through the Education Stabilization Fund. Advance CTE will continue to track this information and share out strategies across the membership.
- Continue to expand the reach and impact of the federal policy communications strategy.
  - Staff now include a legislative update section in the “This Week in CTE” newsletter. Communications and federal policy staff coordinate between daily and weekly so that real-time updates are shared out over the organization’s social media platform. Advance CTE interacts with partners organizations to increase reach, for example ACTE’s action alerts are shared out by the organization. Advance CTE staff also contributed to the planning of, and participated in, two Twitter chats hosted by the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), of which Advance CTE is a board member.
- Support Advance CTE members to respond and adapt to new regulatory challenges, including proposed changes or needed regulatory guidance from OCTAE or the U.S. Department of Education.
  - Advance CTE advocated for state CTE leaders as regulatory challenges arose. Advance CTE also responded when the regulations were too restrictive for the CTE community. In April, ED first shared a statement limiting eligibility of higher education CARES Act funding. The eligibility requirements would exclude students in non-credit programs and without a high school diploma. Advance CTE

and ACTE sent a [letter](#) to the department speaking out against this, explaining the negative impact it would have on students.

- Develop and disseminate information and supports that advocate for our HEA priorities.
  - The development of this work was started but paused for the time being due to the Coronavirus and shifted Congressional priorities.
- Develop a series of supports to assist Advance CTE members in the implementation of the MOA state plans.
  - Advance CTE staff advocated with USDE for an extension of state MOA plan submissions, which was granted. Staff participated in the MOA conference held by USDE and provided State Directors with a call to unpack the new requirements. Until we can see the approved MOA state plans, limited additional supports are warranted.
- Support the implementation of internal protocols and processes, and expanded knowledge management systems that support streamlined ways for staff to track and share legislative information among staff and members, which includes creating new dashboard metrics to evaluate success.
  - Advance CTE is evaluating whether a new dashboard metric to evaluate success would fit in with the organization's dashboard format and strategy. The organization plans to recommend new metrics, to be unveiled with the next strategic plan.
- Develop priorities and recommendations for WIOA reauthorization.
  - Advance CTE hosted bi-monthly discussions with the WIOA Kitchen Cabinet to understand the member priorities for WIOA.
- Carry out planned Lumina Foundation Grant on Area Technical Centers to help guide future federal policy recommendations.
  - Given grant extensions due to Coronavirus, this work was delayed but has now picked up again. The survey of states and listing of area technical centers is not completed; exceeding our goal of securing responses from 45 states. We completed a state-focused roundtable this month, which had 27 participants across 16 states and four partner organizations. The 50-state report, case studies (for Delaware, Florida, Ohio, Oklahoma and Utah) and a microsite, including an interactive map of all of the area technical centers, will be released in late January 2021.

### **Priorities for Next Five Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Promote and advocate for the importance of CTE in economic recovery.
- Advocate for priorities in future stimulus bills, including needed waivers and flexibility, dedicated funding for CTE, etc.
- Advocate for increased CTE funding in the full FY21 appropriations bill, or continuing resolution.
- Build resources to help Advance CTE members to understand and take maximum advantage of federal stimulus and emergency spending.

- If CTE receives dedicated funding in a forthcoming stimulus package, track and share out the impact of those dollars for states.
- Develop and promote transition priorities for the next administration (whether new or incumbent).
- Make outreach to all new Congressional offices and Administration officials and share resources on CTE.
- Ensure visibility for states and their implementation of Perkins plans, including creating and distributing “fact packs” about Perkins V implementation for targeted Congressional offices.
- Write and promote the impact of short-term postsecondary CTE programs.
- Track and share out how states used funding from the CARES Act to support CTE.
- Monitor Higher Education Act reauthorization, including standalone bills, and advocate for the organization’s priorities.
- Make outreach to Congressional offices regarding the timeline of WIOA reauthorization and monitor any movement.
- Build an equity checklist to assist with review and analysis of draft federal policies and their alignment with the Board-approved equity statement.

### **Relevant Data**

- Number of Offices Engaged: 38
- Average Open Rate of COVID-19 Legislative Updates: 32 percent
- States Engaged in Federal Advocacy: 17
- Number of Policy-Related Blog Posts: 26

## **Member Engagement & Professional Learning Strategy Update – October 2020**

### **Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)**

#### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

Many of Advance CTE's seventeen virtual convenings including five webinars, six Lunch and Learns and six regional calls for State CTE Directors - during this period addressed federal and state Career Technical Education (CTE) policies. Lunch and Learn sessions on the topics of work-based learning and dual/concurrent enrollment addressed the disruptions to CTE presented by COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and how policies have changed or will need to change based on the current realities. On multiple occasions during State CTE Director regional calls and in a State Director-only webinar, members had the chance to provide input and also ask questions related to federal laws including Methods of Administration and Perkins, Perkins V implementation, the CARES Act, and more.

Additionally, Advance CTE launched a new initiative this summer - [CTE's Vital Role to Economic Recovery](#) - to position CTE as a solution during the economic downturn. Many states have expressed concern regarding the potential for state budget cuts that could affect CTE funding. This initiative was prioritized in part due to those concerns from members.

#### **2. Empower members through professional learning**

Advance CTE hosted a number of virtual supports throughout the past six months, especially as states were tasked with navigating Coronavirus and reopening schools. Advance CTE developed a reimagined New State Director Institute, which includes four deep-dive workshops on key topics such as leadership and equity, as well as mentors who are former and current State CTE Directors that meet on a monthly basis. The program is designed to support State Directors in their first year in their new role, and this year included a new self-assessment and enrollment form and regular evaluation to ensure it is meeting the needs of the cohort. The 2020-21 New State Director Institute launched in September 2020. Ten State Directors who started in their roles between December 2019 and present were invited to join, and eight have enrolled. Between April and October, staff held onboarding welcome calls on Zoom with five new State Directors, orienting them to Advance CTE's member benefits and resources and getting to know them.

Advance CTE engaged members in six Lunch & Learn virtual learning sessions co-led by members and staff on such topics as equity, work-based learning, distance learning and industry-recognized credentials. Members and the general public also joined five Summer Learning Series webinars on such topics as equity, talent pipeline management, communicating about CTE and CTE's role in the future of work and economic recovery.

As part of the post-program evaluations, Advance CTE has begun to collect demographic data for individuals who choose to provide it, to ensure that members of all races, ethnicities and genders are satisfied with their participation in virtual learning events.

Advance CTE regularly convenes members and other participants in Kitchen Cabinets and Shared Solutions Working Groups to engage in focus-group style discussions on the topics of Equity, Career Clusters, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Economic Recovery, Data Visualization and CTE in middle grades. These groups allow experts and practitioners to build professional community while sharing promising practices and influencing and otherwise engaging with Advance CTE's programs of work.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Advance CTE continues to raise the visibility of states, state leaders and members via blogs, social media, and virtual learning events. Staff posted six blogs introducing new State Directors during this period, which were also cross-posted on Twitter.

Advance CTE continues to engage members as experts to share promising practices on webinars, the online Moodle community and other virtual spaces. Each of the six Lunch & Learn virtual learning sessions included a representative from at least one state sharing promising practices.

Via the regional calls for State Directors, staff was able to conduct two focus-group style conversations with the groups on the topic of The National Career Clusters Framework® revision to understand how states are using the Career Clusters and how they could better meet States' needs.

Advance CTE also released the [State of Career Technical Education: An Analysis of States' Perkins V Priorities](#), which provides a cross-state analysis and recognition of the strategic decisions CTE leaders have made to advance high-quality CTE programs while increasing access and equity for each learner in their state, showcasing how many states have gone above and beyond the law's requirements. The release includes short videos of some State Directors highlighting the standout components of their Perkins V state plan.

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE featured spokespeople from partner organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the Aspen Institute and Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce on all five Summer Learning Series webinars, connecting members to leading experts in the CTE field at large and covering topics such as talent pipeline management, communicating about CTE and CTE's role in economic recovery. Partners from the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships and the National Governors Association joined Lunch and Learns.

In September, Advance CTE hosted [CTE Forward: A Summit on CTE's Impact and Promise](#). The CTE Forward Summit brought together national, state and local leaders from across all 50 states, DC and American Samoa to gather broad perspectives and ideas that will drive a bold, shared vision for CTE. At this critical moment in time – as our country experiences a major economic downturn, with tens of millions of Americans out of work due to Coronavirus – CTE is more important than ever in ensuring learners of all ages can gain the skills they need, when

they need them, to find success in the workforce. This is especially true for those communities that have been historically under-served by education and workforce systems and have been disproportionately impacted by Coronavirus. Each contributor was personally invited to participate in the CTE Forward Summit based on their perspectives, expertise and experiences “at the table” to help shape a vision that will be both daring and forward-looking. The vision will serve as the “true north” for the CTE community and its key partners in the coming years.

This invite-only event was designed in partnership with nine organizations, which participated in monthly planning calls for the Summit and were crucial to ensuring that the right leaders from their networks were invited to contribute. An additional four members provided input as part of this design committee. Forty-one State Directors or their proxies participated in the Summit. On day one, 197 people viewed the livestream events and 164 people viewed the livestream events on day two. Participant evaluations are included under the Relevant Data.

## **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

There is no shortage of opportunities for members to engage with Advance CTE. Staff implemented new processes for planning webinars and other member opportunities several months in advance. Each virtual meeting closes with an evaluation survey for participants to complete, and the responses to those evaluations are reviewed on a regular basis to inform future topics, formats and even meeting frequency. Average results are included in Relevant Data.

Advance CTE has invested in Zoom Webinar technology for a more professional presentation and also for the automated services it provides.

### **Major Accomplishments (April– October 2020)**

- Six Zoom calls for State CTE Directors to connect with colleagues in their regions.
- Five Summer Learning Series webinars, archived on YouTube.
- Six Lunch & Learn Virtual Learning sessions for State Directors and State Members.
- More than 100 resources from partners and Organizational Members added to COVID-19 resources page.
- Five new State Directors welcomed and oriented to Advance CTE via individualized, one hour Zoom video call.
- Launch of 2020-2021 New State Director Institute (eight State Directors enrolled).
- Scheduled and assigned to staff a Fall-Winter webinar series based on organizational releases and priorities.
- Held a number of calls with Organizational Members to discuss their resources related to COVID-19 and virtual curriculum delivery.
- Forty-one State Directors and nearly 200 people overall contributed to the CTE Forward Summit.



## **Challenges**

- Delivering member value and fostering connections when members cannot convene in person.
- Supporting state leaders in delivering high-quality and equitable CTE in the rapidly changing environment presented by a global pandemic.
- Competing priorities for members' time as they are dealing with many crises at the state level.
- 2021 Spring Meeting: Advance CTE's first virtual meeting with a registration fee and thus no precedent for what members will perceive as "fair" pricing, or if members will participate in the same numbers and ways they would have at an in-person meeting.
- Budget cuts at the state level potentially impacting state dues renewal in the future.
- Creating meaningful engagement opportunities for Organizational Members, especially with uncertainty about when members can convene in person.

## **Update on Identified Priorities for (April – October 2020)**

- **Virtual Learning Strategy:** Between May and August, Advance CTE offered eleven virtual professional learning events to take the place of the professional learning and other networking that would have happened at the cancelled 2020 Spring Meeting. There were six Lunch & Learn discussions, an exclusive benefit for State Directors and state members, which allowed for full-group presentations followed by smaller group Zoom breakout rooms to allow members to discuss the material and connect with each other. For all members as well as the general public, we presented five Summer Learning Series webinars in a more traditional "sit and get" style. Representatives from 51 states and territories attended at least one virtual learning event, and more than 1,000 people joined the series overall. Between May and October, there were six Zoom calls for State Directors to convene with colleagues in their region. Advance CTE also started a new webinar series in October, with virtual learning events planned every few weeks through at least January 2021. These virtual learning events boast consistently high attendance and participation (see "Relevant Data").
- **Staying connected with partners and past sponsors through the pandemic:** Advance CTE maintained the [COVID-19 resources page](#) and regularly added reports, tools, research and other materials from past sponsors and partners to the collection in order to support members. Staff also held phone meetings with about five groups of organizational members and other potential meeting sponsors to keep abreast of their work and to ensure that they felt valued as members of the Advance CTE network. The list of companies eager to receive information about 2021 Spring Meeting sponsorship packages is long.
- **2020-2021 New State Director Institute:** Ten State Directors who started between December 2019 and present were invited to join the New State Director Institute (NSDI)

and eight have enrolled. The program started in August 2020 with an orientation and community-building focus; the first content workshop, Leveraging Your Strengths as a Leader. Each member of the cohort has also been connected with a former or current State Director who will serve as a mentor and provide additional professional support on a monthly basis.

- **FY21 Dues Renewal:** As of October 26, 2020, Advance CTE has received dues renewal payments from 43 states. All states had submitted an intent to renew and staff is following up to secure all payments. As expected, several Organizational Members did not renew for FY21 due to pandemic-related budget constraints, however, because Advance CTE is above its budgeted income target, the impact of these non-renewals is minimal at this time.

### **Priorities for Next Five Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- **Designing and launching registration for a high-quality, well-attended and well-received virtual 2021 Spring Meeting:** Staff will design a virtual Spring Meeting for April 2021 to provide members the opportunity to connect with Advance CTE, showcase their achievements, learn from each other, engage with new research and perspectives from the field at large and more. Staff will also engage with past sponsors and other companies to provide income as well as meaningful opportunities for members to engage with such vendors. Advance CTE will be intentional about inviting speakers who represent diverse backgrounds (considering for example, gender, race/ethnicity as well as secondary/postsecondary). Advance CTE will also collect demographic information from participants who are willing to share it during evaluations and will use previously collected demographic data to continue to influence virtual professional learning event design and content.
- **2020-2021 New State Director Institute:** NSDI Workshops two and three (Program Quality and Racial Equity) will be delivered during this time period. Each workshop will be an interactive two-hour Zoom session, one on the topic of ensuring quality, i.e., establishing the non-negotiables for high-quality CTE programs of study and approaches to benchmarking quality throughout a state, and the second workshop on the topic of applying a racial equity lens based on a historic understanding of CTE as well as looking to the future of CTE. Advance CTE will also hold quarterly check in calls with each mentor for additional feedback on new State Director progress and needs. Any new State Directors who start in their role before mid-December 2020 will be invited to join this cohort. Advance CTE collected demographic data from participants upon enrollment and will measure regular evaluations against this information to ensure that all participants are benefiting equitably from the NSDI.
- **Virtual Learning Strategy and ongoing Virtual Member Engagements:** In October 2020, Advance CTE launched the For Each State, For Each Learner: CTE Works [webinar series](#). Five staff have been assigned topics and are working to enlist members and

partners to speak as experts on the webinars. Looking forward, staff will also have opportunities to share upcoming tools and guides with State Directors and State Members in a more informal, live question-and-answer type setting. The regional calls for State Directors will continue as discussion forums and input sessions connecting Advance CTE staff to State Directors every other month. In addition, Advance CTE will continue to convene Kitchen Cabinets and Working Groups and will launch a new virtual community of practice for the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative. As possible, Advance CTE will collect demographic information from participants who are willing to share it, and will use previously collected demographic data to continue to influence virtual professional learning event design and content.

- **Release and adoption of Vision:** In March 2021, Advance CTE will release its updated Vision based on the ideas generated by contributors of the September 2020 CTE Forward Summit. Concurrent with the release will be a strategy to ensure the Vision is adopted by all 50 states.

### **Relevant Data**

#### **Regional Call Evaluations (April – October)**

<b>Poll Question</b>	<b>Average Evaluation Score across 5 regions and 6 calls, Five Point Scale</b>
How likely are you to attend another regional State CTE Directors call in the future?	4.6711
Based on the current needs in your state and office, how valuable was this regional State CTE Directors call?	4.397

#### **Virtual Learning Evaluations for Summer Learning Webinar Series & Lunch & Learn Discussions (May – August)**

**Representatives from 51 states and territories attended at least one virtual learning event, and more than 1,000 people joined the series overall.**

<b>Averages from across 11 Virtual Learning Events</b>						
<b>Number Registered</b>	<b>Unique Joins</b>	<b>Percent of Registered Joining</b>	<b>Peak Concurrent Joined</b>	<b>Evals Completed</b>	<b>Percent of Peak Joins Completing Eval</b>	<b>YouTube Views (SLS only)</b>
<b>171</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>57.90%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37.58%</b>	<b>73</b>

Averages from across 11 Virtual Learning Events		
How likely are you to use the information you learned in this webinar in your own work? 5 PT scale	Rate the degree to which this webinar increased your understanding of the topic 5 PT scale	Ratings Average
<b>3.86</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>3.79</b>

### CTE Forward Summit Evaluation Data

*Averages from two daily evaluations*

I felt that my contributions to the CTE Forward Summit today were meaningful: 3.97 / 5  
 Attending the CTE Forward Summit was a valuable use of my time: 4.32 / 5

The CTE Forward Summit Evaluation included optional demographic questions; average evaluations from individuals who identify with a race/ethnicity other than White (which includes individuals who selected “prefer not to say” and multiple races/ethnicities including White) were higher than the overall averages:

I felt that my contributions to the CTE Forward Summit today were meaningful: 4.25 / 5  
 Attending the CTE Forward Summit was a valuable use of my time: 4.55 / 5

## State Policy Strategy Update – October 2020

### Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)

#### **1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented**

Advance CTE continued to produce and release publications, tools and resources that support development and implementation of state policies that support improving the quality of and access to/success through CTE programs and experiences. From April through October 2020, Advance CTE released five new reports and resources; four were developed in partnership with other organizations, and one was released by Advance CTE independently. Advance CTE and its partners published three new resources on improving equity and access to high-quality CTE as part of the *Making Good on the Promise* series. Recent publications addressed supporting [youth and young adults in the justice system](#), in partnership with The Council of State Governments' Justice Center; [students with disabilities](#), in partnership with the National Center for Learning Disabilities; and [students experiencing homelessness](#), in partnership with the National Center for Homeless Education. Advance CTE partnered with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) to release a [new research report on the national landscape of short-term postsecondary programs](#). Finally, Advance CTE released its latest State of CTE report that provides an [analysis of states' Perkins V priorities](#).

Between April and October 2020, Advance CTE continued to provide information and support to states in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, in support of maintaining quality of and access to/success through CTE programs and experiences. Advance CTE released a [paper](#) that identifies the challenges of delivering CTE during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond; a [resource](#) to help state CTE leaders plan for CTE delivery in the short- and long-term; and a [tool](#) that tracks states' school reopening plans and how states have attended to CTE in those plans. In addition, Advance CTE conducted six “lunch and learn” virtual sessions and five [webinars](#) that addressed specific aspects of CTE programs during and after the coronavirus. Advance CTE also continued compiling and sharing resources to assist states in their response to the coronavirus, which are available on the [COVID-19 page](#) of Advance CTE's website.

Advance CTE continued to track state policies related to CTE and career readiness that were passed, including budgets, executive orders and enacted legislation; this work is conducted in partnership with ACTE. This state policy tracking is the basis of the 2020 Year in Review report that will be released in February 2021. The 2020 report will be accompanied by a policy tracking tool with more detail on specific state policies. Between April and October 2020, staff completed the vast majority of state policy tracking and analysis; the next step is to begin drafting the text of the report that analyzes trends in state policies related to CTE and career readiness.

Advance CTE continued to provide technical assistance to states in alignment with the stand-alone Technical Assistance Strategy, with funding support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. Five states received intensive coaching and topic-specific technical assistance related to Perkins V implementation; further details on this technical assistance are provided in the Technical Assistance Strategy Update.

Advance CTE launched its work to expand high-quality career pathways in six communities across the country, with funding support from JPMorgan Chase & Co.; in October 2020, this project was publicly [launched](#) under the *New Skills ready network* brand. Advance CTE is working in partnership with Education Strategy Group (ESG) to support six state-local partnerships as they expand high-quality career pathways over the next four years. The six communities receiving grants as part of this project are: Boston| Massachusetts; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colorado; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Nashville, Tennessee.

From April through October, the six sites completed the initial planning phase of the five-year grant period. Advance CTE and ESG developed a robust needs assessment process that sites completed; the needs assessment included a cross-sector self-assessment, a data capacity mapping tool, and secondary and postsecondary equity analysis tools. This technical assistance and support helped sites identify strengths and challenges related to four key topics: rigor and quality in career pathways, work-based learning, transitions to postsecondary, and closing equity gaps. Sites also completed an action plan to guide their efforts through September 2021. Advance CTE and ESG reviewed and provided feedback on sites' needs assessments and action plans. In addition, Advance CTE and ESG hosted the first cross-site convening of the *New Skills ready network*, which took place virtually. As of October 2020, sites are beginning to implement their action plans, and Advance CTE and ESG are developing a timeline and work plan for technical assistance and knowledge management activities with sites through June 2021.

In September 2020, Advance CTE launched the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative, which includes technical assistance and support to five states in support of improving postsecondary CTE data quality. Further details about this project are provided in the Data Quality Strategy Update.

Advance CTE completed the first two phases of its work on *Advancing The Framework: A state-led crowdsourcing initiative focused on modernizing The National Career Clusters® Framework*. Advance CTE, with support from Vivayic, conducted a literature review to identify current uses of The Framework in programming and research. Advance CTE also gathered feedback from states, including State CTE Directors and other state CTE leaders (both secondary and postsecondary), to help identify the audience of The Framework and inform an updated purpose of The Framework. With input from the Career Clusters Kitchen Cabinet, Advance CTE drafted a purpose statement for a renewed National Career Clusters Framework, which was approved by the Advance CTE and The Center to Advance CTE Boards of Directors in September 2020. In October 2020, Advance CTE began developing a work plan and timeline for the next set of activities related to modernizing The Framework: a community and stakeholder engagement effort, as well as development of an online portal where users will be able to submit innovative ideas for a fully reimaged or transformed Framework.

Advance CTE is leading a shared solutions workgroup on CTE Data Quality, which was supported by JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s New Skills for Youth Innovation Sites grant. The objectives of this workgroup are to create a comprehensive framework for improving the quality and use of CTE data and strengthening quality and equity in CTE; to convene national, state and local experts to provide input into tools that can be used to enhance state CTE data quality and

use; and to leverage tools to support implementation of other Advance CTE projects including the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative and the *New Skills ready network*. The culminating policy benchmark tool and other resources will be publicly released in February 2021. Further details about this project are provided in the Data Quality Strategy Update.

## **2. Empower members through professional learning**

Staff regularly present on a variety of topics at Advance CTE and partner conferences and webinars, to both share with and learn from members on state CTE policies. Since April 2020, staff delivered the following presentations to members and other partners:

- *NAF Home Week*; hosted by National Academies Foundation; virtual
- *Applying a Racial Equity Lens to Career Technical Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *CTE Forward: What Learners Most Need during the COVID-19 Pandemic*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *Getting to the Credential: State Strategies to Maintain Credentialing in the COVID-19 Era*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *A State Policy Framework for Improving CTE Data Quality*; hosted by Association for Institutional Research; virtual
- *CTE 101*; hosted by The Education Trust; virtual
- *Remote CTE and Work-based Learning - Emerging Practices and Lessons Learned*; hosted by Workforce Matters; virtual
- *Career Technical Education & Talent Pipeline Management: Strategies for Connecting Classrooms to Careers*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *CTE Forward: How to Attract and Recruit Diverse Students at the Postsecondary Level: Lessons from Aspen Institute*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *2020 Elections Landscape: Implications for Career Technical Education*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *Association for Institutional Research's Virtual Forum*; Association for Institutional Research; virtual
- *Virtual Summer Leadership Conference*; Pennsylvania Association of Career & Technical Administrators; virtual
- *CTE's Role in the Future of Work and our Economic Recovery*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *Lunch & Learn: Challenges and Strategies for Sustaining CTE Early Postsecondary Opportunities in Covid-19*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *CTE and School Reopening: Lessons Learned*; hosted by Advance CTE; virtual
- *CTE in Recovery for the Reskilling and Recovery Network*; hosted by National Governors Association; virtual
- *Building Stronger Systems for and Through Youth Apprenticeship*; hosted by the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship; virtual
- *Leveraging Youth Apprenticeship Data to Improve Program and Policy*; hosted by the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship; virtual

Advance CTE has a strong focus on learning from our members about effective policies and practices that support improving the quality of and access to/success through CTE programs and

experiences. We gather this information from our members through the annual Year in Review publication, policy profiles and other reports featured in the [Learning that Works Resource Center](#), and member surveys. To ensure that other states know about effective and innovative practices, we embed those lessons learned into other organizational work by highlighting state promising practices in publications and featuring states at meetings and on webinars.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

For more than four years, Advance CTE has maintained a robust repository of reports, tools and policy profiles through the [Learning that Works Resource Center](#), which includes more than 450 hand-curated resources. From April-October 2020, Advance CTE staff conducted two phases of modifications to the structure of the Resource Center, to improve the site's usability and the user experience and to significantly streamline data collection and tracking. Advance CTE staff are in the process of planning a third phase of modifications that could be more extensive; these modifications would be made in 2021.

The average number of pageviews each month from April-October 2020 was more than 9,300. Visits to the Resource Center throughout 2020 remain considerably lower than in past years, which Advance CTE attributes to several factors. Since mid-March, Advance CTE has directed users to the COVID-19 page on the website for resources related to the pandemic, rather than to the Resource Center. In addition, we believe that our members' efforts from April through October were largely focused responding to the coronavirus pandemic and planning and preparing for school reopening, and these areas of focus have not led them to the Resource Center. Finally, Advance CTE has not released as many major publications throughout 2020 as in past years, largely as a result of staff effort being dedicated to supporting states' response to the coronavirus. In an effort to elevate the many high-quality resources housed in the Resource Center, Advance CTE launched a promotional effort in August to intentionally highlight resources housed in the Resource Center through newsletters and social media promotional efforts. Traffic to the Resource Center is already on an upward trend, which we attribute to these promotional efforts.

In October 2020, Advance CTE launched a significant redesign of the [state-specific pages](#) on our website to better present information on states' CTE enrollment and aspects of states' Perkins V state plans. Advance CTE also launched a [tool](#) that allows users to compare states by a number of different criteria.

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE maintains partnerships with key leaders and influencers in the field, including the Association for Career and Technical Education, National Conference of State Legislatures, Data Quality Campaign and the American School Counselor Association, among others, in order to strengthen our own capacity and influence the national conversation around CTE. In addition, Advance CTE is focused on strengthening our newer partnerships that have been formed in support of our equity initiative, including National Urban League, Council of State Governments and National Center for Homeless Education.



## 5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization

Advance CTE is committed to developing and implementing internal processes and protocols to share knowledge, coordinate efforts, streamline work and create efficiencies, and continuously improve our work and support of our members. Staff continue to upload documents, research and presentations to our shared online folder to ensure that knowledge and materials are shared across the organization. In addition, staff members regularly present information to each other on state policy projects and work through “deep dive” presentations at weekly staff meetings. Moving forward, state policy team leadership will ensure that lessons learned from individual projects are incorporated into the organization’s overall work including communications, equity, technical assistance and federal policy work.

### **Major Accomplishments (April– October 2020)**

- Released eight new reports, briefs and other resources related to state policy, along with updates to six fact sheets:
  - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity and Access to High-Quality CTE for Youth and Young Adults in the Justice System\*](#), in partnership with The Council of State Governments Justice Center
  - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students with Disabilities\*](#), in partnership with the National Center for Learning Disabilities
  - [\*Making Good on the Promise: Improving Equity in and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students Experiencing Homelessness\*](#), in partnership with the National Center for Homeless Education
  - [\*COVID-19’s Impact on CTE: Defining the Challenge and the Opportunity\*](#)
  - [\*Prioritizing CTE Through and Beyond COVID-19\*](#)
  - [\*An Analysis of Existing Short-Term Postsecondary Programs\*](#), in partnership with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE)
  - [\*The State of Career Technical Education: An Analysis of States’ Perkins V Priorities\*](#)
  - [\*Advance CTE COVID-19 School Reopening Tracking Tool\*](#)
  - Updates to Advance CTE fact sheets on the following topics:
    - [\*Distance Learning Across the Work-Based Learning Continuum\*](#)
    - [\*CTE and Dual Enrollment\*](#)
    - [\*Career Technical Education Glossary\*](#)
    - [\*CTE Prepares Learners for the Future of Work\*](#)
    - [\*CTE and Student Achievement\*](#)
    - [\*CTE Delivery Systems\*](#)
- Supported the *New Skills ready network* in six communities across the country, with a focus on expanding high-quality career pathways; site leadership teams include cross-sector representation from both the local and state levels.

- Provided customized technical assistance to states in support of Perkins V plan development and implementation, with five states receiving state policy-focused technical assistance since April 2020.
- Launched the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative, which will provide technical assistance and support to five states in support of improving postsecondary CTE data quality.
- Completed the first two phases of *Advancing The Framework: A state-led crowdsourcing initiative focused on modernizing The National Career Clusters® Framework*, including approving a purpose statement for a renewed National Career Clusters Framework.
- Maintained and strengthened the Learning that Works Resource Center, which received an average of 9,300 visits per month since April 2020.

### **Challenges**

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on much of Advance CTE's state policy work, largely because of reduced capacity in state agencies and their real need to address urgent priorities on the ground in communities. In the summer, Advance CTE was able to restart much of its state technical assistance work, albeit through virtual engagement, but the timelines of most technical assistance projects were extended and some states elected to discontinue their work with Advance CTE altogether because of limited staff capacity at state agencies to address non-coronavirus work.

In addition, the timeline for planned publication releases has been extended because state agencies have limited capacity to engage with Advance CTE staff and because Advance CTE shifted its focus to developing and releasing resources that can help states more effectively respond to COVID-19. Advance CTE state policy staff continue to adjust plans to ensure that our engagement with states remains relevant and timely in this rapidly changing environment, and adjusting or extending timelines for longer-term projects to shift some work on technical assistance and publications to late 2020 and early 2021.

Building staff capacity to support state policy work remains an ongoing challenge, including delays in hiring of highly qualified staff. Advance CTE had originally planned to hire three new staff members by June 2020 to support state policy work, but the timeline for filling all these positions was extended to December 2020. Advance CTE filled one of these positions in February 2020 and onboarded a second policy associate in June 2020. In late July 2020, a policy associate who had been with Advance CTE for two years left the organization, and that position was just filled in late October. Advance CTE is in the final stages of hiring for a senior policy associate with a target start date of December 1, 2020.

### **Update on Identified Priorities for (April – October 2020)**

- Continue to support cities and states to expand high-quality career pathways through the *New Skills ready network* supported by JPMorgan Chase & Co.
  - From April through October, the six sites completed the initial planning phase of the five-year grant period. Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group (ESG) developed

- a robust needs assessment process that sites completed; the needs assessment included a cross-sector self-assessment, a data capacity mapping tool, and secondary and postsecondary equity analysis tools. Sites also completed an action plan to guide their efforts through September 2021. Advance CTE and ESG reviewed and provided feedback on sites' needs assessments and action plans. In addition, Advance CTE and ESG hosted the first cross-site convening of the *New Skills ready network*, which took place virtually.
- Develop and release new reports and briefs that will support *New Skills ready network* sites' work and the CTE community as a whole.
    - Advance CTE released eight new reports, briefs and other resources related to state policy and completed content updates to six fact sheets. Details and links are above in the "Major Accomplishments" section.
    - Advance CTE began work on resources to support the *New Skills ready network* sites during the period in question, including an updated guide to work-based learning and a publication on aligning career pathways to evolving labor market needs, but the overall delay in this initiative due to coronavirus and staff capacity limitations resulted in a delay in completing those resources; both resources are scheduled for release in 2021.
  - Continue to support state implementation of Perkins V, including identifying innovative approaches in state plans and sharing those approaches with other states through professional learning and other strategies.
    - Advance CTE is providing policy-related support and technical assistance to five states through grants from the Gates and Joyce Foundations as well as state contracts. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the timelines for completing these projects was extended and all of the projects will now conclude by December 2020. Advance CTE staff are reviewing lessons learned from across all its state technical assistance projects to identify what resources and strategies can be shared with members more broadly.
  - Support the first cohort of the virtual cohort-based technical assistance model, which will provide a robust and comprehensive way for multiple states to engage in peer sharing and learning on a specific topic through multiple points of engagement over a fixed period of time.
    - Advance CTE staff elected to put the launch of this project on hold because of limited capacity both in states and among the Advance CTE staff as a result of responding to urgent COVID-19 challenges. Staff are planning to launch this effort in 2021.
  - Maintain and strengthen the Learning that Works Resource Center, including expanding the number of resources on relevant topic areas and conducting several rounds of modifications to the Resource Center's structure to ensure it is easy to access.
    - Advance CTE staff have conducted two phases of modifications to the structure of the Resource Center, to improve the site's usability and the user experience and to significantly streamline data collection and tracking. Advance CTE staff are in the

process of planning a third phase of modifications that could be more extensive; these modifications would be made in 2021.

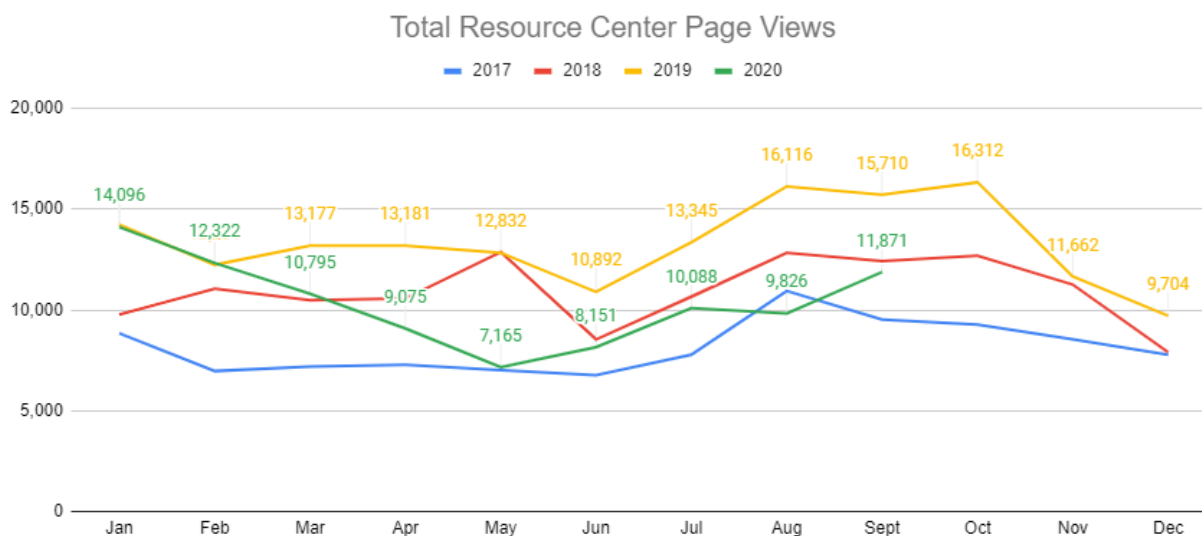
- Conduct the first two phases of an effort to revisit and modernize The National Career Clusters Framework, including soliciting feedback on how the CTE community currently uses the Framework, suggestions for revisions to the Framework and ideas for wholesale transformations of the Framework; and launching a facilitated process to identify and develop several potential prototypes for a transformed Framework.
  - Advance CTE conducted a literature review to identify current uses of The Framework in programming and research. Advance CTE gathered feedback from State CTE Directors and other state CTE leaders to help identify the audience of The Framework and inform an updated purpose of The Framework. With input from the Career Clusters Kitchen Cabinet, Advance CTE drafted a purpose statement for a renewed National Career Clusters Framework, which was approved by the Advance CTE and The Center to Advance CTE Boards of Directors in September 2020. In October 2020, Advance CTE began developing a work plan and timeline for the next set of activities related to modernizing The Framework: a community and stakeholder engagement effort, as well as development of an online portal where users will be able to submit innovative ideas for a fully reimagined or transformed Framework.
- Build staff capacity to support Advance CTE's state policy work, including onboarding and supporting talented new staff members.
  - Since April 2020, Advance CTE hired and onboarded one policy associate who began employment on June 1, 2020. A second policy associate has been hired, who began employment on October 26, 2020; onboarding of that staff member is underway. Finally, Advance CTE is in the final stages of hiring for a senior policy associate with a target start date for that new employee of December 1, 2020.
- Lead shared solutions workgroups on data visualization and use, CTE data quality, and data collection and use in youth apprenticeship programs, and launch a shared solutions workgroup on closing equity gaps in CTE.
  - Advance CTE conducted three workgroups related to effective collection and use of data and staff are finalizing tools and resources for the field that were informed by workgroup participants. More details on the results of those workgroups are provided in the Technical Assistance Strategy Update and Data Quality Strategy Update.
  - The launch of the shared solutions workgroup on closing equity gaps in CTE has been delayed as a result of staffing transitions at Advance CTE; staff are in the process of finalizing the timeline to launch the workgroup in late 2020 or early 2021.

#### **Priorities for Next Five Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Continue to support cities and states to expand high-quality and equitable career pathways through the *New Skills ready network* supported by JPMorgan Chase & Co.

- Develop and release new reports and briefs on relevant topics for Advance CTE’s membership, including two resources that will support the work of the *New Skills ready network sites* and the CTE community as a whole.
- Develop and release the 2020 Year in Review report, which will provide an overview of state policies related to CTE and career readiness that were implemented in states; the report will be accompanied by a policy tracking tool with more detail on specific state policies.
- Continue to support state implementation of Perkins V, including identifying innovative approaches in state plans and sharing those approaches with other states through professional learning and other strategies.
- Develop and launch a virtual cohort-based technical assistance model, which will provide a robust and comprehensive way for multiple states to engage in peer sharing and learning on a specific topic through multiple points of engagement over a fixed period of time.
- Maintain and strengthen the Learning that Works Resource Center, including expanding the number of resources on relevant topic areas and completing planned modifications to the Resource Center’s structure to enhance the user experience.
- Support the effort to modernize The National Career Clusters Framework, including completing a community and stakeholder engagement process to share updates with users of The Framework about the renewed purpose statement and the upcoming effort to solicit innovative new approaches to The Framework, and prepare the innovation portal for launch in April or May 2021.
- Build staff capacity to support Advance CTE’s state policy work, including onboarding and supporting talented new staff members.
- Launch a shared solutions workgroup on closing equity gaps in CTE.

## **Relevant Data**



## Technical Assistance Strategy Update – October 2020

### Overview of Major Activities (April – October 2020)

#### 1. Ensure high-quality federal and state CTE policies are adopted and implemented

From April-October 2020, Advance CTE provided technical assistance to states in support of the implementation of Perkins V; this technical assistance to states is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Joyce Foundation, as well as by state-funded contracts with Advance CTE. Five states received intensive coaching and topic-specific technical assistance related to Perkins V implementation:

- **California** and **New York** are receiving intensive coaching support related to development and implementation of their Perkins V state plans, including developing leadership capacity and implementing high-quality work-based learning.
- **Florida** is receiving technical assistance related to stakeholder engagement. Florida is also participating in an analysis of the state's CTE enrollment data to identify opportunity gaps, root causes and potential strategies to address these gaps. They are among three states that have piloted the opportunity gap workshop this year. (detailed below under Professional Learning).
- **Illinois** is receiving technical assistance related to strengthening work-based learning and developing state standards for CTE.
- **Iowa** received technical assistance from Advance CTE and ACTE related to development of its Perkins V state plan, including facilitation of stakeholder engagement meetings, content expertise related to data and accountability and teacher preparation, synthesis of public comments received on the draft state plan, and in-depth reviews of the state's draft Perkins V state plan. The technical assistance work with Iowa is complete.

In October, Advance CTE released its State of CTE report that provides an [analysis of states' Perkins V priorities](#) and the implementation of those priorities through their Perkins V state plans. In addition, staff are reviewing lessons learned from across all its state technical assistance projects to identify what resources and strategies can be shared with members more broadly.

Advance CTE staff had planned to launch a virtual cohort-based technical assistance effort that would work with small groups of states on specific topics of interest, but staff elected to put the launch of that project on hold as a result of limited capacity both in states and among the Advance CTE staff. Staff are planning to launch this effort in 2021.

Advance CTE's middle grades CTE shared solutions workgroup was completed and resulted in the release in May of a [repository](#) of state-level middle grades CTE resources and tools, as well as an eight-part [blog series](#) developed in partnership with ACTE. In addition, Advance CTE conducted three workgroups related to effective collection and use of data and staff are finalizing tools and resources for the field that were informed by workgroup participants. Further details about the results of these workgroups are provided in the State Policy Strategy Update.

As discussed in the State Policy Strategy Update, Advance CTE is partnering with Education Strategy Group (ESG) to provide technical assistance to six states and communities within those states to expand high-quality career pathways, through the *New Skills ready network* funded by JPMorgan Chase & Co.

As discussed in the Data Quality Strategy Update, Advance CTE recently launched the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative, which includes technical assistance and support to five states in support of improving postsecondary CTE data quality.

## **2. Empower members through professional learning**

In mid-2020, Advance CTE revamped the New State Director Leadership Program and launched a new professional learning program for new State CTE Directors: the New State Director Institute. The Institute is a ten-month cohort-based executive leadership style program that seeks to empower and support new State CTE Directors in developing and advancing comprehensive policies, infrastructure and programming that leads to, and sustains, high-quality and equitable CTE for each learner in the state. The New State Director Institute's workshops are organized around themes of leadership, quality, collaboration and equity. The New State Director Institute is comprised of three key elements: workshops, a mentor and a peer network. The 2020-2021 cohort of the New State Director Institute includes State Directors from 8 states; the first session of the New State Director Institute was held in September.

As the needs of Advance CTE members shifted in the spring to responding to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, Advance CTE rapidly developed new ways to engage State Directors in professional learning and technical assistance activities. Advance CTE launched a series of six Lunch & Learn sessions in May 2020, which offered a venue for state CTE leaders to engage with their peers on a specific topic in a conversational setting. Topics of the series included:

- Applying a Racial Equity Lens to Career Technical Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- State Strategies to Maintain Credentialing in the COVID-19 Era
- Strategies for Secondary and Postsecondary Distance Learning
- Career Exploration and Industry Engagement in a Remote World
- The Future of Work-Based Learning in a Post-COVID Environment
- Challenges and Strategies for Sustaining CTE Early Postsecondary Opportunities in COVID-19

In addition, Advance CTE launched a Summer Learning Series in May 2020, featuring experts sharing information on a specific topic with state CTE leaders through a more traditional webinar-style format. Topics of the five-part Summer Learning Series included:

- What Learners Most Need during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Career Technical Education & Talent Pipeline Management: Strategies for Connecting Classrooms to Careers

- How to Attract and Recruit Diverse Students at the Postsecondary Level: Lessons from Aspen Institute
- 2020 Elections Landscape: Implications for Career Technical Education
- CTE's Role in the Future of Work and our Economic Recovery

Advance CTE delivered technical assistance to two states (**Florida** and **Minnesota**) on the topic of advancing equity in CTE and closing opportunity gaps, with funding support from the Joyce Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Advance CTE conducted a set of virtual train-the-trainer sessions with Minnesota to train consortium staff on how to conduct an opportunity gap analysis process. Advance CTE also conducted a set of virtual workshops with a pilot district in Florida. In addition, Advance CTE worked with Florida to analyze the state's CTE enrollment data to identify opportunity gaps, root causes and potential strategies to address these gaps.

Advance CTE is developing materials and templates that any state can use to conduct an equity-based data analysis and root cause analysis process to close opportunity gaps. These resources build on equity gap analysis work in Florida, Minnesota and New Jersey. Advance CTE staff are conducting final revisions to the workshop materials through December 2020 and are developing plans to share the materials with members in early 2021 through a train-the-trainer workshop.

### **3. Raise the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE**

Advance CTE provides technical assistance to State CTE Directors and state CTE leaders related to communications, messaging and promotion of high-quality CTE. Advance CTE received its third grant from the Siemens Foundation to provide technical assistance to a small number of states to support the recruitment of students into high-quality CTE programs; implementation of that grant was delayed until early 2021 in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Advance CTE continues to build technical assistance activities into project proposals and budgets to ensure sufficient resources to support the provision of these services. Our technical assistance work is currently supported by grants from four different philanthropic foundations, as well as state-funded contracts. As the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the progress of our technical assistance work as well as shifting all technical assistance to be delivered virtually, the funders have offered significant flexibility, including shifting the scope, timelines and budgets of planned work.

### **4. Build and maintain strong and effective partnerships that advance Advance CTE's vision and mission**

Advance CTE continues to engage and leverage partnerships that support our delivery of high-quality technical assistance to states and expand our capacity to do so. We work collaboratively with partners on the delivery of technical assistance; current partners include the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), Education Strategy Group (ESG), and two former State Directors who work with Advance CTE as consultants. We are collaborating with partners to develop and disseminate technical assistance tools and resources, with the potential to co-brand relevant resources.



## **5. Developing internal processes and protocols to ensure a strong and sustainable organization**

Advance CTE as an organization is committed to developing and implementing internal processes and protocols to ensure that we provide high-quality technical assistance to states that need it and that information and lessons learned through state-specific technical assistance informs our broader work with all states. On a quarterly basis we track which states receive technical assistance and as a staff discuss ways we can provide support and technical assistance to states most in need of this support.

We are committed to supporting and increasing the capacity of Advance CTE to deliver high-quality technical assistance; we have engaged two former State Directors as consultants to expand our technical assistance capacity, we have hired staff members with previous experience delivering technical assistance, and we provide training to staff to build their technical assistance and facilitation skills. We continue to focus on developing staff members' skills with virtual engagement and facilitation, and Advance CTE staff have received positive feedback about our creative use of virtual engagement strategies and tools.

We are strengthening our knowledge management system processes, including ensuring that tools and documents used or developed through technical assistance work with states are saved to the organization's shared Google drive, as well as collecting and storing in one central location documents that are typically needed for grant proposals.

Finally, we continue to implement data-driven processes to evaluate the quality and impact of Advance CTE's technical assistance work. We embed evaluation into all technical assistance work to collect evidence about the effectiveness of specific strategies, and we analyze and use this information to support continuous improvement of technical assistance work and products.

### **Major Accomplishments (April– October 2020)**

- Provided five states with intensive coaching and topic-specific technical assistance related to Perkins V implementation.
- Conducted three workgroups related to effective collection and use of data, with specific topics of data collection and use in youth apprenticeship programs; Perkins V data reporting and visualization; and development of a data quality benchmark tool.
- Supported the *New Skills ready network*, which will provide six communities/states with technical assistance to expand high-quality career pathways.
- Launched the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative, which will provide technical assistance and support to five states in support of improving postsecondary CTE data quality.
- Launched the New State Director Institute, a ten-month cohort-based executive leadership style program for new State CTE Directors that includes a mix of workshops, support from a mentor and a peer network.

- Provided virtual technical assistance to members through a series of six Lunch and Learn peer workshops and five Summer Learning Series webinars.
- Delivered technical assistance to two states on the topic of advancing equity in CTE and closing opportunity gaps.
- Developed workshop materials that can be used by any state to conduct their own opportunity gap analysis workshop, with plans in development to launch these materials to members in 2021.

## **Challenges**

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on much of Advance CTE's state policy work, largely because of reduced capacity in state agencies and their real need to address urgent priorities on the ground in communities. In the summer, Advance CTE was able to restart much of its state technical assistance work, albeit through virtual engagement, but the timelines of most technical assistance projects were extended and some states elected to discontinue their work with Advance CTE altogether because of limited staff capacity at state agencies to address non-coronavirus work. Advance CTE staff continue to adjust plans to ensure that our engagement with states remains relevant and timely in this rapidly changing environment, and adjusting or extending timelines for longer-term projects to shift some work on technical assistance to late 2020 and early 2021.

Now that all states have approved Perkins V state plans, Advance CTE needs to pivot away from providing technical assistance to states in support of plan development and instead to begin supporting plan implementation. Advance CTE staff are developing a strategy based on themes from the State of CTE report to determine both the content and delivery methods of its technical assistance in support of state plan implementation.

Advance CTE continues to develop new ways to engage our members in technical assistance activities, yet we anticipate continued limitations in capacity of state agencies as our members are understandably focused on responding to the continuing coronavirus pandemic.

## **Update on Identified Priorities for (April – October 2020)**

- Continue to provide technical assistance to states in support of Perkins V implementation, including identifying innovative approaches in state plans and sharing those approaches with other states through a *State of CTE* report, professional learning and other strategies.
  - Advance CTE is providing policy-related support and technical assistance to five states. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the timelines for completing these projects was extended and all of the projects will now conclude by December 2020.
  - In October, Advance CTE released its State of CTE report that provides an [analysis of states' Perkins V priorities](#) and the implementation of those priorities through their Perkins V state plans.

- Staff are reviewing lessons learned from across state technical assistance projects to identify what resources and strategies can be shared with members more broadly.
- Support the first cohort of the virtual cohort-based technical assistance model, which will provide a robust and comprehensive way for multiple states to engage in peer sharing and learning on a specific topic through multiple points of engagement over a fixed period of time.
  - Advance CTE staff elected to put the launch of this project on hold because of limited capacity both in states and among the Advance CTE staff as a result of responding to urgent COVID-19 challenges. Staff are planning to launch this effort in 2021.
- Develop and release tools and resources on data visualization and use, CTE data quality, and data collection and use in youth apprenticeship programs, informed by three different workgroups on these topics.
  - Advance CTE conducted three workgroups related to effective collection and use of data and staff are finalizing tools and resources for release in November 2020 and February 2021:
    - Youth Apprenticeship Data Workgroup: Advance CTE will be releasing a report in mid-November that highlights challenges and recommendations for improving youth apprenticeship data quality.
    - Perkins V Data Reporting and Visualization: Advance CTE will be releasing a design principles report and communications toolkit in mid-November.
    - CTE Data Quality: Advance CTE is finalizing a set of resources that resulted from this workgroup; a microsite will be launched in mid-February 2021 that will include a CTE data quality policy benchmark tool, case studies and a glossary.
- Begin providing technical assistance to six states and communities within those states to expand high-quality career pathways, through the Global Career Readiness Initiative funded by JPMorgan Chase & Co.
  - From April through October, the six sites completed the initial planning phase of the five-year grant period. Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group (ESG) developed a robust needs assessment process that sites completed; the needs assessment included a cross-sector self-assessment, a data capacity mapping tool, and secondary and postsecondary equity analysis tools. Sites also completed an action plan to guide their efforts through September 2021.
- Continue delivering technical assistance to State CTE Directors and state CTE leaders through professional learning activities including Lunch & Learns and the Summer Learning Series, and determine appropriate timing and structure to relaunch the New State CTE Directors Leadership Program.

- Advance CTE provided virtual technical assistance to members through a series of six Lunch and Learn peer workshops and five Summer Learning Series webinars.
- Advance CTE launched the New State Director Institute in September 2020; this is a ten-month cohort-based executive leadership style program for new State CTE Directors that includes a mix of workshops, support from a mentor and a peer network.
- Develop and release materials and templates states can use to conduct an equity-based data analysis and root cause analysis process to close opportunity gaps.
  - Advance CTE developed workshop materials based on its experiences conducting pilot workshops with Minnesota, Florida and New Jersey. Advance CTE staff are conducting final revisions to the workshop materials through December 2020 and are developing plans to share the materials with members in early 2021.
- Continue to build technical assistance activities into project proposals and budgets to ensure sufficient resources to support the provision of these services.
  - Advance CTE maintains strong relationships with its current grant funders; those funders provided significant flexibility during the coronavirus pandemic to adjust the scope, timeline and budgets of planned work to accommodate the shift to virtual technical assistance delivery. These shifts have allowed Advance CTE to expand the scope of its technical assistance on some projects, including developing a more robust microsite to house the CTE Data Quality policy benchmark tool and increasing the number of states selected to participate in the Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality Initiative.
- Continue to build staff capacity to support Advance CTE's technical assistance work, including hiring staff with previous experience with delivering technical assistance, developing technical assistance and facilitation skills among staff, and partnering with other organizations and consultants to support delivery of high-quality technical assistance.
  - As technical assistance delivery shifted to be fully virtual from April through October 2020, Advance CTE focused on developing its staff members' skills in relation to successfully facilitating and engaging members in virtual settings. Staff members participated in several "tool time" sessions to explore the capabilities and potential use of a number of different virtual engagement tools.
  - Advance CTE is in the final stages of hiring for a senior policy associate with a target start date for that new employee of December 1, 2020; all our final candidates possess extensive skills and past experience delivering technical assistance on policy topics related to CTE.

### **Priorities for Next Five Months (November 2020 – March 2021)**

- Continue to provide technical assistance to states in support of Perkins V implementation, including identifying innovative approaches in state plans and sharing those approaches with other states through professional learning and other strategies.

- Develop and launch a virtual cohort-based technical assistance model, which will provide a robust and comprehensive way for multiple states to engage in peer sharing and learning on a specific topic through multiple points of engagement over a fixed period of time.
- Release tools and resources on data visualization and use, CTE data quality, and data collection and use in youth apprenticeship programs, informed by three different workgroups on these topics.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to cities and states as they expand high-quality career pathways, through the *New Skills ready network* supported by JPMorgan Chase & Co.
- Continue delivering technical assistance to State CTE Directors and state CTE leaders through professional learning activities and the New State Director Leadership Institute.
- Release materials and templates states can use to conduct an equity-based data analysis and root cause analysis process to close opportunity gaps.
- Plan technical assistance work related to the release of the CTE Forward Vision; current plans include a set of supports and resources to help states adopt and implement the new vision after its release in March 2021.
- Continue to build technical assistance activities into project proposals and budgets to ensure sufficient resources to support the provision of these services.
- Continue to build staff capacity to support Advance CTE's technical assistance work, including hiring staff with previous experience with delivering technical assistance, developing technical assistance and facilitation skills among staff, and partnering with other organizations and consultants to support delivery of high-quality technical assistance.

**Fundraising & Development Update**  
*Report submitted by Kate Kreamer, Deputy Executive Director*

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Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE has continued to have strong relationships with our funders and has raised funds to support new and existing project work, staff time and member resources, while staying committed to only taking on projects aligned to our mission, vision, strategic plan and member priorities.

Starting in July 2017, we began tracking our fundraising and development activities to capture within the organization's Shared Impact and Reach Dashboard. Between May-October 2020, Advance CTE staff:

- Had 14 active grants/contracts;
- Secured and launched three new sub-grants/contracts with College High School Alliance and Opportunity America;
- Secured four sponsorships for the CTE Summit, including from a new funder; and
- Have engaged with an additional funder to inform their career readiness strategies.

<i>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</i>	<p>In 2018, Advance CTE secured a one-year, \$300,000 grant from the Gates Foundation for: the revision of the National Career Clusters® Framework; support for the implementation of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V); national leadership and state support activities that advance the implementation of and access to high-quality CTE pathways across the nation, with a focus on priority states; and support for expanded efforts to address equity in CTE. Since the initial grant award, we have received two supplemental grants, to expand our Perkins support as well as support for the CTE Forward Summit.</p> <p>We requested and received a no-cost extension for his grant through March 31, 2021 to support the release of our new vision. Conversations are underway for our next round of funding and Advance CTE leadership is providing a briefing on the 50-state Perkins V analysis and the Summit in November 2020.</p>	Ongoing
<i>JPMorgan Chase &amp; Co.</i>	<p><i>New Skills ready network:</i> In early 2020, Advance CTE received a five-year grant of \$5 million from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation (JPMC) to support JPMC's new career readiness initiative. Through <i>New Skills ready network</i>, JPMC is providing five-year grants to six sites across the country: Boston Massachusetts, Columbus Ohio, Dallas Texas, Denver Colorado, Indianapolis Indiana and Nashville Tennessee. These investments are for local-state partnerships to advance high-quality career pathways and real world-work experiences, with a focus on equity and access. We are partnering with the Education Strategy Group to provide supports to these sites, as well as leading on identifying promising practices and</p>	Ongoing

	<p>helping to share lessons learned with state and local leaders across the country.</p> <p>The sites were finally announced in October 2020, and our grant runs through June 30, 2025.</p>	
<i>JPMorgan Chase &amp; Co.</i>	<p><i>New Skills for Youth Innovation Sites:</i> Advance CTE has been documenting the site-based investments JPMC made across the global. We released 12 snapshots and a summary report of lessons learned and the final two snapshots over fall 2019-spring 2020. Advance CTE is leveraging the rest of the resources to support a Shared Solutions Workgroup around data quality aligned to the broader <i>New Skills ready network</i>, which will culminate in a new policy benchmark tool, a set of supplemental resources around career-ready data and a microsite.</p> <p>We have requested and received a no-cost extension through June 30, 2021 to support spend down as we had to cancel in-person meetings. We are finalizing the internal budget and plans to support additional data work, as well as potential economic recovery supports.</p>	Ongoing
<i>Joyce Foundation</i>	<p><i>Perkins V Implementation Support:</i> This two-year grant is supporting Advance CTE's implementation supports for Perkins V, including direct technical assistance to priority states and a range of activities around equity. One of the major deliverables has been a new opportunity gap workshop, piloted in New Jersey, Florida and Minnesota over 2020, to support state-led efforts to identify and close equity gaps in CTE. We are now in the process of identifying next steps for disseminating these resources and provided supports and services for states. Later in 2020, Advance CTE will be launching a shared solutions workgroup on equity with support from this grant. The grant runs through May 31, 2021.</p>	Ongoing
<i>Siemens Foundation</i>	<p><i>Siemens 3.0:</i> In early 2020, Advance CTE received a two-year grant from the Siemens Foundation to continue to support states in their communications and recruitment efforts at the state and local levels. This round of funding is technical assistance for states, subgrants to states to pilot recurrent activities, and a national survey of students and families to retest the messages developed in 2017 and oversample for subpopulations to ensure that messages resonate with families of varying backgrounds. Additionally, the grant would be used to deliver 30 career advising workshops over two years. The grant runs from March 2020-February 2022 and totals \$838,500.</p>	Ongoing
<i>New America (Siemens, Ballmer Group, JPMorgan Chase)</i>	<p><i>Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship:</i> Advance CTE has joined New America and a number of other partners as a leading partner on a multi-year, multi-funder project to support the expansion of high-quality youth apprenticeship programs. The partners include New America, JFF, Education Strategy Group, National Alliance of Partnerships for Equity, National Governors Association and</p>	Ongoing

	<p>National Workforce Fund. The funders include JPMorgan Chase, Siemens Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Ballmer Group, Bloomberg Philanthropies and Annie E. Casey Foundation. The first phase of the project is winding down; while the original end date was August 2020, we have requested and received a no-cost extension through November 30, 2020.</p> <p>We are expecting our scope of work for phase two of the work to be finalized in November 2020. It is expected that our funding will remain somewhat similar (\$200,000 over two years).</p>	
<i>Lumina Foundation</i>	<p><i>Area Technical Centers:</i> In 2019, Advance CTE received its first grant from the Lumina Foundation to conduct research and provide recommendations around the role of area technical centers in supporting adult learners and statewide postsecondary attainment. We had the opportunity to do a briefing for the state policy team at Lumina in fall 2020 to preview our findings and will be releasing the report, a dashboard of area technical centers and other resources on a new microsite in January 2021. We have requested and received a no-cost extension through March 31, 2021.</p>	Ongoing
<i>ECMC Foundation – Postsecondary Data Initiative</i>	<p><i>Advancing Postsecondary CTE Data Quality:</i> Advance CTE has received a three-year, \$750,000 grant from the ECMC Foundation to support a multi-state initiative to improve the quality and effective use of postsecondary CTE data. Through this grant, Advance CTE is working with a cohort of postsecondary state and system offices to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, build an action plan for improving CTE data quality, receive technical assistance and participate in a community of practice. The states that applied but were not selected to be part of the cohort, which is also receiving \$70,000 over the course of the project, are being invited to join the community of practice. The grant period runs from January 2020-December 2022.</p>	Ongoing
<i>UMass Medical School</i>	<p>Advance CTE has been built into a five-year grant, focused on supporting adult learners with disabilities, in partnership with the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. The total sub-contract runs from October 2019-September 2024 and is for \$42,000.</p>	Ongoing
<i>College High School Alliance</i>	<p>Advance CTE joined the College in High School Alliance’s (CHSA) steering committee, along with JFF and NACEP, Bard College, Middle College National Consortium, KnowledgeWorks and Achieving the Dream.</p>	
<i>Joyce Foundation</i>	<p>In April 2020, CHSA submitted a grant proposal to the Joyce Foundation, which includes \$57,000 for Advance CTE to serve on the steering committee, develop a resource on CTE and early college opportunities and support broader advocacy and communications in support of these programs at the state and federal level. The grant runs from September 2020-August 31, 2022.</p>	Secured



<i>Gates Foundation</i>	CHSA was recently approved for a one-year grant from the Gates Foundation, to run from September 2020-August 31, 2021. Advance CTE will receive \$23,000. The grant agreement is still being finalized and we expect our contract and payment to be processed in November 2020.	Secured
<i>ECMC Foundation</i>	CHSA has received approval from ECMC Foundation to submit a full proposal, after accepting the letter of intent. The grant would not begin until 2021 and our grant amount is still to be determined, but would not be less than \$20,000, but the entire grant will be for \$525,000.	Proposal Development
<i>CTE Forward Summit</i>	In addition to the support built into our Gates and Siemens' grants for the CTE Forward Summit, Advance CTE raised an additional \$43,000 funds from a number of funders including Strada Education Network (\$25,000), JPMC (\$10,000), Lumina (\$5,000), and ECMC Foundation (\$3,000). The funding from Strada (and Gates) will also support the vision development and release.	Complete & Ongoing
<i>Lumina Foundation – Opportunity America</i>	Over the summer, Advance CTE signed an MOU with Opportunity America to help develop, collect and disseminate survey findings on credit/non-credit offerings at community colleges. The contract is with Advance CTE, extends over 2020-21 and is for \$14,000.	Secured
<i>ECMC Foundation – CTE Leadership</i>	In October-November 2020, Advance CTE put forward a proposal to the ECMC Foundation for a three-year grant to support building a pipeline of diverse state CTE postsecondary leaders. We will find out whether our proposal was accepted in early November.	Proposal Development
<i>Lumina Foundation (NASFAA)</i>	<i>Short-Term Postsecondary Programs:</i> The National Association for State Financial Aid Administrators ( <a href="#">NASFAA</a> ) approached Advance CTE to join a new initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation on the national landscape of short-term postsecondary programs. We served as a critical thought partner, disseminated a survey to our members around motivators and inhibitors of short-term postsecondary programs, conducted additional research, contributed to the publication (which was released in October 2020) and helped with dissemination. The grant has now concluded.	Complete
<i>Association of Black Charities</i>	<i>Racial Equity:</i> Advance CTE secured a grant to help us understand how to identify federal and state CTE policies or practices that perpetuate inequities. This one-year grant, totaling \$25,000, supported internal equity trainings for Advance CTE staff. We requested and received a no-cost extension on this grant to complete our work through virtual trainings, due to COVID-19. This grant has now concluded.	Complete
<i>U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation</i>	<i>TPM-CTE:</i> Advance CTE staff has secured a contract with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to embed CTE into their Talent Pipeline Management curriculum. We served on the committee, along with six State Directors and supported the release and dissemination of the <a href="#">final resource</a> . This contract has now concluded.	Complete

<i>Iowa Perkins Support</i>	In 2019, ACTE secured a contract with the Iowa Department of Education to provide support around the development of their Perkins V plan, in partnership with Advance CTE. This contract concluded in June 2020.	Complete
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Over the past six months, Advance CTE has also put forward two proposals – one to the Gates Foundation in partnership with the Council of State Governments’ Justice Center and one to ECMC Foundation in partnership with Western Governors University – that were ultimately not selected.

***Looking Ahead:***

Advance CTE recognizes that a number of grants are ending this fiscal year (Gates, Joyce 2.0, Lumina Foundation). We are planning to develop a new development strategy in alignment with our new vision and strategic plan, starting in early 2021.

**Board action:** None

Grant	Grant Amount	Grant Start Date	Grant End Date	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sept 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Apr-Jun 2021	Jul-Sept 2021	Oct-Dec 2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Apr-Jun 2022
Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship 1.0	\$200,000	Sept. 2018	No. 2020									
GATES: Perkins V, Career Clusters, Summit	\$1,250,000	Oct. 2018	Mar. 2021									
JPMORGAN CHASE: Innovation Sites, Data Quality	\$475,000	Oct. 2018	Jun. 2021									
JOYCE: Perkins Support, Equity	\$300,000	Apr. 2019	Mar. 2021									
Lumina: Area Technical Centers	\$250,000	Sept. 2019	Mar. 2021									
Lumina: NASFAA	\$75,000	Aug. 2019	Sept. 2020									
ECMC: Postsecondary Data Quality	\$750,000	Jan. 2020	Dec. 2022									
JPMC: Global Career Readiness Initiative	\$5,000,000	Mar. 2020	Jun. 2025									
Siemens 3.0	\$838,500	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2022									
CHSA-Joyce	\$57,000	Sept. 2020	Aug. 2022									
CHSA-Gates	\$23,000	Sept. 2020	Aug. 2021									
Opportunity America	\$14,000	Sept. 2020	Dec. 2021									
Strada Education Network: Summit & Vision	\$25,000	Sept. 2020	Mar. 2020									

**Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE FY19-21 Strategic Plan Update**  
*Report submitted by Kate Kreamer, Deputy Executive Director*

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Over the summer, Advance CTE undertook their annual review and update of the Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE to bring it into alignment with the work underway and new priorities and projects planned for the year ahead that will help ensure the organization is able to fully meet the promise of the three-year strategic plan.

In particular, the update ensured the staff-developed and -executed activities reflected:

- Our internal and external commitment to equity and ending racial injustice;
- The broader set of activities to support the development, release and implementation of the new vision;
- Supports to ensure CTE is well-positioned in the economic recovery; and
- Our updated plan for a virtual learning strategy and member supports.

Below is a snapshot of progress on the strategic plan, at the Board-approved “strategy” level since the May 2020 Board meeting, but reflective of the updated activities.

<b>Green</b>	Solid: Progress is on track, or ahead of schedule, and is expected to be achieved
<b>Yellow</b>	Progressing: Progress has been made, but there are identified action steps and deliverable timelines which require attention in order to stay on track
<b>Orange</b>	Concerning: Progress has been halted and attention needs to be given to address/resolve the disruptions in order to get back on track
<b>Red</b>	Problematic: Little or no progress has been made and immediate attention is required to identify solutions-oriented next steps to begin getting traction

Strategic Priority	Status (October 2020)
<b>Strategic Priority 1: Ensure the Adoption and Implementation of High-Quality State and Federal CTE POLICY</b>	
1a. Develop, refine and advance federal legislative and budgetary priorities that support, promote and increase equitable access to and success in high-quality CTE.	
1b. Develop and promote policy frameworks, publications and tools that support, promote and increase learner access to and success in high-quality CTE.	
1c. Support Advance CTE members in the implementation of federal and state legislation and policies through structured and just-in-time technical assistance.	
1d. Plan and execute a strategy for the revision of the National Career Clusters® Framework.	

<b>Strategic Priority 2: Empower Advance CTE Members through Topical and Impactful PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b>	
2a. Maintain strong and effective two-way communications channels with Advance CTE members to ensure they are aware of and inform Advance CTE's priorities, activities, resources and events.	
2b. Provide high-quality in-person and virtual professional development events and resources to build, grow and strengthen the leadership skills and content knowledge of Advance CTE members, which they then implement in their own states and communities.	
2c. Provide personalized and targeted supports to Advance CTE members to support CTE's leadership pipeline.	
2d. Build and strengthen communities within Advance CTE's membership to foster cross-state sharing and learning.	
<b>Strategic Priority 3: Raise the Visibility and PROMOTION of High-Quality CTE</b>	
3a. Develop, disseminate, and support Advance CTE members and key stakeholders in the use of communications resources, tools, messages and technical assistance to build the visibility of and support for high-quality CTE.	
3b. Position Advance CTE as the go-to organization for members, policymakers, the media and other key stakeholders seeking expertise, accurate information and timely resources related to CTE.	
3c. Plan and execute a strategy to celebrate Advance CTE's 100-year anniversary that documents and honors our history and success while continuing to move the organization and CTE field forward.	
3d. Plan and execute a fundraising and development strategy that aligns with and advances the organizations' mission and vision.	
<b>Strategic Priority 4: Build and Maintain Strong and Effective PARTNERSHIPS that Advance our Vision and Mission</b>	
4a. Develop, maintain and grow strategic partnerships with policymakers, federal agencies, advocacy groups and other key organizations to advance the federal legislative and budgetary priorities.	
4b. Develop, maintain and grow strategic partnerships with policymakers, advocacy groups and other key stakeholders to support states' adoption and implementation of legislation and policies.	
4c. Develop, maintain and grow strategic partnerships with K-12 and postsecondary education organizations to ensure CTE is considered an essential partner in the full P-20 education continuum.	
4d. Develop, maintain and grow strategic partnerships, particularly with employers and industry and workforce development organizations, to ensure CTE is considered an essential partner to workforce and economic development.	

**Strategic Priority 5: Develop and Maintain Internal PROCESSES and PROTOCOLS to Ensure a Strong, Healthy and Sustainable Organization**

5a. Ensure all aspects of the management of Advance CTE/The Center to Advance CTE are effective, efficient and in legal compliance.

5b. Revise and update the organizational standard operations procedures manual to comprehensively articulate key organizational policies, processes and practices.

5c. Develop, maintain and use an internal knowledge management system.

5d. Support and maintain a positive work culture that is collaborative and values employees' contributions, leadership and growth.

5e. Maintain an organizational commitment to being data-driven and focused on continuous improvement.

**Summary of Overall Trends**

- A lot of our federal policy work has halted due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) and lack of a second stimulus bill.
- Many of our Perkins' supports are winding down, especially the direct technical assistance being provided.
- We are-prioritized staff capacity to focus on engaging members and strengthening our virtual professional learning offerings
- Over the past six months, Advance CTE launched a number of new grants and projects, putting us in early stages of work (e.g.Siemens research, which means our communications technical assistance is delayed; the ECMC project, which includes our first community of practice; New Skills ready network had a delayed start, so many publications will not be released until early 2020; etc.).
- While we have many strong partners, CTE has not been a top priority for some in the past few months as other issues have taken precedence and there has been limited legislative activity. Advance CTE has made intentional efforts to engage with organizations focused on economic recovery and, looking ahead, the vision and Career Cluster work position us well for new and expanded partnership opportunities.
- We have committed a significant amount of time and capacity on our internal processes, with a focus on equity, which is critical as we have three new staff members joining our team in fall/winter 2020.

**Board action required: No action required**