



State Policies Impacting CTE 2015 Year in Review

In 2015, states continued to invest heavily in career and technical education (CTE), as leaders and policymakers sought to strengthen their state economies, fill the talent pipeline with well-prepared workers in key industries, and provide meaningful educational and career opportunities for citizens at every learner level.

Now in its third year, this report is a joint venture of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC). Since our inaugural report, we have seen consistent fiscal and programmatic investments in CTE, as state policymakers look to promote, expand and improve CTE across secondary, postsecondary and adult education.

More than 125 CTE-related laws, executive orders, board of education actions and budget provisions were approved across 39 states in 2015. Although there was a slight dip overall in the number of CTE-related policies enacted compared to 2013 and 2014, there was a notable uptick in substantive policy actions seeking to leverage CTE within states' broader economic and workforce development strategies. Additionally, a number of states focused on implementing major state and federal policies passed in recent years, rather than adopting new reforms, and a number of states had high-profile budgetary battles this year, leading to delayed or no action on a range of policy issues.¹ In any case, there is no question that CTE remained a top policy priority for the majority of states, particularly in regard to their education agendas.

Key Takeaways

Funding emerged as the top category for the third year in a row, with 28 states including CTE-specific provisions in their budgets or changing their funding approaches. In the vast majority of these cases, funding was increased rather than decreased, and it was also directed to postsecondary CTE and workforce development initiatives slightly more often than to secondary CTE. Some postsecondary funding examples include last-dollar scholarships for community college students (*Oregon*), the piloting of free tuition (*Minnesota*) and one-time funding to assist *South Dakota's* technical institutes in building capacity for high-demand workforce programs. For

secondary CTE, *Montana* lawmakers doubled CTE's annual statewide appropriation, and in Nevada annual funding tripled to \$16.3 million. Another windfall for secondary CTE came in *California*, as the legislature approved a three-year \$900 million CTE Incentive Grant competition to support new and expanded high-quality programs. Conversely, *Arizona* lawmakers reduced the state's base per-pupil spending to 92.5 percent — a cut of \$26 million — for the state's 14 Joint Technical Education Districts.

Similar to our first report in 2013, the governance category re-emerged in 2015 as the second-most-

<i>Policy Area</i> <i>Note: A single bill or policy can address multiple policy areas</i>	<i>Number of States Addressing Policy Area</i>	<i>States</i>
Funding	28	AL, AZ, AR, CA, CO, GA, IN, IA, KS, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MT, NE, NV, NJ, NM, OH, OR, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI
Governance	21	AL, AR, CA, CO, FL, LA, MA, MT, NH, NM, ND, NY, OR, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, WY
Industry Partnerships and Work-based Learning	20	AL, AR, CA, CO, DE, GA, IN, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, NE, NJ, NM, OR, TX, VA, WA, WV
Career/Academic Guidance and Awareness	15	AL, AR, CA, CO, IA, MI, MN, NE, NM, OH, PA, TN, TX, UT, WA
Dual and Concurrent Enrollment, Articulation and Early College	14	AL, AR, CA, CO, GA, HI, KS, ME, MI, NM, SD, TX, VA, WA
Industry-recognized Credentials	12	CO, GA, KS, ME, MD, NE, NM, OH, OR, TN, VA, WI
CTE Teacher Certification and Development	9	CA, ME, MN, NJ, OR, SD, TX, VA, WA
Data, Reporting and/or Accountability	7	AR, CO, DE OH, SD, VA, WY
CTE Standards and Accreditation	7	ME, ND, NM, TX, VA, WA, WV
Graduation Requirements	6	GA, IN, NM, OR, TX, VA
STEMⁱⁱ	6	MD, MA, MN, OR, TN, WA
Prior Learning and Competency-based Education	6	CT, MT, OH, PA, VA, WI

common policy area, with 21 states enacting laws or rules to affect how CTE is governed in some way. These policies included funding formula changes, the creation of a new governing body or task force, or a transfer of authority from one state agency to another.

In *Alabama* and *South Dakota*, the community and technical colleges moved out from under the auspices of their respective Departments of Education, and were re-established as their own independent systems, though South Dakota voters must approved this change in 2016. Meanwhile, *Oregon* established the Oregon Talent Council, primarily comprised of industry representatives, to advise state agencies and institutions.

Likely driven by the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and major

national initiatives, a number of governance-related policies address interagency collaboration to develop state career pathways systems. For instance, in *Virginia* the Board of Workforce Development, the Virginia Employment Commission and the Virginia Community College System are directed to develop and execute a strategic plan combining public and private resources in support of sector strategies and career pathways. Relatedly, several states specifically passed legislation mandating or encouraging CTE participation in WIOA planning (*Arkansas, California, Florida* and *Louisiana*).

The third-most-common category of 2015 addressed partnerships between industry and education, with 20 states enacting policies that foster and encourage such collaboration. These included a new career-oriented foreign language

program in *Texas* developed with industry leaders, and several state laws that require business collaboration to apply for newly funded competitive grant programs. Additionally, roughly one-third of these policies were focused on expanding or improving work-based learning at the secondary and postsecondary levels through funding increases, new accountability metrics, tax incentives and more.

Funding is often key to the implementation of policies fostering all types of industry partnerships. For example, *Maine* is providing tuition assistance and grants for programs that obtain matching funds or in-kind contributions from local businesses to support the state's Put ME to Work program. In addition, *Maryland* funded an apprenticeship pilot program, while *Colorado* set aside funding for a new program to partially reimburse companies in key industries for offering high-quality internships at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

One category that has risen dramatically this year is career/academic guidance and awareness, with 15 states passing policies in 2015. Just six states did so in 2014 and three in 2013. This could be seen through laws funding career planning tools (*Colorado, Iowa, Michigan and Ohio*) and increasing the number and training of career counselors (*Alabama, Arkansas, Minnesota and Utah*). Notably, governors in *Michigan* and *Nebraska* launched awareness campaigns to

promote a variety of careers and high-demand industries.

The attainment of college credit in high school and credit articulation remained popular in 2015, with 14 state legislatures and boards enacting related policies, such as modified or expanded eligibility for dual/concurrent enrollment (*Georgia, Hawaii and Washington*). Georgia streamlined its dual-enrollment initiatives into one program, Move On When Ready, which now authorizes CTE courses and electives as being eligible for dual enrollment. Some states appropriated funding or expanded access to dual enrollment and early/middle college programs (*Alabama and Michigan*, among others).

Many of the most active policy categories in 2015 were also frequently seen in 2014. However, there were a few policy categories in which we observed fewer state actions in 2015, notably: data, reporting and accountability; graduation requirements; and CTE standards and accreditation. These variations likely reflect cycles in which state policy on a particular issue is approved in one year, followed by a year or more of implementation with little-to-no related state action.

We anticipate that 2016 will be another major year for CTE policy, as states pursue their continuing commitment to CTE within the implementation of WIOA and the Every Student Succeeds Act, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

This paper was prepared by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium ([NASDCTEc](#)) and the Association for Career and Technical Education ([ACTE](#)), and provides an overview of CTE-related state policies enacted in 2015.

While many of the highlighted state actions may have positive implications for CTE, the inclusion of policies within this publication does not imply an endorsement by ACTE, NASDCTEc or state CTE leaders. The policy table provides a high-level overview of the trends found in this year's roundup of relevant state CTE policies. This table is not exhaustive and, therefore, not every state policy found is included.

Alabama

[SB191](#) separates the state's community and technical colleges from the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, and it creates the independent Alabama Community College System and a new board of trustees.

Alabama's fiscal year (FY) 2016 [education budget](#) appropriated an additional \$5.1 million to expand CTE dual enrollment. The funding bump brings the total to \$10.3 million. The funds are to be distributed by the chancellor of the Alabama Community College System, who is directed to work with industry partners to identify workforce needs. The budget also provided a \$700,000 increase for the state's CTE initiatives, including the state's Career Coaches program. The funding bump will allow for every high school in the state to have a career coach.

Alaska

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Arizona

Lawmakers permanently [reduced](#) state base per-pupil spending to 92.5 percent, or a cut of \$29 million, for its 14 Joint Technical Education Districts, which offer secondary CTE programs to partner school districts. The cuts are scheduled to go into effect on July 1, 2016.

Arkansas

2015 was an active year in CTE policy for the state:

- With the support of Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Arkansas lawmakers approved [HB1183](#), which makes computer science a required course offering for all public high schools and charters in the state, beginning in the 2015-16 school year. Specifically, the law requires that at least one course be offered at each school, be of high-quality, meet or exceed state curriculum standards, and be made available in a variety of education settings to meet the needs of students. The law also established a task force to recommend course standards and frameworks, study the computer science and technology needs of the state, and recommend strategies to meet future workforce needs. The state CTE director is a member of the task force.
- [SB368](#) establishes the Career Education and Workforce Development Board to create and administer a coordinated approach to workforce development and CTE in Arkansas. The bill also created the Skills Development Fund and Office of Skills Development, which will award grants to public and private organizations for the development and implementation of workforce training programs.
- [SB371](#) allows school districts to use certain categorical funds for partnerships with state-supported higher education and technical institutions to offer concurrent courses and other CTE options to students in grades eight to 12.
- [SB791](#) aligns existing state laws to the newly passed federal WIOA, and includes the state CTE director on the Arkansas Workforce Development Board.
- [SB891](#) creates the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Fund to provide planning and implementation grants to support the development of local career pathways. The grants encourage collaboration between employers and education.

- [HB1600](#) aims to promote efficiency in reporting by a school district or public school by reducing duplicative reporting to the state Departments of Education and Career Education.
- [HB1895](#) expands the state's College and Career Coaches program to be accessible for all middle and high schools. The College and Career Coaches program assists students in preparing for postsecondary education or careers.

In addition, the Arkansas Board of Education [voted](#) to endorse the vision and recommendations made by the ForwARd Arkansas initiative, which was led by a group of education, business, government and civic leaders from across the state. The recommendations aim to improve education by focusing on seven key areas and include CTE as a means to become college- and career-ready.

California

Legislation in 2015 included [AB288](#), which authorizes community colleges and school districts to enter into a College and Career Access Pathways partnership to develop seamless CTE pathways and increase dual- and concurrent-enrollment opportunities for students. The bill also increases the number of allowable postsecondary credits that students may take to 15 per term. In addition, [AB1270](#) codifies definitions of career pathways and sector strategies, and encourages, but does not require, a combined state plan for all education and workforce programs under WIOA.

In late June, the California legislature agreed to a \$115 billion [budget](#) deal – effective July 1 – that sends more than \$400 million in new money to the state's CTE programs during FY 2015-2016. Specifically, lawmakers approved Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed CTE Incentive Grant program to the tune of \$900 million over the next three years. The grants are intended to support new or expanded high-quality CTE programs, and the amount will decrease to \$300 million in FY 2016-17 and \$200 million in FY 2017-18. The grant program requires local recipients to match the state funding during the first year of the grant. By the third year of the grant, the local match must double the state's investment. This grant program was approved separately with the passage of [SB148](#).

The budget also included \$29.1 million to expand and create apprenticeship programs that focus on new and emerging industries. One-time funding was appropriated to support the CTE Pathways Program, which provides resources to community colleges to develop, enhance and expand CTE programs aligned to regional labor market demands.

Finally, the budget appropriated \$500 million to the 2015-16 Educator Effectiveness Funding Program. These block grants are intended for local districts to use over the next three years to bolster their teacher and administrator professional development, particularly as it relates to the teaching of state content standards, including the Next Generation Science Standards.

Finally, the California Community Colleges' Board of Governors [approved](#) 25 recommendations made by the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy. The recommendations focus on career exploration, industry involvement in career pathway development, continuous program improvement, streamlining curriculum approval, developing more CTE teachers, regional CTE coordination and establishing a dedicated and sustainable funding source. The task force was comprised of representatives from education, industry, government agencies and other groups.

Colorado

[HB1170](#) adds a new performance indicator to the state's K-12 accountability system. Starting in the 2016-17 school year, each public high school, district and the state as a whole must account for the percentage of graduating students who

immediately enroll in a CTE program, community college or four-year university. Each postsecondary enrollment option will now be weighted equally.

The bill also creates a statewide coordinator for postsecondary and workforce readiness who reports to the state's Workforce Development Council. The coordinator functions as an intermediary to raise the level of postsecondary and workforce readiness that high school graduates must achieve for success, particularly as it relates to skilled professions. This position also helps to coordinate the efforts of local school districts, area technical centers, community colleges, the state education agency, the workforce development council and the state CTE office, among others.

A number of other pieces of legislation were passed in the state last year:

- [SB82](#) establishes a local property tax credit or rebate for commercial and residential property owners who contribute to their county's workforce development fund, Bright Future Colorado, which is designed to provide financial assistance to Colorado residents who pursue postsecondary education and training from an accredited program.
- [HB1230](#) creates a new program to partially reimburse companies in industries, such as advanced manufacturing, aerospace and information technology, for offering quality internships to high school students or recent high school graduates, as well as two- and four-year college students. The bill directs the Department of Labor and Employment to reimburse participating companies up to half their expenses – for a maximum of \$5,000 and 10 internships – and half the reimbursement amount must be paid to the intern. To qualify, internships must be at least six months and 130 hours, be in an innovative industry, allow students to gain experience in at least two occupational areas and pay a wage of \$10 an hour. The bill appropriates approximately \$583,000 for this program.
- [HB1271](#) directs existing funds to support mobile learning labs to provide employers with flexible delivery options for on-site training. The bill was modeled after a program at Pueblo Community College.
- [HB1274](#) directs Colorado's Workforce Development Council, in collaboration with the Colorado Community College System and other partners, to develop integrated career pathways for in-demand industries within the state, such as construction and skilled trades, information technology and health care. The first career pathway should be implemented by or before the 2016-17 school year and at least two additional career pathways developed in each subsequent year. Once the career pathways are developed, the state Department of Higher Education and the Department Labor and Employment must create a free, state-provided online microsite with information about industry-specific career awareness, salary and wage information, an employment forecast, financial aid opportunities and online student support services.
- [HB1275](#) amends the state's concurrent enrollment program to allow high schools to award credit for students to count toward Registered Apprenticeship and internship programs. The bill also establishes a tuition assistance program for students enrolled in CTE certificate programs that do not meet the minimum credit-hour requirements to be eligible for federal Pell Grant assistance.
- [HB1270](#) adjusts existing state laws to allow for the Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools, a model commonly known as P-TECH. A P-TECH school is a public school with grades nine through 14 that students graduate from with a high school diploma and an associate degree. Students may also earn pre-apprenticeship and other industry-recognized certifications. The P-TECH school is operated as a collaborative effort by a local education provider, a community college and one or more local high-growth industry employers.

- [HB1276](#) appropriates \$10 million to create the Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment and Key Training Act, or WORK Act. The bill establishes a multi-year matching grant program to provide skilled worker training programs with resources to help identify, recruit, enroll and prepare Coloradans for careers in middle-skill jobs in high-demand industries. The bill defines skilled worker training programs as accredited education programs, CTE programs and apprenticeships.

In addition, the community college system in 2015 began development of a [badge system](#) that will recognize specific skills learned in school or on the job. The badge system is being supported through the Colorado Helps Advanced Manufacturing Programs grant project, and developed with the collaboration of manufacturers to meet the needs of that industry sector.

Connecticut

In June, the State Board of Education formally adopted [guidelines](#) for local school districts wishing to implement a mastery-based education system, which was first allowed by law in 2013. In Connecticut, districts have the option to offer mastery-based learning, where students must demonstrate that they have mastered competencies in order to move ahead. The guidelines include recommendations for community engagement, practice, equity and policy.

Delaware

In January, Gov. Jack Markell announced in his State of the State [address](#) that Delaware would join the Pathways to Prosperity Network. The initiative establishes partnerships with Delaware's employers, universities and school districts to develop career pathways for grades nine through 14 in the state's information technology and hospitality industries, with plans to expand to more industries in the future. Led by the governor's office, the initiative is a joint effort of the state's Departments of Economic Development, Labor, and Education.

Relatedly, the Office of Career & Technical Education and STEM Initiatives, in partnership with the Department of Labor, changed its policies to tie CTE program of study approval and improvement to labor market information.

District of Columbia

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Florida

[HB7019](#) changes the name of the state's workforce development board to CareerSource Florida, Inc., and it creates a 20-member task force to develop the state's plan for implementing WIOA. The Florida state CTE director is among the task force members.

Georgia

[SB132](#) streamlines the state's existing dual-enrollment initiatives and funding sources into one program, Move On When Ready. High school students in grades nine through 12 are now eligible to enroll in postsecondary institutions on a full- or part-time basis if admission requirements are met, and they may take courses at both their high school and postsecondary institution in the same term. Additionally, career, technical and agricultural education (CTAE) courses and electives are now eligible for dual enrollment, and non-course related fees and textbooks must now be funded by postsecondary institutions and cannot be charged to students. The bill also directs the Department of Education to communicate to high schools the subject-area requirements or elective courses that may be satisfied with dual-credit courses.

Relatedly, [SB2](#) creates a new graduation option for Georgia high school students. Those who have completed ninth- and 10th-grade course and assessment requirements are now allowed to enroll in a postsecondary institution to complete an associate degree, a technical college diploma or at least two technical college certificate programs in a specific career pathway. Postsecondary credit completed during high school may now be counted as credit toward high school graduation. In addition, the State Board of the Georgia Technical College System is directed to identify high-need fields of study and provide this information to local school systems.

In other 2015 state action, the Georgia Department of Education [announced](#) the initiative Educating Georgia's Future Workforce to increase the state's focus on career education and expand business partnerships, including developing an International Skills Diploma Seal and an analysis of Georgia's CTAE programs.

Hawaii

[SB374](#) expands Hawaii's dual-credit eligibility to include grades nine through 12 for all public, private and home-schooled high school students.

Idaho

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Illinois

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Indiana

[HB1194](#) tasks the Indiana Career Council's Core 40 Subcommittee with making recommendations on changes to Indiana diploma options to ensure that all students, including special education students, can pursue a college or career pathway. In addition, [SB509](#) changes the state's grant program for part-time students to a grant program for adult students pursuing a degree aligned to the state's priority economic sectors.

On the funding front, Indiana [passed](#) a biennial budget that changes the amount of funds distributed to Indiana secondary CTE programs. Modifications include an increase for high-wage/high-demand courses from \$450 to \$500 per credit hour, and increases for the high-demand/moderate-wage and moderate-demand/high-wage courses from \$375 to \$450. In addition, the legislation divides other CTE courses into introductory courses, funded at \$300 per student, as well as foundation courses, funded at \$150 per student. Work-based learning is funded at \$300 per student.

The budget also included an allocation to the Department of Workforce Development of \$24,000,000 for the CTE Innovation and Advancement program. Of that amount, an earmark of up to \$5,000,000 shall be used annually to fund CTE performance grants.

Iowa

HF658 transfers \$600,000 to the Department of Education for a one-year extension of the state's career-planning system, [I Have a Plan Iowa](#).

Kansas

The 2015 Kansas Legislature [maintained](#) funding to pay full tuition for high school students enrolling in credit-bearing postsecondary technical courses at the previous level of \$20,750,000, and included a \$500,000 appropriation enabling

students to take Microsoft certification exams at no cost to the student. However, the amount of incentive funding paid to school districts for each student graduating from high school and earning an approved industry certification in a high-demand field was reduced to \$750,000. School districts received notification over the summer that the credential incentive funding would be distributed on a prorated basis, resulting in incentive funding of just over \$500 per credential. Tuition funding for high school students enrolled in credit-bearing postsecondary technical courses and credential incentives to school districts were first put in place through SB155, which was signed in 2012.

Kentucky

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Louisiana

[HB741](#) calls for the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council to create an integrated workforce development delivery system through a combined state plan under WIOA. This combined state plan could include CTE programs supported by the Perkins Act.

Maine

The biennial budget [funds](#) \$1 million over two years for needs-based tuition assistance and grants for Put ME to Work, a program to create employer-driven job training programs in high-demand fields at community colleges. The program must include matching funds or in-kind contributions from participating businesses.

The FY 2016 budget also increases funding to \$1 million for the state's Bridge Year early-college program for the 2016-17 academic year, which will allow additional high school CTE students an opportunity to earn postsecondary credit.

Additionally, the commissioner of education directed \$1 million of discretionary funding from the FY 2016 budget toward a new CTE grant competition for the state's 27 secondary CTE schools. The grants may be used to upgrade equipment needed to meet CTE standards and certify programs, as well as for teachers seeking to obtain updated industry-recognized certifications.

Maryland

[HB942](#), the Apprenticeship Maryland Pilot Program, develops a two-year apprenticeship pilot that will allow high school juniors and seniors to obtain a license or certification in high-skilled, high-growth manufacturing and STEM sectors. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will offer grants to two local school system pilot sites for this program, which must include at least one year of classroom instruction and 450 hours of paid work-based training under the supervision of an eligible employer, with participants receiving at least minimum wage. MSDE will collaborate with other state agencies and the business community to develop criteria and identify eligible employers.

Massachusetts

The commonwealth's FY 2016 [budget](#) includes \$3 million for school-to-career connecting activities.

A new [regulation](#) adopted in 2015 requires ninth-grade students who live in cities and towns that offer an approved exploratory program to attend the exploratory program provided by the district of residence. However, students may apply for non-resident admission for the purpose of exploring specialized agriculture and natural resources programs designated by the commissioner and not available in the student's district of residence.

In other 2015 action related to CTE, Gov. Charlie Baker [established](#) a Workforce Skills Cabinet to better align state policies, programs and resources to improve workforce skills, job readiness and CTE opportunities in Massachusetts' regions. Recommendations were announced in December, including a BizWorks Team for government-industry coordination; a regional planning process, including grants; and a CTE initiative to expand access to CTE in STEM fields, with a focus on underserved populations.

Michigan

[SB69](#) extends the Michigan New Jobs Training Program, which allows community colleges to provide free training for employers who are creating new jobs or expanding operations, to 2023, which is past its prior end date of 2018. The bill also clarifies how the state minimum wage is defined for the purposes of the program.

Michigan's FY 2016 [budget](#) includes a number of provisions for CTE and workforce development, including a \$10 million increase for CTE programs; \$10 million for CTE and early-/middle-college programs that lead to student attainment of a high school diploma, as well as an associate degree, certification or up to 60 college credits; \$500,000 for a career planning tool; and investments in skilled trades training.

Last year also witnessed Gov. Rick Snyder's [announcement](#) of a new campaign promoting education and careers in the skilled trades, beginning with promotional videos produced with "Dirty Jobs" television star Mike Rowe and other partners.

Minnesota

In Minnesota, a \$42 million biennial [budget](#) for 2016-17 was signed after a contentious battle over education funding. The budget includes \$8.2 million for adult workforce development competitive grants for career pathways partnerships; \$3 million for FastTRAC, the state's program for workforce development and training; \$4.2 million for the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership program; \$2 million for SciTechsperience, a STEM internship program; \$800,000 for manufacturing education; and funds for apprenticeships, job-training grants and rural career counseling coordinators.

[SF5](#), the state's budget for higher education also features an \$8.5 million pilot program offering free tuition to approximately 1,600 students studying in high-demand fields at the state's technical colleges.

Mississippi

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Missouri

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Montana

The Board of Regents of the Montana University System, which includes the state's community colleges, [approved](#) a new policy for prior learning assessments. The policy calls for appointing a Prior Learning Council, designating prior learning assessment liaisons for each institution and putting faculty in charge of decisions in regard to recognizing prior learning. The policy also describes assessment standards and procedures for prior learning assessments.

In relevant legislation, [HB356](#) adds an additional \$1 million each year for expanding and enhancing CTE, doubling the annual statewide CTE appropriation. The bill originally requested \$10 million each year for CTE.

Nebraska

[LB519](#), which directs lottery revenue to educational programs, includes the Community College Gap Assistance Program to help low-income resident students with tuition, fees and related costs for non-credit programs in career fields that are considered in-demand in the state, including computing, health services, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, biosciences, and hospitality and tourism.

Lawmakers also appropriated \$250,000 to offer the Microsoft IT Academy to more schools and community colleges, as well as directed \$380,000 of state lottery funds to local grantees participating in the state's ongoing [reVISION](#) initiative.

In addition, Gov. Pete Ricketts in 2015 [launched](#) the Nebraska Developing Youth Talent Initiative to connect young Nebraskans to careers in the manufacturing and technology sectors. The program fosters partnerships between business and public schools that promote engagement in hands-on career exploration and relevant workplace learning for students in grades seven and eight.

Nevada

For the 2016-17 biennium [budget](#), an additional \$16.3 million was authorized for CTE, representing a three-fold funding increase. The additional funding will be awarded to school districts and charter schools through a combined allocation and competitive grant process to improve, expand and develop CTE programs.

New Hampshire

[SB190](#) modifies financial responsibility for CTE programs, including tuition and transportation costs and reimbursements.

New Jersey

The New Jersey State Board of Education adopted new standards for educator preparation in November, which include more rigorous and extensive clinical experiences for both traditional educator preparation programs and alternate-route programs. Since the majority of CTE teachers enter the field via the alternate route, the relevant changes are:

- Effective in the 2017-18 academic year, alternate-route teacher candidates will be required to complete at least 50 hours of pre-professional experience, rather than 24 hours, and clinical experiences are to be included within the pre-professional experience.
- Starting in the 2017-18 academic year, the required hours of instruction are increased from 200 to 350 that are to be completed over the course of a minimum of two years (previously it was one year). The proposed increase in instructional hours will provide candidates with more support during their novice professional experience, and the extension to two years will ensure adequate time for candidates to engage in curriculum aligned to the state's professional standards for teachers.

Additionally, [A3970](#) was passed in 2015, permitting county vocational school districts to ask county improvement authorities to construct new facilities and to issue bonds to finance those facilities. The bill is meant to streamline construction.

Finally, the Garden State's FY 2016 [budget](#) included \$3 million for a County Vocational School District Partnership Grant Program. Funds are to be allocated for grants to county vocational school districts to partner with business, other school districts, county colleges and other entities to create high-quality CTE programs in existing facilities. The budget also directed \$4 million toward adult education programs for an approved adult high school, a postsecondary CTE program at a county vocational-technical school or a non-credit CTE program at specific community colleges.

New Mexico

[HB178](#) amends the public school code to award credit for CTE and pre-apprenticeship programs. In addition, it states that districts may choose to put an additional weight on the calculation of the student's GPA for students who successfully complete an industry-recognized credential.

The [FY 2016-17 budget](#) appropriated funding to support CTE as follows:

- \$200,000 for career technical student organizations
- \$500,000 for workforce readiness programs in high schools
- \$400,000 for early-college high schools that build their CTE programs of study around the state's high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupations

With [HM14](#), lawmakers passed a non-binding memorial (similar to a resolution) that calls for the state Departments of Higher Education, Public Education, and Workforce Solutions to collaborate to establish high-quality career pathways that coordinate school curricula, postsecondary studies and 21st-century job opportunities for all New Mexico students. The career pathways should be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and include policy initiatives to establish career guidance systems, among others.

HM14 also was used to accelerate and advance the state's participation in the Council of Chief State School Officers' [Career Readiness Initiative](#), for which New Mexico is working to engage the employer community to develop career pathways, set a high bar of quality for CTE programs and prioritize career readiness within school accountability systems.

Also in 2015, the New Mexico Public Education Commission [adopted](#) the Common Career Technical Core Standards and Career Ready Practices for secondary CTE programs.

New York

According to the [budget](#) passed this year, if a failing school does not show demonstrable improvement at the end of one year, the school will go into receivership. Intervention plans to turn around failing schools should include access to CTE and workforce development, among other strategies.

North Carolina

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

North Dakota

Among numerous [studies](#) that lawmakers are directed to undertake before the regular session in 2017, is a study of the state's public colleges and their missions. This study will investigate whether some campuses should offer only CTE and workforce programs. Another study will investigate the nature and scope of CTE opportunities available to students in the state, the manner in which such opportunities are financially supported and the manner in which these opportunities are monitored to ensure that they provide students with 21st-century technical skills that are aligned to industry standards, in addition to providing appropriate academic foundations.

Ohio

The FY 2016-17 [budget](#) for Ohio includes several provisions for CTE:

- Joint Vocational School Districts will receive an increased per-pupil amount and are eligible for the new graduation bonus.

- CTE funding was removed from the guarantee base, and it is exempt from the cap in FY 2017.
- CTE reimbursements of \$1 million each year will help school districts cover the cost of in-demand credentials for economically disadvantaged students.
- The Ohio Career Counseling Pilot Program was created and funded at approximately \$1 million to cover pilots for four career centers and three comprehensive high schools/compacts.
- A two-year pilot grant program for K-12 competency-based education was funded at \$1 million per year.
- The Adult Diploma Program was allocated a second round of planning grants for five additional sites that will pair a high school diploma with an industry-recognized credential. Additionally, the budget established a funding formula for the current five pilot programs.

Ohio also [launched](#) its Workforce Success Measures dashboard to share employment, earnings, skills attainment and value to business outcomes from several workforce programs, including data on CTE delivered at area technical centers and community colleges.

Oklahoma

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Oregon

Several bills relevant to CTE were passed in the state in 2015:

- [SB81](#) establishes Oregon Promise, a program to provide Oregon community college scholarships for resident students who have earned a high school diploma or GED, have fewer than 90 credit hours at the institution, and maintain at least part-time status and a 2.5 GPA.
- [HB3072](#) allocates \$35 million for activities related to STEM and CTE, including programs and student organizations that expose students to high-wage and high-demand jobs. Funds will be distributed to school districts based on CTE enrollment in three-credit approved programs, as well as the number of students who earn state-approved industry credentials. In addition, grants are available for expanding teacher training related to CTE, and the bill also calls for a pilot program to increase exposure and access to CTE courses through CTE course equivalency for high school graduation credit.
- Retired public employees are eligible to work as CTE teachers without losing their retirement benefits under [HB3058](#). This legislation expires in three years.
- [HB2728](#) establishes the Oregon Talent Council to advise state agencies and educational institutions about talent development in high-growth industries. A replacement for the state's Engineering Technology and Industry Council, the Talent Council will be populated primarily with industry representatives and have more flexibility to fund innovative programs to meet workforce needs.

Pennsylvania

In 2015, the Pennsylvania community college system [launched](#) College Credit FastTrack, funded by a Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant, to enable learners to explore institutions and courses and talk to an adviser. In addition, prospective students can build an e-portfolio that describes their prior learning and submit it for credit.

Rhode Island

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

South Carolina

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

South Dakota

Several pieces of legislation relevant to postsecondary CTE were passed in 2015. Under [HB1072](#), technical institutes will be provided with the names and addresses of seventh through 12th grade public school students in order to provide students and parents with information on the benefits of technical education and ways to prepare for postsecondary education. [HB1118](#) changes governance for the state's technical institutes from oversight by school districts to independent oversight. Each institute will be eligible to become its own separate local education agency with its own independent governing board. Relatedly, [HJR1003](#) would amend the state's constitution to separate the governance of the technical institutes from the Board of Regents. The voters will review this proposal in the 2016 elections.

In addition to the traditional state support for the technical institutes, the legislature [approved](#) \$1 million in one-time funding to assist the technical institutes in building capacity in their high-demand workforce programs. These funds are being invested in equipment; additional sections of programs, such as welding and diesel technology; and additional instructors. Increased funding was also provided so that high school juniors and seniors could access reduced-tuition, dual-credit courses for \$40 per credit hour.

The State Board of Education in December [approved](#) changes to the state's CTE teacher certification rules to provide consistency across CTE content areas. The rules also offer additional flexibility in how teachers may become certified with either a Career Cluster® or career pathway endorsement, and they provide more clearly defined support from mentor teachers. A career cluster endorsement requires teachers to pass a state certification exam or complete 15 credits of coursework and allows teachers to teach any course within a career cluster. A career pathway endorsement requires teachers to pass the state certification exam, complete nine credits of coursework, or have 4,000 hours of work experience. With the pathway endorsement, teachers may teach any course within a career pathway.

All teachers must complete a CTE methods course, and those who use an alternative certification must have four credits from a mentored internship.

Tennessee

[SB87](#) changes references in Tennessee law from vocational education to CTE.

In an [amendment](#) to the FY 2015-2016 budget, \$1 million was approved for the new Veteran Reconnect initiative, which provides funding to two- and four-year postsecondary institutions to help veterans successfully earn a degree or certificate. Relatedly, [SB 605](#) appropriates \$1.5 million for the Community College Reconnect initiative, which is intended to provide adult learners with last-dollar scholarships to the state's colleges of applied technology, as well as help adult learners earn a postsecondary credential.

[SB453](#) directs the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network (TSIN) to establish STEM innovation hubs, which are regional partnerships of school districts, postsecondary institutions, STEM businesses and community organizations in Northwest Tennessee and other rural areas of the state. TSIN must also provide all Tennessee middle schools with a curriculum to

educate students on the variety and benefits of STEM careers. This curriculum is applicable in multiple classroom settings, including science.

Texas

The Lone Star State was very active in CTE legislation in 2015:

- [HB1431](#) directs the State Board of Education, in consultation with the commissioner of higher education and business and industry leaders, to develop a career-oriented foreign language program that public schools may provide to students with instruction in industry terminology in languages other than English.
- [HB18](#) includes several provisions related to CTE. First, it requires independent school districts to instruct students in seventh or eighth grades on personal graduation plans, college-readiness standards and possible career choices. Funds are set aside for the University of Texas at Austin to develop Web-based instruction on college and career exploration, and the university is required to develop online training for middle and high school counselors and teachers, if applicable, on topics including career and workforce information. Finally, the bill removes limitations on the number of dual-credit courses or hours students can take while in high school, and it codifies guidelines from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for teacher approval related to dual credit.
- [HB1430](#) requires the Texas Education Agency to ensure that the diploma endorsement for public services includes information on health science career pathways and careers, and that mental health professions are included in health science career information.
- Through [HB1583](#), public junior colleges are required to implement a block schedule curriculum for students in an associate degree or a certificate program in allied health, nursing or other workforce pathways.
- [HB2014](#) allows a veteran or current service member to be certified to teach CTE courses if the individual has experience in the relevant field through his or her military service.
- [HB2628](#) requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), with the aid of advisory committees, to develop CTE programs of study curricula and review them periodically for alignment across education levels, with student interest and with industry needs. In addition, THECB must align college- and career-readiness standards with knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to CTE through programs of study.
- [HB2812](#) removes limits on dual credit for a high school student taking courses at a junior college outside the service area in which the student is enrolled.
- [HB3062](#) increases eligibility for the Jobs and Education for Texas program, which provides support for postsecondary CTE courses, to allow school districts to be eligible for grant funds under the program. It also transfers authority from the state comptroller's office to the Texas Workforce Commission to administer the grants.
- Through [HB3348](#), THECB can start a pilot program to authorize certain junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs in the applied science, applied technology and dental hygiene fields.

The State Board of Education also formally [adopted](#) revised 19 TAC Chapter 130, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for CTE, adding new TEKS for several new CTE practicum courses, a new advanced marketing course and several automotive technology courses. Implementation is planned for the 2017-18 school year.

Utah

Relevant CTE legislation in Utah included [HB203](#), which makes computer science and information technology teachers eligible for the Teacher Salary Supplement Program that allots an annual salary supplement of \$4,100.

[HB198](#) creates the Strengthening College and Career Readiness Program and appropriates \$400,000 for grants to local education agencies to enhance the skills of college and career counselors. It also directs the State Board of Education to develop a certificate that indicates a counselor is highly skilled at providing college and career counseling.

Finally, [HB337](#) creates a CTE board within the Department of Workforce Services and charges it with conducting a comprehensive study.

Vermont

No relevant CTE policy was adopted in 2015.

Virginia

Gov. Terry McAuliffe [signed](#) an executive order to incentivize the participation of both state agencies and private businesses in registered apprenticeships. The incentives, totaling \$400,000, will help defray costs of apprenticeship-related instruction.

On the legislative front, the following bills were passed in 2015:

- [HB1320](#) requires every teacher seeking to renew his or her license to complete all renewal requirements, including professional development, as prescribed by the State Board of Education. However, teachers must not be required to satisfy requirements by completing coursework and earning credit at a higher education institution.
- [HB1335](#) directs the appointment of liaisons between the state's Department of Education and State Board for Community Colleges.
- [HB1616](#) requires that each sequence of CTE courses be aligned with state or national program certification and accreditation standards, when available. An exception is provided for a program offered by industry in cooperation with a local school board.
- [HB1675](#) recognizes alternative means of earning credit. Through this legislation, local school districts can waive the requirement for students to receive 140 clock hours of instruction to earn a standard unit of credit when proof can be provided that students have mastered the relevant content and skills.
- [HB1676](#) allows local school boards to enter into articulation agreements with community colleges and other public postsecondary institutions. The agreements must identify students' options for CTE courses that lead to an industry-recognized credential concurrent with a high school diploma, as well as specify the credentials available for such courses.

- [HB1986](#) requires each agency administering a CTE and workforce development program to submit a report to the governor's chief workforce development advisor and the Virginia Board of Workforce Development detailing the program's performance against state-level metrics established by the board and advisor. In addition, the Board of Workforce Development, the Virginia Employment Commission and the Virginia Community College System shall collaborate on their relative roles and responsibilities. Finally, the bill calls for each local workforce development board to develop and execute a strategic plan designed to combine public and private resources to support sector strategies, career pathways and career-readiness skills development.
- [HB2137](#) changes CTE teacher endorsement by permitting the State Board of Education to issue a provisional license (upon request) to a teacher seeking an initial license who has not attained an industry certification in his or her area of instruction. Time must be allowed for the teacher to earn that industry certification.
- [HB2276](#) modifies the requirement that a student must earn a CTE credential in order to receive a standard diploma in instances where a CTE credential is not readily available or does not adequately measure student competency. In the latter case, the student must receive competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the standard diploma requirements.
- [SB1024](#) transfers the responsibility for apprenticeship policy and administration from the State Board for Community Colleges to the commissioner of labor and industry.

Washington

2015 witnessed the passage of several bills related to CTE:

- Changes are made to computer science education in [HB1813](#). The state's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Professional Educator Standards Board are directed to adopt computer science learning standards developed by a nationally recognized organization. In addition, the Standards Board must develop standards for a K-12 teacher endorsement in computer science, with options for dual endorsement in mathematics, science or another high-demand content area. The legislation also expands eligibility for a conditional scholarship program for educators.
- [HB1546](#) clarifies funding allocations and subsidies to districts for the state's dual-enrollment programs, College in the High School and Running Start. It also expands eligibility for the College in the High School program to 10th-graders, but does not permit allocations or subsidies to be used for their participation.
- [SB5202](#) requires the state's Financial Education Public-Private Partnership to work with OSPI to integrate financial education skills and content knowledge into the state learning standards.
- [SB5746](#) adds Everett Community College to the list of schools eligible to use the Aerospace Training Student Loan Program, which provides low-interest loans to students who are enrolled in an authorized short-term aerospace training or educational program. With this addition, four schools are now able to participate in the program. Students must have a declared intention to work in the aerospace industry in Washington. The student loans may not exceed one year of tuition and fees.
- [SB5863](#) calls for the recruitment of underrepresented populations for transportation apprenticeships, and it requires the state Department of Transportation (DOT) to report on the success of these efforts. In addition, it changes coordination for expenditures related to apprenticeship preparation and support services from DOT

and the Apprenticeship and Training Council to DOT and the Department of Labor and Industries. DOT is also directed to use funds from sources other than federal funds when possible.

In addition, the state's biennial [budget](#) includes tuition cuts of 5 percent for the state's community and technical colleges, and grants for the construction of STEM facilities that are awarded to districts that can demonstrate a lack of space in classrooms and laboratories and that have secured private donations of at least \$100,000.

West Virginia

In February, the West Virginia State Board of Education [voted](#) to add the 12 Simulated Workplace protocols to state policy. The Simulated Workplace, which began as a pilot in 2013, is an instructional strategy that converts the CTE classroom into a student-led company to simulate a workplace environment. The initiative is moving from pilot to statewide implementation, and embedding the 12 quality protocols in state policy will assist with local implementation.

Wisconsin

Signed by Gov. Scott Walker in July, the state's biennial [budget](#), Act 55, included a provision that allows Wisconsin's 16 technical colleges to elect to receive a portion of dedicated state outcomes-based funding predicated on their relative success in awarding course credit "... for relevant educational experience or training not obtained through an institution of higher education, including skill training received during military service." Also included in Act 55 is \$500,000 of one-time funding to enable the Wisconsin Technical College System Board to develop a competitive matching grant program for the development of specialized support services for veterans, including career pathway planning and credit for prior learning.

In addition, funding was moved from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Workforce Development for CTE incentive grants to support programming that results in high-demand, industry-recognized certifications.

Wyoming

The Wyoming Career Readiness Council, newly [created](#) in 2015, will establish a process for using economic development data to strengthen CTE, advance secondary-postsecondary alignment and form a steering committee to make ongoing recommendations. The group was formed as part of Wyoming's participation in the Council of Chief State School Officers' [Career Readiness Initiative](#).

Methodology

The policy activities in this report were compiled from a thorough review of a number of sources, including state government websites, media stories and compilations such as those prepared by the Education Commission of the States. Policy actions were included in this report only if they were finalized, or in some cases implemented, in 2015—not merely initiated. For example, a piece of legislation passed in 2014 with a July 1, 2015, effective date would not have been selected, but any legislation signed into law in 2015 was included.

Once compiled, the information was distributed for review to state CTE directors and ACTE state association leaders, and any feedback received was included in this final report.

While we made extensive efforts to verify the completeness and accuracy of this report, should discrepancies be noted, we would be happy to correct them at any time. Please contact Catherine Imperatore (cimperatore@acteonline.org) or Andrea Zimmermann (azimmermann@careertech.org).

About the Association for Career and Technical Education

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) is the nation's largest not-for-profit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. ACTE represents the community of CTE professionals, including educators, administrators, researchers, guidance and career development professionals, and others at all levels of education. ACTE is committed to excellence in providing advocacy, public awareness and access to resources, professional development and leadership opportunities. <http://www.acteonline.org>

About the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium

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

ⁱ National Association of State Budget Officers. (2015). *State Expenditure Report: Examining Fiscal 2013-2015 State Spending*. Washington, DC.: NASBO: Retrieved from

<http://www.nasbo.org/sites/default/files/State%20Expenditure%20Report%20%28Fiscal%202013-2015%29S.pdf>

ⁱⁱ For the purposes of this analysis, activity using the term “science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)” was considered for the STEM category. Policies addressing fields of study that could be included within STEM, such as manufacturing or information technology, but not using STEM terminology, were not counted.