

CTE Today

Today's cutting-edge, rigorous and relevant career and technical education (CTE) prepares youth and adults for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers.

What is Career and Technical Education?

Encompasses 94 percent of high school students and 13 million postsecondary students ⁱ
Includes high schools, career centers, community and technical colleges, four-year universities and more
Educates students for a range of career options through 16 Career Clusters and 81 pathways
Integrates with academics in a rigorous and relevant curriculum
Features high school and postsecondary partnerships, enabling clear pathways to certifications and degrees
Fulfills employer needs in high-skill, high-wage, high-demand areas
Prepares students to be college- and career-ready by providing core academic skills, employability skills and technical, job-specific skills

CTE Works for High School Students

High school students involved in CTE are more engaged, perform better and graduate at higher rates.

- 81 percent of dropouts say relevant, real-world learning opportunities would have kept them in high school.ⁱⁱ
- The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 90.18 percent, compared to an average national freshman graduation rate of 74.9 percent.ⁱⁱⁱ
- More than 70 percent of secondary CTE concentrators pursued postsecondary education shortly after high school.^{iv}

CTE Works for College Students and Adults

Postsecondary CTE fosters postsecondary completion and prepares students and adults for in-demand careers.

- 4 out of 5 secondary CTE graduates who pursued postsecondary education after high school had earned a credential or were still enrolled two years later.^v
- A person with a CTE-related associate degree or credential will earn on average between \$4,000 and \$19,000 more a year than a person with a humanities associate degree.^{vi}
- 27 percent of people with less than an associate degree, including licenses and certificates, earn more than the average bachelor degree recipient.^{vii}

CTE Works for the Economy

Investing in CTE yields big returns for state economies.

- In Connecticut, every public dollar invested in Connecticut community colleges returns \$16.40 over the course of students' careers. That state's economy receives \$5 billion annually in income.^{viii}
- In Washington, for every dollar invested in secondary CTE programs, the state earns \$9 in additional tax revenues.^{ix}
- In Tennessee, CTE returns \$2 for every \$1 invested. At the secondary level, CTE program completers account for more than \$13 million in annual tax revenues.^x

CTE Works for Business

CTE addresses the needs of high-growth industries and helps close the skills gap.

- The skilled trades are the hardest jobs to fill in the United States, with recent data citing 550,000 jobs open in the trade, transportation and utilities sector and 246,000 jobs open in manufacturing.^{xi}
- Health care occupations, many of which require an associate degree or less, make up 8 of the 20 fastest growing occupations.^{xii}
- STEM occupations such as environmental engineering and science technicians require an associate degree and will experience faster than average job growth.^{xiii}
- Middle-skill jobs, jobs that require education and training beyond high school but less than a bachelor degree, are a significant part of the economy. Of the 46.8 million job openings created by 2018, 30 percent will require some college or a two-year associate degree.^{xiv}

-
- ⁱ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School Transcript Study, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey, 2009 [American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) analysis]; AACC membership database, 2012 [AACC analysis].
- ⁱⁱ Bridgeland et al, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*, Civic Enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart Research for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2006.
- ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, *Consolidated Annual Report for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 Program Year 2007-2008*, unpublished data [National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium analysis]; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007-2008*, 2010.
- ^{iv} U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Postsecondary and Labor Force Transitions Among Public High School Career and Technical Education Participants*, 2011.
- ^v Ibid.
- ^{vi} Jacobson and Mokher, *Pathways to Boosting the Earnings of Low-Income Students by Increasing Their Educational Attainment*, Hudson Institute Center for Employment Policy and CNA for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009.
- ^{vii} Harvard Graduate School of Education, *Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century*, 2011.
- ^{viii} Robison and Christophersen, *The Economic Contribution of Connecticut's Community Colleges*, Economic Modeling Specialists Inc., 2008.
- ^{ix} Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, *2011 Workforce Training Results-Secondary CTE*, 2011.
- ^x Harrison et al, *The Economic Impact of Secondary and Postsecondary Career and Technical Education in Tennessee*, Sparks Bureau of Business and Economic Research and the University of Memphis, 2006.
- ^{xi} ManpowerGroup, *2012 Talent Shortage Survey Research Results*, 2012; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover–April 2012, June 2012.
- ^{xii} U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*, Fastest Growing Occupations; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*, Healthcare Occupations.
- ^{xiii} U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*.
- ^{xiv} Carnevale et al, *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2010.