



NEWS RELEASE

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Oregon's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Plan Approved by U.S. Department of Education

*Plan represents collaboration with business and industry partners
and educational stakeholders*

(Salem, Ore.) – A statewide plan that will inspire a new generation of Career and Technical Education innovators, problem solvers and workforce ready employees was approved today by the U.S. Department of Education.

Oregon's new CTE plan, signed off on by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) at the U.S. Department of Education, creates voluntary, statewide Program of Study Frameworks that will promote greater consistency in quality across the state, ensure more geographical equity, engage business and industry in the development of CTE programs throughout Oregon, and encourage the use of shared resources.

Approval means Oregon will continue receiving about \$30 million per biennium. Oregon will begin receiving these federal CTE funds this June. (The state also supports CTE in Oregon with tens of millions of dollars of state funds per biennium via High School Student Success Act funds and community college support fund dollars.)

In 2019 in Oregon, 51,800 high school students and 53,818 community college students used CTE programs to gain skills necessary to succeed in high-wage, in-demand careers and grow Oregon's economy. CTE is proven effective to prepare our current and future workforce and grow entrepreneurs who can nimbly create new jobs and stimulate economic growth. Oregon's CTE programs focus on the knowledge and skills needed to address evolving economic needs and can help our communities through the COVID-19 crisis.

"We went through an extensive process with educators, stakeholders and the business community to develop a strong, innovative CTE State Plan that will serve as a solid blueprint for Oregon's education and economic success," said Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Director of CTE Jennell Ives. "We centered our plan around our vision to re-imagine and transform learner experiences in order to enhance their future prospects, empower their communities, and ensure equity in an inclusive, sustainable, innovation-based economy."



CTE programs not only advance a student’s career prospects, they also immediately boost a student’s performance in the classroom. Students in a CTE Program of Study graduated high school at a far higher rate than the statewide average for a given year, 93.5% versus 80% for the cohort completing the 2018-2019 academic year. Data suggest that this phenomenon is consistent regardless of a student’s ethnicity, zip code, or whether they’re experiencing disability.

“The plan is grounded in partnerships and leveraging of resources to build pathways to careers for students,” said Donna Lewelling, Deputy Director for the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development at the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). “The intentional connection of students to postsecondary career and technical education along with the partnership of business and industry are the cornerstones.”

Three innovations in Oregon’s CTE State Plan were highlighted by the U.S. Department of Education:

Career Exploration and Work-based Learning

Stakeholders consistently identified career exploration and work-based learning as high priorities for the future of CTE in Oregon. Business and industry partners strongly supported extension of career exploration into middle schools. All Oregonians need access to careers that fuel our economy and provide stability for themselves and their families. One way to achieve access is to provide improved information about the career opportunities available in the state and expand the opportunities for learners to see themselves in a variety of career fields, including ones that may be unfamiliar.

Improving Data Literacy

Oregon’s plan includes not only updating our CTE data systems and improving our data visualization and reporting, but committing to ongoing regional training on how to interpret and use data to inform equitable and continuous improvement in CTE with a specific focus on access, participation, and outcomes for Perkins-identified special populations.

Regional Structure and Peer Review

CTE Regional Coordinators are key partners in supporting program improvement and developing partnerships. Perkins grant applications and CTE plans will be shared for peer review through public presentations of regional plans, goals and activities. The public peer review process hopes to create greater transparency and public awareness of CTE across the state.

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