

Administrative Procedures for Career and Technical Education (Attachment for Policy No. 115)

Purpose

The School District of Philadelphia (“District”) recognizes that every student needs to have the core academic knowledge and opportunity of experience that will prepare them for post-secondary success. The purpose of these administrative procedures, together with related policy, is to establish guidelines for creating and maintaining Career and Technical Education (“CTE”) programs.

Definitions

Approved Program Evaluation (“APE”): Assessment tool used to evaluate CTE programs and whether they are following state regulations.

Bureau of Career & Technical Education (“BCTE”): A division of the Pennsylvania Department of Education responsible for administering CTE programs across the State of Pennsylvania.

Career and Technical Education Information System (“CATS”): PDE’s web-based CTE program approval system/database, which the Office of CTE is responsible for regularly updating.

Classification of Instructional Program (“CIP”) Code: The code developed by the U.S. Department of Education that will support the accurate tracking, assessment, and reporting of fields of study and program completion activities.

Career and Technical Education (“CTE”): Programs that prepare students with 21st-century skills. CTE is made up of various industry sectors, which include many career pathways related to all occupations within a Program of Study, which is a sequence of rigorous academic and technical courses that integrate core academic knowledge with technical knowledge, providing students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.

Competency list: A PDE-required instructional tool used by CTE teachers to measure the technical skills of a student in a specific POS; these lists represent the industry-identified skills needed to be successful in careers related to each POS.

CTE completer: A student who completes all CTE program requirements necessary to achieve career objectives, completed a PA-approved end-of-the-program assessment in their CTE program, and attained a high school diploma.

Career and Technical Student Organization (“CTSO”): Regional and/or national student organizations dedicated to specific industry sectors and include local and national competitive events to expose students to various skills needed in the industry.

High Priority Occupation (“HPO”) List: Current list of state and local job categories that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs, and provide family sustaining wages for a specified period of time as dictated by the U.S. Department of Labor.

NOCTI: The PDE-approved CTE end-of-program student assessment. The Michigan-based company is no longer referred to as “National Occupational Competency Testing Institute;” it is only referred to as “NOCTI.”

National Institute of Metalworking Skills (“NIMS”): The industry-aligned end-of-program student assessment for metalworking/fabricating-related CTE programs.

Occupational Advisory Committee (“OAC”): Advisory committee established for each CTE program or cluster area of related programs offered by each individual high school. Members include employees and employers in the occupation for which training is provided. The committee advises the board, school administration, and teachers on curriculum, equipment, instructional materials, safety requirements, program evaluation, and other related matters and to verify that the programs meet industry standards.

Pennsylvania Information Management System (“PIMS”): A PDE longitudinal data system that efficiently and accurately manages, analyzes, and disaggregates data for students served by Pennsylvania’s Pre-K through postsecondary and undergraduate education systems.

Pennsylvania Skills Certificate: Issued by PDE, this certificate is awarded to CTE students who achieve at the Advanced level on NOCTI or NIMS.

Postsecondary Education: An educational program for students who have earned their high school diploma or equivalent and desire to obtain education/training beyond that level, in an effort to prepare them for a career.

Program of Study (“POS”): CTE programs consisting of a one (1), two (2), or three (3)-year sequence offered for an average minimum of 360 hours per year of instruction. Typically, students are enrolled in their CTE course a minimum of two (2) hours or periods per day, throughout the school year. These programs are approved by the BCTE.

Technical Assistance Program (“TAP”): A BCTE-led initiative to increase the quality and impact of CTE programs while ensuring that these programs are aligned with the Commonwealth’s economic and workforce development priorities and goals as outlined in the current Strategic Plan: to increase academic and occupational achievement and success for all CTE students.

Procedures

CTE provides students with the opportunity to acquire challenging academic and technical skills, preparing them for high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand careers in a competitive 21st century global economy. In addition to acquiring specific technical skills related to a career pathway, CTE programs are designed to contribute to the broad educational achievement of students, including academic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as to their ability to work independently and as part of a team, think creatively, and solve problems, and utilize

technology. CTE teaches students the high-demand skills needed for postsecondary (college and career) success.

Office of Career and Technical Education (“CTE”)

The District’s Office of CTE, a division of the Office of Academic Supports, is responsible for the implementation of CTE programs across all District high schools. The duties of program implementation are broken down by industry cluster to best serve the programs that are offered throughout Philadelphia. CTE Industry Development Specialists (“IDS”) oversee the implementation of their respective CTE area. In addition to the IDS, each CTE POS has a Career Awareness Specialist (“CAS”) that works directly with students enrolled in the CTE programs at the school, provides career development services, and supports partnerships that promote the goals and mission of the Office of CTE. Career Integration Specialists (“CIS”) serve as teacher coaches that support new and veteran teachers with mastering the skills necessary to be successful in the classroom.

CTE Program of Study (“POS”)

The District’s CTE programs are located across two school types: Comprehensive CTE Schools and Schools with CTE Programs. The District’s comprehensive CTE schools are schools where all students in grades 10 through 12 are enrolled in CTE Programs of Study (“POS”). Alternatively, in Schools with CTE Programs, some students take CTE coursework while others do not. POSs are approved by the BCTE.

The development and implementation of POSs is a requirement of the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)*. POSs:

- incorporate secondary education and postsecondary education elements;
- include coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that align secondary education with postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education;
- may include the opportunity for secondary education students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or other ways to acquire postsecondary education credits and lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Students in an approved CTE POS are enrolled in a one (1), two (2), or three (3)-year CTE program and must receive a minimum number of instructional hours over the course of the program (720 hours for one (1) and two (2)-year programs, and 1,080 for three (3)-year programs).

Students who complete their POS are considered CTE completers. CTE students must be roster-coded according to the number of hours and/or periods a student is pursuing to complete their CTE program. Course codes, therefore, depend upon the participation level of each individual student.

The list of POSs can be found on the Department of Education’s [Programs of Study webpage](#).¹

Perkins CTE Program Funding

The District’s CTE programs are funded primarily through *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V Grant)*. Perkins funds are awarded to the District and are managed by the Office of CTE. Schools that have approved CTE POS are given specific budgets every school year according to the number of CTE programs and CTE students. Schools then order the equipment, supplies, materials, and resources needed for each CTE program to operate for that particular school year.

Permissible Use of Funds

Perkins funds are directed toward strengthening the academic and career and technical skills of CTE students, and to ensure that CTE programs are aligned to workforce needs and curriculum is reflective of current technical industry standards. Perkins should be used for career exploration and career development activities; professional development for teachers, faculty, school leaders, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and counselors; integration of academic skills into CTE POS; curriculum development, sustaining OACs; instructional industry-standard equipment; supplies; technology; work-based learning; industry certifications; CTE teacher recruitment and employability skills. Perkins funds should not be used for costs associated with furniture; construction or renovations; equipment and supplies not used directly to teach skills to students; salaries or wages to secretarial support staff and students; costs of promotional items; in- and out-of-state conference travel unrelated to local Perkins plans; or any routine consumable supplies, except those required to provide additional services to special population students.

Program of Study (“POS”) Required Competencies

POSs have been developed through the requirements of the Perkins related to the CIP codes that align to the PA Department of Labor and Industry’s HPO list. Each POS has an aligned PDE-approved competency list, which represents the industry-identified skills needed to be successful in careers related to the POS.

CTE teachers are required to utilize the competency list as the foundation of the CTE curriculum model in their POS, on which instructional lesson plans are developed. CTE teachers must also maintain and regularly update a competency list for every student enrolled in their CTE POS, in order to track the competencies each student has completed.

The competencies developed and approved for the CTE task lists are the same competencies that are used for the end of the program assessment testing required for all CTE completers.

¹ The Department of Education’s Program of Study webpage is available at <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Career%20and%20Technical%20Education/Programs%20of%20Study/Pages/default.aspx>

CTE Program Approval Process

The Office of CTE works closely with each school's leadership in submitting what is required in order for the CTE POS to be approved by PDE. When schools plan to apply for a new CTE POS to be offered at their school, the high school's administrative staff, including principal, assistant principal(s), and roster chair, must first attend an orientation held by the Office of CTE, to learn about the duties and responsibilities of operating a CTE POS at their school. The next step for the school administration is to complete and submit to the Office of CTE an [Application for New CTE Program](#).² CTE staff will guide school administration through this application process.

A major factor the Office of CTE considers when reviewing any application for new CTE programs is whether the proposed program meets regional and state workforce development needs through the most updated State's HPO and IDOL lists. The purpose of these statewide and regional workforce development-driven lists is to align workforce training and education investments with careers that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs, and are most likely to provide family-sustaining wages. Combining statistical data with regional expert input allows for a complete picture of the actual workforce needs of the Commonwealth.

CTE Instructors/Professional Development

In order to be qualified to teach CTE programs, teachers must possess the appropriate vocational or instructional certificate as required for the CTE program they are appointed to teach. In some cases, emergency certificates are awarded by the District, but all teachers are expected to complete specific coursework and pass the required examinations within a certain time period.

The type of certification required to teach within the CTE program depends upon the CIP code that the teacher is hired to teach. Temple University serves as the assigned institution to train and certify CTE teachers in eastern Pennsylvania. The list of all CIP codes and the instructional/vocational certification required can be found on [PDE's Website](#).³

Throughout the school year, various professional development/training sessions are offered, designed specifically for CTE teachers in their respective areas to further their content knowledge, update current industry certifications, or to learn about current trends in the industry. These CTE-related professional development sessions are designed and/or approved by the Office of CTE and/or the CTE programs' Occupational Advisory Committee, and the CISs and IDSs schedule them through the District's Cornerstone system to ensure the professional development has been approved and that the participants will receive Act 48 credits.

School administration and Assistant Superintendents must send designated CTE instructors to these ongoing professional development sessions (i.e. Technical Assistance Program training, CTE skills upgrade training, etc.) in accordance with state regulations, ACT 48 credits, and continuing education units per individual credentialing.

² The Application for New CTE Program is available at https://docs.google.com/document/d/18ddNSH7uz-JyL6V5Z3DwqUy_usJLu--p/edit

³ A list of all CIP codes can be found at https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Career%20and%20Technical%20Education/Pages/CIP_codes.aspx

Occupational Advisory Committee (“OAC”)

CTE teachers are collectively responsible for establishing an OAC for their respective POS. OAC membership should be representative of the community in terms of race, gender, age, occupation, socioeconomic status, geographical location, and other locally appropriate factors. A balance between large and small employers should be established and maintained.

Those who should be considered for membership on an OAC include representatives of business, industry, and labor groups; employees and employers in the occupation for which training is provided; owners of small businesses; parents, students (non-voting), graduates, and the general public; and staff members of other education agencies and institutions.

It is required that the OAC meet a minimum of two times during the school year. The OAC is crucial and should “advise” the school on equipment, classroom space usage, and current trends in the industry, and can serve as potential employers for current students and/or graduates.

The OAC has several major goals:

- Provide recommendations to update, modify, expand, and improve the quality of the occupational program;
- Support and strengthen the relationship between business, industry, the community, and education;
- Make recommendations to strengthen and expand the curriculum and provide assistance in implementing these recommendations;
- Articulate long-term goals and objectives of the occupational program to parents, employers, and the community; and
- Assist in identifying needs, determining priorities, and reviewing and evaluating curriculum.

To achieve these goals, members may provide valuable services in areas such as student recruitment and placement, curriculum development, facilities and equipment, staff development, public relations, community needs, legislative and financial support, and CTSO support.

The OAC guidance handbook published by BCTE can be found on [PDE’s Advisory Committee Guidelines webpage](#).⁴

Industry-Recognized Certifications

CTE students shall have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized certifications in their respective CTE area. Earning an industry certification has many benefits. It gives students a sense of accomplishment and a highly valued professional credential and helps students become more employable with higher starting salaries. Valid reliable certifications are also evidence of technical skill attainment. Industry certifications, therefore, are an important component of a CTE POS.

⁴ The OAC guidance handbook can be found at <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Career%20and%20Technical%20Education/Resources/Teacher%20Resources/AdvisoryCommittee/Pages/default.aspx>

Every POS is aligned to an industry-recognized certification. The current list of industry-recognized certifications offered in the District’s CTE programs can be found on the [Office of CTE’s webpage](#).⁵

Career & Technical Student Organizations (“CTSO”)

Pennsylvania coordinates student organizations, called CTSOs, that provide career awareness, leadership, motivation, and recognition for career-related skills. CTSOs are a co-curricular extension of the classroom instructional program by integrating academics and career and technical skills into real work experiences.

Each POS is required to have student participation in one of the following PA-approved CTSOs:

- *DECA* for students in marketing and culinary-related programs;
- *Future Business Leaders of America (“FBLA”)* for students in business and accounting programs;
- *FFA* for students in agriculture-related programs;
- *Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA)* for students in health-related programs; and
- *SkillsUSA* for students in construction, automotive, engineering, communications, IT, and other trade-related programs.

NOCTI Assessment

In the Spring of their 12th grade year, CTE students take a NOCTI (or NIMS) exam that is specific to their CTE POS. Each [NOCTI exam](#)⁶ has an online written/multiple choice module, and a hands-on/demonstration module during which students perform tasks that are evaluated by industry professionals. The NOCTI allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills within their chosen CTE POS, and students who pass their industry-specific NOCTI with a rating of Competent or Advanced receive industry-relevant certificates, and may also be able to secure college credit (depending on where they continue their education).

PDE contracts with NOCTI to develop tests, but not all CTE pathways have a corresponding NOCTI (or NIMS) exam. As a result, some CTE POS do not align to a NOCTI exam.

The NOCTI and NIMS are administered every Spring in March and April. Schools must appoint a Test Coordinator, who works closely with school administration to ensure all testing schedules and protocols are strictly adhered to.

Career and Technical Education Information System (“CATS”)/Pennsylvania Information Management System (“PIMS”) Data

Every approved CTE program must collect and maintain required data that gets submitted to the state every year. Most data is collected centrally through the District’s IT Department. The Office

⁵ The Office of CTE’s webpage is available at <https://www.philasd.org/cte/>

⁶ A list of current NOCTI assessments can be found at <https://www.careertechpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Crosswalk-2021-2022.pdf>

of CTE collects data on student outcomes such as industry certifications, internships/work-based learning opportunities, post-graduation data, and NOCTI results. In order to reflect the most accurate data on CTE programs and students, it is critical that roster chairpersons assign students the right courses using the correct CIP codes that are approved for the school. In addition, the course codes assigned by the roster office must be accurate.

The Office of School Organization is responsible for making roster chairpersons as well as school administration aware of the correct course codes to use for CTE students when rostering courses every school year. If students are not coded correctly, data submitted to the state will be inaccurate and will have a monetary effect on future funds received by the District.

Program Evaluation and Monitoring

PDE's CTE program approval process, Approved Program Evaluation ("APE"), consists of on-site compliance audits of the CTE programs at each school every five years. The state's APE Checklist is aligned to state regulations and is used as an evaluation and organizational tool for CTE programs to prepare for the vocational approved program on-site visitations.

As part of the APE process, school administration and CTE teachers must develop and maintain program binders (or electronic Google folders) for each CTE program at the school. The Office of CTE staff assists schools with the APE preparation, including coordinating/scheduling the visit with PDE staff, compiling the required documentation, and guiding school administration and staff on the review process. Further information on the required compliance documentation can be found on [PDE's Program Approval webpage](#).⁷

In addition to PDE's APE process, on a yearly basis, the Office of CTE will evaluate CTE programs at schools to identify strengths and areas that need to be addressed by teachers and/or school administration. Additionally, the Office of CTE may conduct programmatic and fiscal audits to evaluate whether CTE POSs are being operated in accordance with state and federal mandates.

Promoting/Marketing CTE Programs

There are multiple ways in which the Office of CTE provides information about CTE programs in the District to students, parents, and the general public, including the following:

- [High School Directory](#)⁸ (published annually)
- Public events (i.e., high school fairs, open houses)
- School Visits (coordinated at the school level with support from the Office of CTE; includes teams from high school CTE programs visiting elementary/middle schools, as well as elementary/middle school students visiting CTE programs in high schools)
- [District's CTE Website](#)

⁷ PDE's Program Approval webpage is available at <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Career%20and%20Technical%20Education/ProgramApproval/Pages/default.aspx>

⁸ The High School Directory is available on the Office of CTE's webpage at <https://www.philasd.org/cte/>

CTE programs are marketed, promoted, and accessible to all District students, including those interested in non-traditional career pathways (i.e., female students in welding programs, male students in health-related programs) and students returning from placement. Elementary and middle school counselors should encourage all students to apply for CTE programming aligned with their interests, including non-traditional pathways.

Child Protective Services Law

Identification of Adult Responsible for Child's Welfare

When a District student under the age of eighteen (18) years old participates in a CTE internship, externship, work study, co-op, or similar program with an outside employer, the Office of CTE and the employer must, prior to commencing participation, identify an adult(s) who will be the student's supervisor while the child participates in the program. The identified adult(s) will be the person responsible for the child's welfare.

The identified adult(s) must be in the immediate vicinity of the child at regular intervals during the program. Immediate vicinity means an area in which an individual is physically present with a child and can see, hear, direct, and assess the activities of the child.

Clearance Certifications

Prior to commencement of the CTE program, the identified adult must submit the following information to the Office of CTE:

1. PA Child Abuse History Clearance - which must be less than sixty (60) months old.
2. PA State Police Criminal History Record Information - which must be less than sixty (60) months old.
3. Federal Criminal History Report - which must be less than sixty (60) months old.

The Office of CTE shall review the information and determine if information is disclosed that precludes identification of the adult as the supervisor responsible for the child's welfare.

Information submitted by an identified adult in accordance with this policy must be maintained centrally by the Office of CTE in a manner similar to that for school employees.

Arrest or Conviction Reporting Requirements

If the identified adult receives an arrest or conviction required to be reported by law, they must notify the employer, in writing, within seventy-two (72) hours of the occurrence.

If the identified adult is listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database, they must also report this to the employer within seventy-two (72) hours of notification, in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law.

Failure to accurately report such occurrences may subject the identified adult to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and criminal prosecution.

When there is a reasonable belief that the identified adult was arrested for or has been convicted of an offense required to be reported by law, was named as a perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or has provided written notice of such occurrence, the employer must immediately require the identified adult to submit new certifications.

If the employer receives notice of such occurrences from either the adult or a third party, the employer must immediately report that information to the Office of CTE.

Child Abuse Reporting

Identified adults who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse must make a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law.

Maintenance Schedule

These administrative procedures will be reviewed upon policy renewal, or in the case of a triggering event, and include a review of current, applicable state and Federal CTE laws and regulations.

Related Information:

[22 PA Code 339](#)