

Work in Progress

Overview of States that may offer Insights into Illinois Programs of Study

Prepared by Collin Ruud, OCCRL – Fall 2007

This, as a draft copy, is being continually updated, with the following information providing a beginning snapshot of what is known about CTE in a limited number of states. The basis of this research is state-level websites. The states were decided upon after brief analysis of all 50 states, after which time those programs that seemed to offer ideas useful to Illinois' programs of study were identified (either due to having a similar structure or by having a creative implementation) were chosen for more in-depth analysis. Additional states that had promising programs but were yet to be implemented will be added at a later date. The selected states are listed in alphabetical order.

Georgia

Georgia is currently going through a revision project, with development started in 2005-06, and first implementation for the 2007-08 school year. However, their previous model was successful and the current model is close to Illinois' model (with curricular changes).

School-to-Work:

Georgia's previous School-to-work (STW) program consisted of twelve (12) regions (counties rather than school districts) that designed their own objectives, approach, and strategies to improve education from secondary education to postsecondary education or the workforce, closely aligned with statewide and federal CTE standards.

CTAE:

A new program was created in 2006 entitled Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE), consisting of nine (9) "program concentrations" (much like career clusters) and governor-defined "strategic industries" where curricula are specifically designed.

Phase I strategic industries:

- Agriscience
- Aviation
- Transportation Logistics
- Small Business Development
- Computing
- Marketing Management
- Nursing
- Engineering

Each strategic industry is closely aligned with statewide "Centers of Innovation." Program uses a visual diagram to show how pathways are linked with these Centers of Innovation and into which federal career clusters they fit.

Curriculum:

Curricula are developed using eleven (11) suggested “Foundation Skills,” which the state defines as “critical competencies that students pursuing any career pathway should exhibit to be successful.” These are core standards that are realized in academic standards and curriculum development. For each pathway, a curriculum team is formed consisting of community-wide leaders, instructors (secondary and postsecondary) and administrators to develop performance standards and align curricula with Foundation Skills.

Articulation:

The articulation process is included with curriculum team meetings. Postsecondary representatives are able to design articulation agreements with local programs during the development process of curricula.

Work-based learning:

Within Career Development as a whole, several methods of work-based learning are suggested. Field trips, job shadowing, school-based businesses, entrepreneurial ventures, internships/practicum, clinical experiences, cooperative education, and youth apprenticeships are all suggested as valid work-based learning opportunities. Cooperative education is used extensively by programs in Business and Information Technology, Marketing, and Industrial training fields. Apprenticeship programs are also offered to individuals with which 11th or 12th grade students are given the opportunity to work for an industry and attain both a diploma and a postsecondary credential.

Student Organizations:

All programs within CTAE are required to have alignment with a national organization related to the particular field.

Administration:

Work-based learning programs require a local coordinator and supervisor to oversee operations of local CTAE programs. The supervisor is primarily required to continually review standards and assessments and maintain the programs under those standards. The coordinator is responsible for communication between workplaces, secondary institutions, and postsecondary institutions. The coordinator is also responsible for the review and implementation of each local program, taking local applications and deciding on whether to implement the program at a particular school.

The state also sets up an advisory committee for each local program to maintain adherence to state and nationwide standards, review and assess local programs, and keep watch over administration of the programs.

Marketing:

Marketing is required of all programs within the state, as outlined by a marketing plan. This plan is to include ideas for marketing to employers, students, parents, the community, and other institutions.

Evaluation:

Evaluation in the state is based on demographic and performance information. Demographic data are to be used to modify marketing plans, program makeup, and equal opportunity compliance. CTAE programs must adhere to statewide learning standards, which include the requirement to have student organizations, appropriate follow-ups with students and employers, and creating recommendations for improvement of each program. The data are used in an annual report generated for each program. It is kept on file at the local level but also submitted to the state Department of Education for review.

Links:

<http://www.dtae.org/gastw/menu.html>

<http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/DMGetDocument.aspx/CTAE%20Career%20Pathway%20Development%206%201%2007.pdf?p=6CC6799F8C1371F6925AA8206F99AE219C9A841B5FCFE35BC8BDAF7ECA791C07&Type=D>

<http://www.georgiastandards.org/career.aspx>

Nebraska

Areas of Study:

All sixteen (16) Career Clusters are contained within six (6) Career Fields:

- Business, Marketing, and Management
- Human Services and Resources
- Environmental and Agricultural Systems
- Communication and Information Systems
- Industrial, Manufacturing, and Engineering Systems
- Health Sciences

Program Standards:

Program standards are available in checklist format for program participants. Standards require special certification for instructors, state and federal curricula, assessment in place, and community partnerships. The checklist is a form of self-assessment made available for each NCE career field. Student organizations are required for every career cluster, as in other state programs.

Curriculum:

Curricula are outlined by the state to adhere with federal standards of Career Clusters. Several state-designed standards are also outlined (see above). Students who enter the NCE program have an Individual Career Education Plan (ICEP) form filled out that describes what courses are to be taken in grades 9-12 for a particular career pathway, postsecondary courses (for 2- and 4-year institutions), as well as extracurricular activities for the student to participate in and to reach completer status. Over 60% of the school districts in the state have articulation agreements aligning curricula with college standards.

Extended learning:

The state uses an “extended learning” program that consists of numerous opportunities for students to get hands-on training in their desired job category. These program types are cooperative education, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships, mentoring, and service learning.

Middle School Curriculum:

Middle school curricula are guided by Career Cluster charts made by the state. One chart, for example, lists several potential lessons (with supplied lesson plans and materials) related to which career cluster each lesson would emphasize. Some lessons cover multiple career clusters. Another chart relates each lesson with the objective (standard) that is expected to be taught within each cluster, while yet another chart relates the lessons with “Foundation Knowledge and Skills” such as employability, teamwork, communication, and critical thinking.

Links:

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/nce/>

Oklahoma

Areas of Study:

While the website lists all sixteen (16) Career Clusters in a descriptive format, research found only seven (7) “Occupational Divisions” used by the state:

- Agricultural Education
- Business and Information Technology Education
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education
- Health Careers Education
- Marketing Education
- Technology Education
- Trade/Industrial Education

Implementation:

All CareerTech programs in the state must have an “occupational advisory committee” made up of teachers, administrators, and employers. They are required to meet at least once annually. There are additional requirements that include local administration, teacher supervision, and cooperative education. Other administrative requirements include keeping record of students, defining career practicum and providing career guidance for all CareerTech programs.

Each occupational division has specific requirements, grade levels, and method for operation. For example, Agricultural Education is designed for grades 8-12. Students in the program must participate in a “supervised agricultural experience project.” Each program has requirements to keep relationships and programs with student organizations (such as FFA). Family and Consumer Sciences, on the other hand, runs from grades 6-12, with more specific training in grades 11-12.

All programs are required to go through an approval process via a CareerTech program administrator. Programs must provide hands-on experience and meet statewide standards for curriculum. More specific program requirements exist for each occupational division. For example, Agricultural education allows for the creation of summer programs, including field days, tours, etc. Instructors must be provided with leave time as well. Instructors in such programs must be full-time, 12-month employees (rather than in 9-month appointments). Each occupational division additionally has program enrollment limits and minimums. These are typically defined as a maximum of 25 students for laboratory or classroom instruction. Instructors are additionally required to have certification to teach CTE courses.

Assessment:

The state releases an annual report indicating accessibility and statistics information for CareerTech programs. Funding information is required from every CareerTech program for the report as well. Assessment is an important component to statewide accreditation.

Technology Centers/Comprehensive Schools:

The two main methods for providing CareerTech instruction are using technology centers or comprehensive schools. Comprehensive schools are the most similar to other states' CTE programs, as they are simply schools that have CareerTech programming for students. Technology Centers, on the other hand, are individual facilities that exist for the sole purpose of providing instruction for CareerTech. This instruction is offered to both students and adults, although adults must pay an additional fee. Most technology centers are located on college campuses and have closer-aligned articulation agreements with community colleges as a result. Technology centers have their own set of standards, including how to make articulation agreements, integrate programs to K-12 standards, etc.

Standards:

The state provides a comprehensive list of standards for each occupational program. Within the curricula of each program, there is also a “curriculum and duty-task crosswalk” which lists “units,” or different aspects of the curricula, followed by objectives within the unit, crosslisted with standards that each objective meets.

Links:

<http://www.okcareertech.org/cimc/>
<http://www.okcareertech.org/index.html>

Tennessee

Areas of Study:

The Tennessee CTE program currently allows districts to create programs within eight (8) program areas:

- Agriculture
- Business Technology
- Contextual Academics
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Health Science
- Marketing
- Technology Engineering
- Trade/Industrial Education

Contextual academics is a series of courses intended to allow students to study the application of different courses. Examples of such courses are “Technical Algebra,” “English IV, Communication for Life,” and “Principles of Technology I/II.” The Trade/Industrial cluster contains several clusters similar to Career Clusters, such as Human Services, Transportation, and Arts and Communication.

Standards:

Each of the eight (8) program areas has a state-defined set of standards, including specific course requirements and “competency profiles” for students and courses. Course requirements are highly specific, outlining exact information that must be learned by students within a specific class. There are nine (9) standards with numerous sub-standards that must be kept by every individual participating in the program. Some career clusters are divided into sub-clusters (example: Agriculture has Agribusiness, Agriculture Mechanics, etc.). Areas like business have career pathways outlined for grades 9-12 for specific careers, along with a recommended course structure for students. Standards are very detailed for each course regarding textbooks, instructor certification, and expectations for student learning within the timeline of the course.

Courses:

State policies allow for the creation of “special courses” that are to be created when there is a specific need in-state, which require annual review and assessment. Generally, most federally- or state-approved courses can fill the function of a special course, but the application process exists in extenuating circumstances.

Improvement:

All programs are required to fill out an annual Improvement Report. While brief, it touches on whether goals were met within the past school year, and how Perkins funding has improved (if it has improved) the overall program. Program directors are required to provide an overview of progress, data that were used for assessment, funding information, a detailed budget of expenditures, and a final summary outlining what components of the program worked the best.

Links:

<http://www.state.tn.us/education/cte/>

Virginia

Areas of Study:

The Virginia CTE program currently has eight (8) different programs of study, seven (7) closely aligned with federal Career Clusters:

- Agricultural Education
- Business and Information Technology (similar to 2 career clusters)
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Health and Medical Sciences
- Marketing
- Technology Education
- Trade/Industrial Education
- Career Connections

Career Connections is a program created by the state that allows students to learn basic employability skills without being specifically in one program area. These skills include leadership, entrepreneurship, and basic education. The program also is where exploratory classes are listed.

Implementation:

Local governments are required to create and submit proposals for the implementation of CTE programs in their locale. Applications are subject for review and approval by the Department of Education. Specific requirements for the application process are aligned with federal requirements. A separate budget application is required as well. If approved, the local government is responsible for the creation of a CTE advisory council. The council's primary responsibilities include determining labor market demands and relevancy of specific CTE programs for the local area, and to work on the evaluation and implementation of the program. State policies dictate that this board be made up of students, teachers, parents, and business representatives. An additional clause makes it a requirement to maintain a diverse population within the board. Each local CTE program is required to submit data on CTE progress, to adhere to state and federal policies.

Cooperative Education:

Programs in the state are allowed to utilize the cooperative education methodology. Specific requirements on course size (maximum 24, average 20) must be kept. A training agreement is required for all participating in the cooperative education programs, and the agreement must be made by the student, parent/guardian, school administrator, and employer.

Student Organizations:

Like other states, all CTE programs in the state are required to have an affiliated student organization. They must be "an integral and active part of each secondary career and technical program offered." Furthermore, middle school (grades 6-8) should have similar programs with the same affiliated organization.

Marketing:

The state made a website entitled “RU Ready?” to serve as a resource for students and parents regarding the CTE programs. It includes information regarding career clusters, career pathways, the advantages of CTE programs, etc.

Links:

<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/CTE/>

<http://www.gatewayva.com/edu/ruready/index.shtml>