

CTE State Policy Trends: Industry-Recognized Certification

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State Policy

- States have been active in legislating about CTE and workforce development
 - Pathways/programs of study
 - Dual credit
 - Industry-recognized certifications
 - Career guidance
 - Work-based learning
 - Partnerships/industry demand

State CTE Policy Review

STATE POLICIES
IMPACTING
CTE

2013 Year in Review

2013 was a major year for career and technical education (CTE)! All but three states had legislative or regulatory action in the 2013 calendar year that impacted one or more elements of CTE. This level of engagement by state legislatures, state boards of education, governors' offices and state agencies can be attributed to the growing awareness that CTE is key to engaging learners at all levels, closing the skills gap and bolstering America's competitiveness advantage.

In addition, a number of states launched statewide task forces or councils to coordinate efforts to increase participation in CTE (such as *Indiana*), to ease transitions between secondary and postsecondary education (such as *Arkansas* and *Iowa*) and/or to meet statewide goals related to workforce development (such as *Tennessee* and *Oregon*).

There were also significant changes in regard to states' graduation requirements. A handful of states passed legislation or initiated efforts to allow students to advance by demonstrating proficiency (rather than seat time), including *Colorado*, *Iowa*, *Oklahoma* and *Vermont*. While not all of these states have made CTE explicit in their policies, competency-based education graduation requirements certainly open the door to more academic and technical integration. *Arizona*, *Washington* and *Wisconsin* expanded policies to allow CTE courses to count toward academic requirements. In addition, a number of states developed CTE-focused endorsements for their high school diplomas, including *Florida*, *Texas*, *North Carolina* and *Wisconsin*.

Finally, several states addressed expanding access to dual/concurrent enrollment by launching new task forces focused on this goal (such as *Louisiana*, *Maine* and *Rhode Island*), facilitating credit-transfer policies (such as *Kentucky* and *Maryland*) or creating centralized inventories (such as *Indiana*).


This review also identified 11 states that addressed science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in some way, often in concert with other policies. As this review did not focus on all STEM-related policies, but rather CTE policies, it is likely there were other state-level STEM activities that were not captured in this analysis.

Prepared by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium ([NASDCTE](#)) and the Association for Career and Technical Education ([ACTE](#)), this paper will provide both an overview and a state-by-state review of CTE-related policies that were enacted in 2013.


Overview

Looking across all 50 states and Washington D.C., a few trends emerged. Surprisingly, the most common form of activity was funding for CTE. Thirty-one states directed additional funds to support new and existing CTE initiatives, through such mechanisms as competitive grants to scale or replicate best practices (such as *California*, *Alabama* and *New York*), capital investments (such as *Arkansas* and *Massachusetts*) or adjustments to the state's funding formula (such as *Georgia* and *Arizona*). It is particularly noteworthy that so many states worked to find new sources of revenue for secondary and postsecondary CTE, given how tight resources are around the country.


Another major trend was around governance. Several states reorganized their state agencies or clarified regulatory authority for CTE.



STATE DIRECTORS
National Association of State Directors
of Career Technical Education Consortium



Association for Career
and Technical Education
ACTE



Learning that works for America
CTE

- ACTE and NASDCTEc
- First released in early 2014, covering 2013 policy
- Next edition in progress, due out late January 2015

2013: Industry Certification Policy

- *Florida*: Bonuses to teachers
- *Kansas and Wisconsin*: \$1,000 incentive
- *North Carolina*: Free exam administration
- *Louisiana*: College credit for academic content in industry-based certification courses



Industry Credential Brief



POLICY BRIEF ON INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

Prepared for the National Conference of State Legislatures
December 11, 2014

NOTE: This brief is a summary of major 2014 legislative and agency actions concerning industry-recognized credentials, but is by no means an exhaustive listing. The information compiled in this document is in the process of being vetted by state CTE leaders as part of the upcoming release of the second annual State CTE Policy Review, produced by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium and the Association for Career and Technical Education. The State CTE Policy Review will take a comprehensive look at state policy actions from 2014, including industry-recognized credentials. The 2013 report may be accessed [here](#) and the newest installment will be available at [careertech.org](#) or [acteonline.org](#) in late January 2015.

SUMMARY

As a means to prepare a career-ready workforce, industry-recognized certifications have continued to attract the interest of state policymakers across the country. In 2014 alone, more than 15 states passed laws or launched initiatives that focused on increasing industry-recognized credential attainment. This summary includes notable actions by governors and state education or workforce agencies.

Arizona

The [state budget](#) for Fiscal Year 2015 includes \$1 million for IT certification programs.

California

[SBBS8](#) formally establishes the Career Pathways Trust Grant, originally funded in the 2013 budget. Grant recipients must ensure pathway programs that lead to a degree or certification in a high-skill, high-wage and high-growth or emerging field, as well as foster collaboration, provide articulated pathways, prioritize work-based learning and leverage existing funding and programs.

Florida

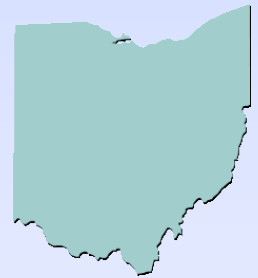
[SBBS6](#), an education appropriations bill, includes many provisions related to offering and reporting on industry certifications and Digital Tool certificates, a major facet of the 2007 Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act, such as:

- Requiring district boards to make CAPE Digital Tool certificates and industry certifications available in P-12 through subject area curricula, as a separate course, through open-access options or through online or digital applications;
- Authorizing access to third-party assessment centers and career and professional academy curricula in a digital format in support of Digital Tool certificates and industry certifications;
- Providing eligibility for additional full-time-equivalent funding for students earning Digital Tool certificates and industry certifications, including in the middle grades;
- Stating that a grade in a course level 3 or above and leading to an industry certification will receive the same weight as a grade in an honors course; and

- NASDCTEc and ACTE
- Prepared for this meeting

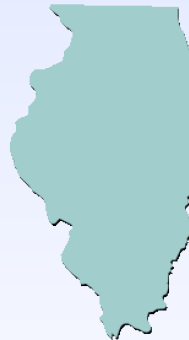
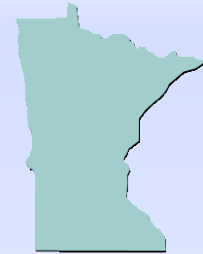
2014: Industry Certification Policy

- *California, Louisiana, Rhode Island and Tennessee:* pathways leading to a credential, including a certification
- *Ohio:* industry certification as a graduation option
- *Florida:* CAPE industry certifications and Digital Tool certificates
- *Idaho and Louisiana:* certifications count for dual credit tuition assistance
- *Missouri:* scoring guide includes business partnerships leading to certification
- *Virginia:* CTE teachers required to have an industry credential



2014: Sector Specific

- *Arizona, Minnesota, Missouri and West Virginia:* IT certification
- *Utah:* STEM certification
- *Illinois:* manufacturing programs of study and MSSC certification



Certification Data Exchange Project

- Learn the characteristics and employment outcomes of students who took and passed certification exams
- Grew out of a CompTIA-Illinois pilot
- Currently conducting pilot with additional states
- Goal to develop standards and guidelines on data sharing and establish a national data exchange clearinghouse

Contact and Links

- Industry certification brief on the conference website
- 2014 policy paper forthcoming at www.acteonline.org and careertech.org
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