

## Career Technical Education Talking Points: CTE Helps Students Engage & Succeed

As a CTE stakeholder, you are also, inevitably, a CTE advocate. Whether you are an instructor or an administrator, a student or an employer, your passion for the discipline is likely to land you in a conversation with someone who does not know what CTE is, who doesn't understand its value, or who misunderstands what it looks like today.

Below, you'll find short, digestible talking points that you can use in meetings, in conversation or in correspondence to explain and make the case for CTE. These talking points are flexible, they can be mixed and matched, or tweaked to fit with your audience's level of understanding and support for CTE. They are also well supported by other talking points and fact sheets, found at <http://careertech.org/fact-sheets>.

### The Basics:

- CTE programs are developing America's most valuable resource – its people. CTE keeps America working by preparing them for the jobs that exist today, and equipping them with the skills employers will need in the future.
- High-quality CTE provides learners of all ages with the academic, technical and employability skills necessary to succeed in future careers and become lifelong learners.
- CTE prepares learners by introducing them to workplace competencies, and makes academic content accessible by providing it in a hands-on context.
- Organized through the National Career Cluster® Framework, CTE programs cover the entire world of work, from agriculture and arts to marketing and manufacturing.
- Through the National Career Clusters Framework, students can explore careers and gain universal career-ready skills, as well as skills specific to individual jobs and occupations.
- CTE is not only for students who want to go directly into a career, but is also a meaningful and vital opportunity for students who are preparing for college. In fact, about three-quarters of CTE concentrators go on directly into postsecondary education after graduating high school.<sup>1</sup>
- CTE is taught in a range of settings – from high schools and area technical centers to technical and two-year community colleges. In total, about 12.5 million high school and college students are enrolled in CTE across the nation.<sup>2</sup>
- This diverse delivery system provides employers with an opportunity to engage with learners at various levels of their careers – from career exploration in high school to adults who are returning to the classroom to improve their skills.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/sectech/nacte/career-technical-education/interim-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://cte.ed.gov/docs/Rpt to Congress/Perkins RTC 2010-11.pdf](http://cte.ed.gov/docs/Rpt%20to%20Congress/Perkins%20RTC%202010-11.pdf)

### **The Value:**

- In all but one state, CTE concentrators were more likely to graduate from high school than the average student, with two-thirds of the states reporting CTE graduation rates that were 10 or more percentage points higher than the graduation rates for all students.<sup>3</sup> The average graduation rate is approximately 90 percent for CTE concentrators, compared to a national average graduate rate of about 80 percent.
- CTE provides a positive return on investment for students, businesses and the economy.
  - Students who earn a CTE-related associate's degree or certificate can make an average of \$9,000 more per year than their peers who graduate with a humanities or social science focus.
  - For high-demand fields such as healthcare, students can make \$20,000 more per year.<sup>4</sup>
- Students in postsecondary CTE programs are more likely to be employed within five years than those in an academic field of study. Armed with technical knowledge, employability skills and an industry-recognized credential in their field of study, CTE students are finding success in the workplace and employers are recognizing the value being added to their companies.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> [http://cte.ed.gov/docs/NACTE\\_FinalReport2014.pdf](http://cte.ed.gov/docs/NACTE_FinalReport2014.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/pathways%20to%20boosting.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/B03.asp>