

CTE & Programs of Study

The evidence is clear – students are equally motivated to achieve college and career success. According to a recent national survey, 85 percent of parents and students believe getting a college degree is important, but even more believe it is important to have a meaningful career.¹

Programs of study, first introduced in the 2006 reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins),² provide a framework for bridging academic and technical instruction in a sequenced pathway that expands, rather than limits, opportunities for today’s learners.

Historically, vocational education programs provided students with the specific skills they needed for a single job. In contrast, programs of study equip students with **real-world skills** in order to **enhance the high school experience** and provide **real options for college and rewarding careers**. Programs of study allow students to explore different career pathways and figure out what they like to do and what they are good at.

Armed with that information, students can choose their Career Cluster[®] of focus and progress along a pathway of increasingly specific academic and technical courses, enhanced by real-work experiences, toward the attainment of credentials that will help them succeed both in postsecondary study and in their careers.

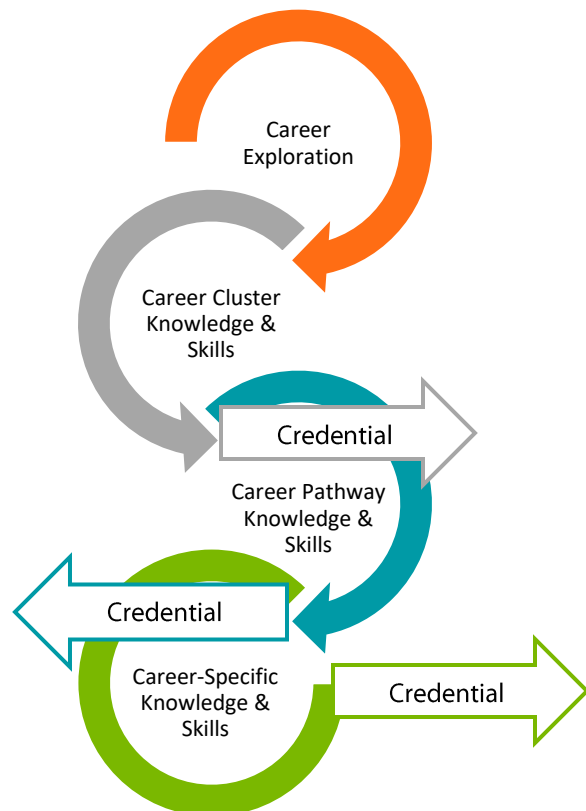
Programs of Study & Career Readiness

- The intentional design of programs of study helps put students on a path to further education, career readiness and success. In one study, students indicated that their participation in a program of study made it **more likely that they would take relevant courses in the future** (84 percent).³
- Participation also **made students focus** on their studies **and know where they were headed** (80 percent) throughout and after high school.

Programs of Study

- Consist of an intentional **sequence of specialized courses**;
- Link **secondary and postsecondary** education;
- Integrate **challenging academic and technical** instruction;
- Include **dual credit** opportunities;
- Lead to an industry-recognized **credential, certificate or degree**

A Program of Study’s Progression



Programs of Study & Student Success

- Programs of study help students gain technical and academic skills and competencies. In fact, 76 percent of CTE students reported that their program of study **helped them get better grades.**⁵
- The higher a student's "dosage" of CTE, the more likely they are to be successful in and after high school. According to one study, students who take dual credit courses in a CTE program of study were **more likely than their peers to go to college.**⁶
- Further research out of Arkansas finds that CTE concentrators – those completing three or more credits in a program of study – were more likely to **graduate high school, enroll in college, be employed and earn higher wages** than their peers.⁷
- More evidence indicates that students in programs of study **outperform** their non-CTE peers as well as those enrolled in traditional CTE programs. One study finds participation in a program of study **increases the likelihood of graduation** (between 9-11 percent across districts), **overall GPA** (by upwards of 0.45 in one school district) and **CTE GPA.**⁸

Programs of Study in Practice: Network Engineering Program at Summit Technology Academy



The Network Engineering Academy program at Summit Technology

Academy⁴ is a **high-quality program of study** and the winner of the 2017 Excellence in Action Award for the Information Technology Career Cluster[®]. Students enrolled in the program of study experience rigorous coursework, participate in work-based learning opportunities and can earn dual credit in high school that seamlessly transfers to college.

The program of study begins with foundational knowledge building. Classes explore the structure and functions of the internet and eventually progress through a comprehensive, theoretical, and practical approach to designing, implementing, and securing enterprise and wide area networks. Students who complete the program in their junior year can participate in the Missouri Innovation Campus (MIC) partnership, where they can begin to earn a bachelor's degree while in high school.

Students in the Network Engineering Academy **graduate ready for college and career success.** In the 2015-16 school year, 81 percent of students in the program earned an industry-recognized credential, and 94 percent enrolled in postsecondary education, enlisted in the military or were employed.

¹https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/files/resources/The_Value_Promise_Career_Technical_Education_2017.pdf

² Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, http://s3.amazonaws.com/PCRN/docs/perkins_iv.pdf

³ http://www.nrccte.org/sites/default/files/publication-files/nrccte_mature_pos_final.pdf

⁴ https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/2017ExcellenceActionSummitTechnologyAcademy_IT_FINAL_0.pdf

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED567419.pdf>

⁷ <https://edexcellence.net/publications/career-and-technical-education-in-high-school-does-it-improve-student-outcomes>

⁸ http://www.nrccte.org/sites/default/files/publication-files/nrccte_cte_programs_of_study_career_pathways.pdf