

## Putting Learner Success First & CTE Educators

### **About Putting Learner Success First: A Shared Vision for the Future of CTE**

*Putting Learner Success First: A Shared Vision for the Future of CTE* – released with support from seven national organizations in May 2016 – calls for a re-imagined education system where all learners have access to high-quality experiences that put them on a path to career success. This vision boldly challenges the status quo and calls for a transformation of the education system while also defining CTE’s role in igniting and achieving this goal.

The vision is anchored in five inter-related and equally important principles:

- **All Career Technical Education (CTE) programs are held to the highest standards of excellence.**
- **All learners are empowered to choose a meaningful education and career.**
- **All learning is personalized and flexible.**
- **All learning is facilitated by knowledgeable experts.**
- **All systems work together to put learner success first.**

The initiative addresses the future of CTE through a community-wide approach, requiring understanding and support from individuals both inside and outside the CTE community. There is no doubt that CTE educators, who are “on the ground” working with students on a daily basis, are a critical link to realizing the transformation that the vision references. In that spirit, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) has developed this document to explain the principles and provide suggestions of actions that CTE educators might take to support the vision.

### **Why this Matters to CTE Educators**

The fact that the vision is anchored in a community-wide approach is significant for CTE educators. The new vision calls for a systemic approach that better integrates CTE within the environment in which it exists, be it at a local school or postsecondary institution, or in another delivery system. This new paradigm, which recognizes and values CTE, should help CTE educators at the local level.

The nature of a learner-centric system that the vision speaks of will require the erosion of silos and more alignment within and across education, workforce development and economic development systems. The vision underscores the importance of programs of study that provide students a clear path to meeting their career and life goals. CTE educators are at the epicenter of programs of study and will be called upon as leaders to implement them in the future.

In addition to programs of study, the vision calls for strong career exploration and advisement in order for students to investigate and better understand their career choices. While the school counselor or career guidance professional will lead these activities, the vision calls on all educators to be more involved in supporting this process. CTE educators are already a source of career development through their coursework and often as advisors to Career and Technical Student Organizations.

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The vision also lays out a concept for the recruitment, training and support of educators, calling for the modernization of CTE certification programs, and a priority on professional learning opportunities focused on contextualized teaching and learning and learner engagement. It also discusses the need for more mentoring opportunities and increased involvement from employers.

This vision will require much more support and collaboration across the educational “lines” that currently separate our educators and those that separate us from employers and others in the wider community. The vision also calls from improved federal policy investments to realize the concept.

### **What CTE Educators Can Do to Support the Vision**

#### Review the Vision

Read the vision and determine what your role might be related to the recommendations. Do you see yourself as a leader within the movement? Are there specific activities that you are best suited to carry out? How does the new vision affect your current practice? Are there new skills you must learn or support you will need from your school, institution or leaders?

#### Share the Vision

As discussed, a key to successful implementation of the vision will be continuing to break down the silos that exist between CTE and non-CTE education as well as secondary and postsecondary and those outside of education, such as employers. Share the document with these colleagues and begin a discussion of how your school, district or institution might implement some of the recommendations of the vision or get involved in your state’s efforts. In-service days and advisory board meetings are two potential venues to host a discussion around the vision.

#### Get Involved

Get involved in the vision! National organizations and states are conducting a range of activities to support the vision. Be on the lookout for initiatives that help to implement the vision. Educators will be critical to the vision’s success. Organizations like ACTE and Advance CTE will be working together to encourage state leaders to be inclusive of local educators and provide the support they need to meet the vision goals.

Through its Strategic Direction and priorities, ACTE is working to support the vision and the field through activities such as our High-Quality CTE initiative and a focus on academic integration and programs of study. ACTE will be looking to its membership for the answers on how to further support their work and the future of CTE.

An easy way to get involved and show your support for the new vision is to sign on to the campaign and share what you are doing to advance the vision and its principles in your classrooms and communities at <https://careertech.org/shared-vision-sign-on>

For additional information on the vision and ACTE’s support, see  
<http://www.acteonline.org/ctesummit>

Written by the Association for Career and Technical Education  
[www.careertech.org/vision](http://www.careertech.org/vision)

