Postsecondary Program Quality in Colorado and Illinois

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Postsecondary Program Quality

- Support from the Joyce Foundation allowed this work to happen
- In 2018, the Colorado Community College System and Illinois Community College Board reviewed their own practices
- Policy Benchmark Tool was used as a starting point
Policy Benchmark Tool: What does the tool do?

- Describes the key components of a high-quality policy that will ensure program quality
- Leads an assessment of current policy to pinpoint strengths and opportunities for growth
- Assists with “What now?”
Six core elements

1. Rigorous course standards and progressive, sequenced courses
2. Secondary and postsecondary alignment and early postsecondary offerings
3. Industry involvement
4. Labor market demand
5. High-quality instruction
6. Experiential learning
Section 1: Defining a quality policy

- Define the core elements
- Describe affected policy areas, so that you can:
  - Review existing policies
  - Bring in content experts
### Section 2: Self-assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to Consider</th>
<th>1 (Emerging)</th>
<th>4 (Strong)</th>
<th>Rating and Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A) How effectively does your current policy ensure alignment between CTE program standards and relevant industry standards?</td>
<td>Program and/or course standards, whether developed at the state or local level, have not recently been evaluated for alignment to relevant industry standards.</td>
<td>The state has a defined and has ongoing process in place for aligning CTE program and/or course standards with industry standards, which is validated by industry partners.</td>
<td>Overall Rating: 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B) How effectively does your policy ensure that CTE programs are thoroughly integrated with relevant academic college and career readiness standards?</td>
<td>CTE program and/or course standards are considered entirely separate from or do not align with academic standards and instruction or employability standards.</td>
<td>Academic standards and CTE standards are considered equally significant for all CTE programs and courses in the state.</td>
<td>Rating 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local CTE programs align and revise CTE program and/or course standards and industry standards at their own discretion, with little to no guidance from the state, so there is no way of knowing the degree of alignment.</td>
<td>Individual schools and institutions use state-level guidance to ensure that program and/or course standards are integrated with academic standards consistently.</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program and/or course standards are typically narrowly focused on occupation-specific skills and do not address cross-cutting employability/career-ready skills.</td>
<td>Program and/or course standards show a clear integration of academic and technical content, as well as state-approved employability standards.</td>
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</table>
Section 2: Ratings

1. **Emerging**: This policy component is not yet defined or is just beginning to emerge; current state policy meets most of the criteria listed.

2. **Building**: This policy component has some bright spots, but there are still many improvements to be made; it meets some of the criteria under 1, but there are key considerations that allow for more optimism.

3. **Promising**: This policy component is fairly well developed, though there are still some improvements to be made; it meets some but not most of the criteria under 4 and is considered to be more developed than a 2.

4. **Strong**: This policy component is extremely well developed and effective, even if there are still minor adjustments to be made; it meets most of the criteria listed under 4.
Section 3: Implementation

- Set short- and long-term goals
- Be strategic about stakeholder engagement
- Manage risks
- Consider affected policies and initiatives
- Have clear next steps
Section 4: Ongoing quality

- Consider the full cycle of approval and re-approval
- Decide the outcomes that will be measured
- Plan for collecting and using information to evaluate programs

### Evaluation Core Elements

#### 1) Rigorous Course Standards and Progressive Sequenced Courses
- Learners experience positive outcomes, as seen in evidence of program completion and credential attainment
- Program standards and/or curricula have been updated since the last review to reflect the latest knowledge from the field, as validated by industry partners and representatives from both secondary and postsecondary
- Learners’ course-taking patterns indicate an appropriate and deliberate sequence of instruction
- CTE participation at the school and institution levels reflects the school’s overall population

#### 2) Secondary and Postsecondary Alignment and Early Postsecondary Offerings
- Statewide credit transfer agreements are embedded within CTE programs, and CTE programs have evidence that learners are able to smoothly complete transitions between secondary and postsecondary and between postsecondary institutions, as well as earn noncredit postsecondary credit
- Learners obtain at least one relevant credential of value upon completion of the CTE program
- Learners have access to high-quality advising systems to help guide them through their chosen pathway and transition from secondary to postsecondary to workforce

#### 3) Industry Involvement
- The industry advisory committee meets on a consistent timeline, and each meeting is structured to allow for meaningful engagement and input from members
- Industry advisory committee members represent a diverse group of stakeholders and remain engaged over time
- The industry advisory committee regularly reviews CTE program standards and curriculum and provides insights on how to better align them to industry needs
- CTE program administrators and the industry advisory committee regularly examine labor market information and make CTE program changes as needed to ensure alignment with industry needs
- Multiple industry partners provide meaningful opportunities for learners and instructors to benefit from their expertise both on site at a workplace and in the classroom
Resources

• Policy Benchmark Tool
  • https://careertech.org/resource/program-approval-policy-benchmark-tool

• Driving Quality in Postsecondary CTE: Approval and Evaluation Policies
  • https://careertech.org/resource/driving-quality-postsecondary-cte

• Developing Credit for Prior Learning Policies to Support Postsecondary Attainment
  • https://careertech.org/resource/credit-prior-learning
High-Quality CTE Programming Supported by Advance CTE and the Joyce Foundation

www.careertech.org
Project Goals

Positively impact the quality and relevance of postsecondary CTE programs by:

- Using Advance CTE’s Policy Benchmark Tool to assess existing program approval and review policies and strengthen those policies and processes;
- Engaging local campuses to support and pilot implementation of updated program approval and review policies; and
- Sharing lessons learned in updating and improving program approval policies with the broader CTE community.
Timeline

Spring 2018
• Program Review Evaluation and Focus Groups
• Coordination of College Pilots and Project Planning
• State Policy Self-Assessment

Fall 2018
• Meet with Pilot Sites/ Pilot Sites will evaluate and provide recommendations for state policy
• ICSPS will conduct field work to further identify gaps, best practices, technical assistance needs and get a thorough understand of high-quality CTE program development.

Spring 2019
• Meeting 2 with Pilot Sites- Program Approval and Review Revisions and Collect Feedback
• Collect feedback from Chief Academic Officers
• Finalize alignment between program approval and review policies for CTE

Summer 2019
• Resource Creation/ Update POS Expectations Tool
• Technical Assistance
• Statewide Training
Assessment
## ICCB Self-Assessment

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State Policy Assessment

1. Rigorous Course Standards and Progressive, Sequenced Courses
   programs of study reinforces sequencing; good integration of employability skills; lack of contextualization; no state CTE standards

2. Secondary & Postsecondary Alignment/Early Postsecondary Offerings
   a lot of dual credit; articulation for transfer but not CTE; equity issues; need to meet demand while maintaining rigor

3. Industry Involvement and Alignment
   Need for formal advisory committee policy; lots of employer engagement, but how rigorous?; Advisory Committee Guidebook; need for connecting students to employers through WBL

4. Labor Market Demands
   thorough use of LMI, but how localized?; Do faculty members understand what this data means?; We used to provide workshops

5. High-Quality Instruction
   Driven by accreditation; embedded in approval policies; ensure flexibility; CTE instructors need more training in pedagogy

6. Experiential Learning
   Encourage experiential learning, but don’t require; need more engagement with CTSOs
System Engagement

- Black Hawk College
- College of Lake County
- John A. Logan College
- Kankakee Community College
- Kishwaukee College
- Lincoln Land Community College
- Oakton Community College
- Parkland College
- Rend Lake College
- Waubonsee Community College
System Engagement

1. Participate in the assessment of the statewide program approval process.
2. Provide feedback and recommendations to inform the first draft of revisions.
3. (Originally) Colleges will pilot the revised program approval process.
4. Participate in meetings and interviews.
5. Attend and participate in the statewide training that will occur in August/September of 2019.
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Findings and Results
Top Ten Reasons Why Program Approval Applications are not Approved

1. Well developed program descriptions
2. Determination of program need
3. Curricular content
4. Assessment of student learning
5. Connection of proposed program with other programs at the college
6. Program accreditation-Industry Credentials
7. Demonstrating partnerships
8. Faculty qualifications
9. Cost/Budgeting
10. Academic Control
Policy Revisions and Professional Development

- Updated and Revised the Program Approval Manual
  - alignment with Perkins V
  - Revised the Programs of Study Expectations Tool
- Revised the Program Review Manual
- Offered technical assistance to participating community colleges
- Held a Statewide Workshop
Thank you!

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