

Using the Alignment Study Results

The state-specific results from the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Alignment Study can be used in a variety of ways, depending on each state's plan for the CCTC. Below are some concrete strategies for leveraging the results of the alignment study as well as the supportive materials.

Building awareness about the CCTC:

The state alignment results provide a wealth of information that provide a jumping-off point for engaging K-12 and postsecondary educators, administrators, business/industry representatives, policymakers and other critical stakeholders around the state's current CTE expectations and where the CCTC may fit into that framework moving forward.

- ✓ **Share the findings with peers** within and across state agencies.
- ✓ **Brief the education leadership** including, but not limited to, the K-12 Superintendent of Education; the Governor/Governor's Education Policy Advisor; key State Board of Education members; key legislative leaders; and higher education leaders such as state higher education executive officers, college presidents, and community and technical college system heads.
- ✓ **Share with the CTE community** by writing an article or summary of the alignment results and sharing via newsletters, listservs and other means of communicating with CTE educators in your state.
- ✓ **Present the findings** at CTE conferences and other professional development events.
- ✓ **Brief business/industry leaders** at Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Business Roundtable and other business-focused meetings.

Reviewing and revising programs of study:

In particular, the alignment results and CCTC should help drive honest and informed discussions about programs of study. Nearly every state has programs of study in nearly every Career Cluster area – with or without statewide standards undergirding those programs of study at one or both learner levels – making the opportunity for strengthening and bringing successful programs of study to scale clear.

- ✓ **Convene secondary and postsecondary leaders** to discuss programs of study in your state, including evidence of each program of study's success, using the CCTC as a common reference point in those conversations.

- ✓ **Convene secondary and postsecondary CTE educators** to review existing programs of study and their current, and possible, alignment to the CCTC, either as the developers of those programs of study or as external reviewers.
- ✓ **Review and revise program of study support and approval processes**, based on the takeaways and findings from the secondary and postsecondary education leaders' and educators' discussions.

Preparing for adoption:

For those states already committed to adopting the CCTC, the alignment study results can be shared with State Boards of Education, State Superintendents/Commissioners of Education, legislatures, governors' offices, higher education system heads and other key policymakers to help make the case for adoption and explain what adoption will mean for the state. Beyond briefing these key education leaders, states can leverage the results to make the case for adoption, as both a critical step forward and also the natural next step to be taken.

- ✓ **Formally present** the findings at a State Board of Education/State Board of Regents meeting or to the individual or body that formally adopts CTE standards at the secondary and/or postsecondary levels.
- ✓ **Draft policy language** (regulatory or legislative) to adopt the CCTC.
- ✓ **Use policy levers** already at your disposal (e.g., requirements for programs of study, dual/concurrent enrollment, program approval/evaluation, Perkins requirements and funding, etc.) to begin encouraging the use of the CCTC.

Mapping out an implementation and transition strategy:

The CCTC are a set of end-of-program of study standards that serve as anchor standards for CTE pathways. The alignment study results demonstrate where state's standards already are supporting students' learning within programs of study – and where gaps still exist and need to be addressed.

All of this information can be a tool as states revise, update and/or replace their existing CTE standards to bring them into alignment with the CCTC, be it through formal adoption of the CCTC, revising current standards to fully align to the CCTC, changing requirements for state-approved programs of study, updating program approval requirements, or other actions that support the transition to the CCTC.

A critical first step in determining what it will take for a state to successfully implement the CCTC is to convene the state's advisory committee(s), subject matter experts and/or other key stakeholders to:

- ✓ **Review and discuss the results**, including making new judgments if there is widespread agreement or disagreement on the alignment study findings.
- ✓ **Prioritize** the CTE areas/Career Clusters that are the least and/or most aligned to the CCTC.
- ✓ **Make recommendations** on the CCTC that still need to be addressed, including current state standards that may be able to be rewritten or removed.
- ✓ **Benchmark the current policy infrastructure** in place to identify what needs to be addressed to support the implementation of the CCTC, in particular state policies around programs of study, standards alignment, program approval and evaluation, and dual enrollment/credit transfer agreements.
- ✓ **Make recommendation on policy changes and supports** necessary to support full implementation (e.g., professional development, instructional materials, course requirements, reporting requirements, etc.).

Augmenting ongoing standards revision processes:

For states that do not plan to adopt the CCTC for whatever reason, there are still ways to leverage the alignment results, and the CCTC, to the benefit of those states' CTE programs.

- ✓ **Use the CCTC as a key benchmarking document** during statewide standards/curriculum revision processes to help raise the rigor of those Career Clusters and Career Pathways that are the least aligned to the CCTC.
- ✓ **Require local CTE programs and programs of study** to demonstrate how they are supporting students' mastery of the CCTC as part of their reporting requirements.