

## Putting Learner Success First & State CTE Leaders

### ***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.

### ***Why this Matters to State CTE Leaders***

This vision is built on the years of progress and reforms largely led by the CTE community. Through the leadership demonstrated by State CTE Directors and other state-level leaders at the secondary, postsecondary and workforce development levels, many CTE programs have evolved into high-quality CTE programs of study, with stronger linkages across secondary and postsecondary systems, better alignment with industry needs and anchored in meaningful credentials. But CTE leaders also know there is more work to be done to ensure that high-quality CTE is the norm and access is guaranteed to all learners at all levels.

This vision calls on state CTE leaders to take an honest look at their systems and raise the bar on the quality of CTE so that all learners have access to pathways to success. Equally important, the vision also requires state CTE leaders to share and expand what is working within high-quality CTE – meaningful career advisement, authentic applications of knowledge and skills, project-based instruction, inter-disciplinary integration and secondary-postsecondary alignment – into all of education so that all learners may benefit and be prepared for the careers of their choice.

This is a vision for and by state CTE leaders and requires their leadership to be achieved.

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## ***How State CTE Leaders Can Help Advance Putting Learning Success First***

### *Take stock of how current policies and practices and how well they align with the vision principles*

The first step state CTE leaders must take to support this vision is to identify where and how they are meeting the principles and actions and where more work and attention is needed. State leaders should use the vision to drive important internal and external conversations about where their CTE system is and where it needs to go, how CTE is and can impact the rest of the education system and how all learners – whether enrolled in CTE or not – can be better prepared for career success.

### *Review, revise and reform program approval processes and requirements*

While many of the principles and actions address the entire education system, the first principle – *All CTE programs are held to the highest standard of excellence* – simply cannot be achieved without leadership and action from CTE leaders. This vision pushes State CTE Directors and other state-level leaders to promote, fund and scale those programs that are truly and demonstrably high quality – while phasing out or transforming those programs that are not meeting learners' or industry's needs. In other words, it sets a high bar for quality and cannot be achieved without state CTE leaders stepping up to the plate and making sure their program approval processes – and subsequent funding – ensure only quality programs exist.

### *Partner with state leaders – both inside and outside state agencies – to implement the vision*

This vision was developed collaboratively by a wide array of stakeholders and, as such, also must be implemented by many individuals representing K-12, postsecondary, workforce development and business and industry, at a minimum. State CTE leaders should leverage, build and expand upon partnerships with other state leaders to explore the vision and identify opportunities for collaboration. The vision can be a conversation starter or a way to ground existing partnerships in the future of CTE and learner success.

The implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Higher Education Act and countless state-level policies provide a platform for embedding the principles and actions of the new vision into a state's education and workforce systems.

### *Get the message out*

State CTE leaders are one of the most critical voices and should be at the forefront of sharing *Putting Learner Success First* with the CTE community, practitioners and partners. You can start by sharing the sign on campaign with your colleagues, partners and networks:

<https://careertech.org/shared-vision-sign-on>

### *Share promising practices*

Does your state have an innovative program for recruiting industry experts into the classroom? An effective policy for supporting credit for prior learning or competency-based pathways? A district or institution that is leading your state in advising and support learners' through their career pathways? Share them in your state or with us at [resources@careertech.org](mailto:resources@careertech.org)!