Career and Technical Education in Illinois

- At the secondary level, CTE is delivered through comprehensive high schools; CTE-focused secondary schools, which are schools that center secondary academics around specific careers; and area career centers, which provide supplementary career training to area high school students and adult learners.
- At the postsecondary level, Illinois delivers CTE through its community college districts.

Exemplary CTE Programs in Illinois

- At Ridgewood High School District 234, a competency-based school in Cook County, students are presented with a range of unique educational opportunities in CTE. First, the district has committed to co-teaching that integrates academic subjects with technical courses so students can experience how academic subjects are used in the real world. Ridgewood has implemented Geometry-in-Construction, and has gone a step further by designing its own Algebra2-in-Business course, a co-taught, double-hour class, in which students create marketing plans that include mathematical application with cost analysis for product development. Students in these classes perform better on standardized tests in math than those taking traditional math courses. Second, the competency-based model enables students to design their own senior year. Some seniors choose to do independent research projects; others opt for an internship or an apprenticeship. Student entrepreneurs have the opportunity to present unique pitches to outside investors in the INCubator program. Still other students request specialized dual credit programs and attain college credentials before graduating from high school. Third, in the computer science pathway, “Computer Science for All” gives students the ability to focus their core classes around computer science, if they choose. The district continues to rethink what education should be and is not afraid to step out to try new and innovative approaches to help its students be successful in life. (Information from Des Plaines Valley Region Education for Employment)

- Community High School District 218 (CHSD 218) prepares students to be college and career ready in one of 14 state-approved CTE programs across Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Technology and Engineering Education. In partnership with Moraine Valley Community College and the Moraine Area Career System, the district has developed programs of study using the National Career Clusters Framework® that provide students with a sequence of complementary academic and technical courses, enhanced with work-based learning and the opportunity to earn CTE dual credit and industry-recognized certifications. The CHSD 218 CTE Dual Credit program provides students with 13 early college courses in the areas of Accounting, Automotive Technology, Computer Applications, Culinary Arts, Drafting/CAD, Electronics, IT and Computer Networking. Since the inception of CTE dual credit, more than 10,000 CHSD 218 students have successfully earned college credit, saving parents and students over $3 million in college tuition. Additionally, CHSD 218 CTE students can explore in-demand career fields not offered in the CHSD 218 high schools through the Dual Enrollment program, with offerings in Basic Nursing Training Assistant Program; Welding; Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning; and Emergency Medical Technician. Students also have the opportunity to earn 18 industry-recognized certifications, including Autodesk, CompTIA, Alldata Automotive Service, OSHA, ServSafe, Early Childhood Education and the American Heart Association CPR/FA/AED. In 2017-2018, CHSD 218 CTE students earned 1,589 industry-recognized certifications. (Information from CHSD 218)

In school year 2016-2017:

- 96.5 percent of Illinois CTE high school students graduated
- 99 percent met performance goals for technical skills
- 78 percent of Illinois CTE postsecondary students met performance goals for technical skills

Data from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education