



STATE POLICIES **IMPACTING** CTE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



STATE POLICIES IMPACTING CTE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

IN 2023

47
states

115
policy actions

In 2023, states continued to make progress directed toward Career Technical Education (CTE) and career pathways, despite a turbulent postpandemic labor and educational environment.

Multiple industry areas continue to see labor shortages, with areas such as hospitality and manufacturing seeing retention challenges sectorwide.¹ Meanwhile, the bright spot in recent postsecondary enrollment data is increased participation in CTE program areas at community and technical colleges.² In addition, the federal government is making significant investments in new and emerging career areas through federal programs such as the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) and the [CHIPS and Science Act of 2022](#), and the U.S. Department of Education directed \$5.6 million from the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins V) to expand work-based learning innovations through the [Career Z Challenge](#).

Shifts in national labor market and postsecondary participation trends combined with significant federal investment require additional policy at the state level to ensure that learners continue to have access to high-quality and equitable CTE programs. In 2023, 47 states enacted 115 policies affecting CTE and career readiness, including legislation, executive orders, and budget provisions that significantly changed funding (a plus or minus 5% change in funding). Policies that were passed affected the secondary education, postsecondary education, adult education, and/or workforce development systems.

The 2023 report marks the 11th annual review of CTE and career readiness policies from across the United States conducted by Advance CTE and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). This report does not describe every policy enacted within each state but instead focuses on policy trends across the nation. Readers looking for specific state policies can visit the [online CTE state policy tracker](#) and filter by state; system level; and/or analysis tags such as funding, industry-recognized credentials, or work-based learning.



[CLICK HERE](#) to view all 2023 CTE state policies



The 47 states

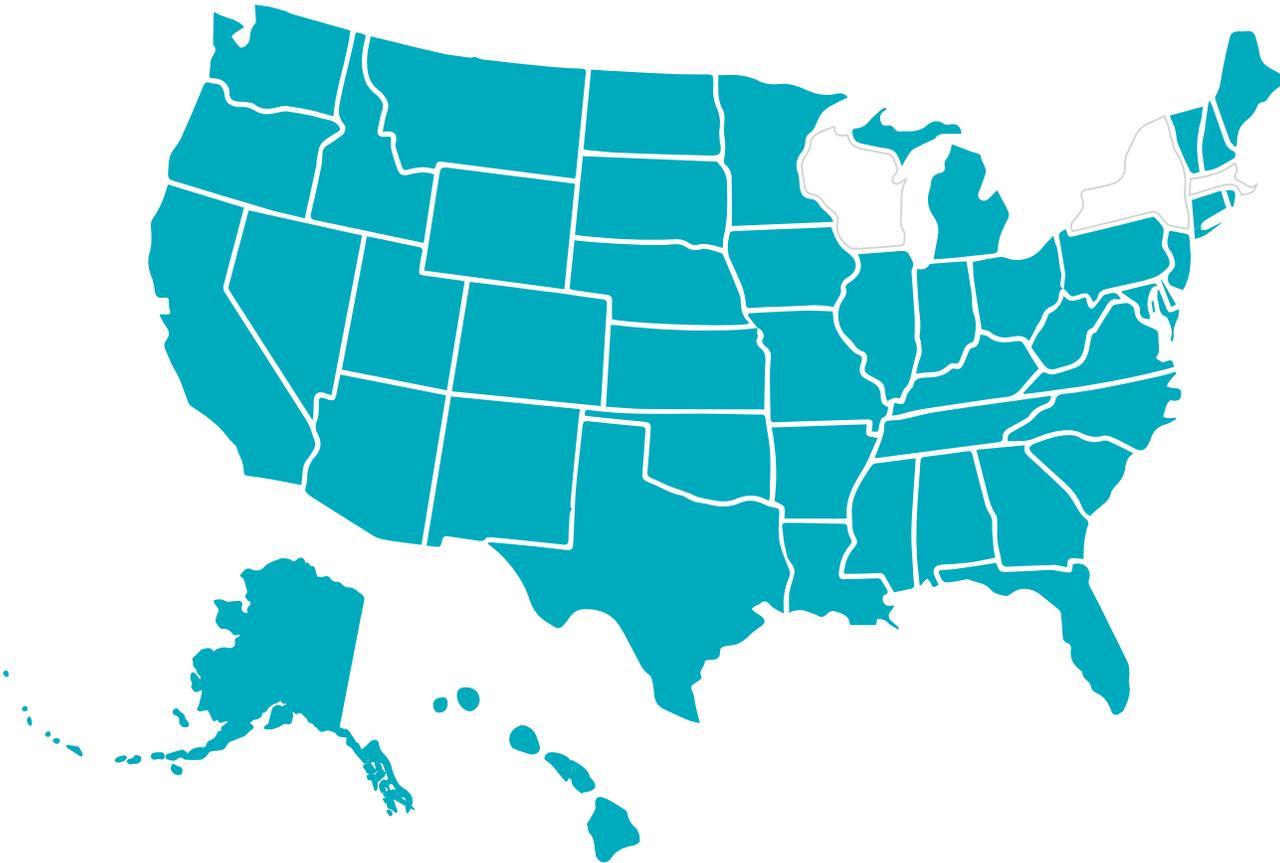
THAT ENACTED POLICY RELATED TO CTE IN 2023 WERE:

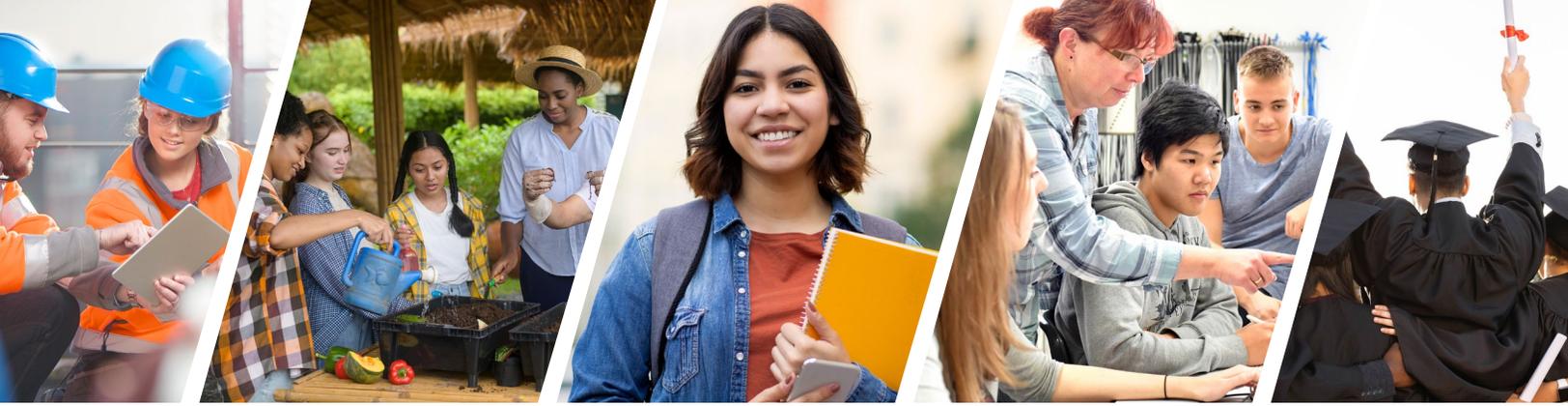
Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho

Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri

Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania

Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wyoming





Key Policy Trends



As in previous years, this analysis categorizes each policy action by topic. In 2023, state policy most frequently addressed the following topics:

1	Industry Partnerships and Work-Based Learning	48 policies enacted
2	Data, Reporting, and/or Accountability	37 policies enacted
3	Funding	32 policies enacted
4	Governance	24 policies enacted
5	Graduation Requirements	18 policies enacted

Many policies are categorized under multiple topic areas. A more comprehensive “Methodology” section describing how policies were included and categorized can be found at the end of this report.

The policy areas that states focused on in 2023 were similar to the previous year. In 2022, industry partnerships and work-based learning; funding; access and equity; data, reporting, and/or accountability; and industry-recognized credentials were also featured in the top five.

Over the past 10 years, the top five policy categories addressed by states have been funding; industry partnerships and work-based learning; industry-recognized credentials; dual/concurrent enrollment, articulation, and early college; and data, reporting, and/or accountability. However, since 2019, access and equity has often had enough policies to rank as one of the top five policy categories, representing an increased focus among states on how CTE-related policies can more equitably serve learners. In contrast, scheduling and extended learning; applied bachelor’s degrees; Career Technical Student Organizations and leadership development; and CTE standards and accreditation are the policy categories least addressed by states.



In 2023

47 states

enacted CTE-related policies,
the **second-highest number**
in the **past decade**.

2017

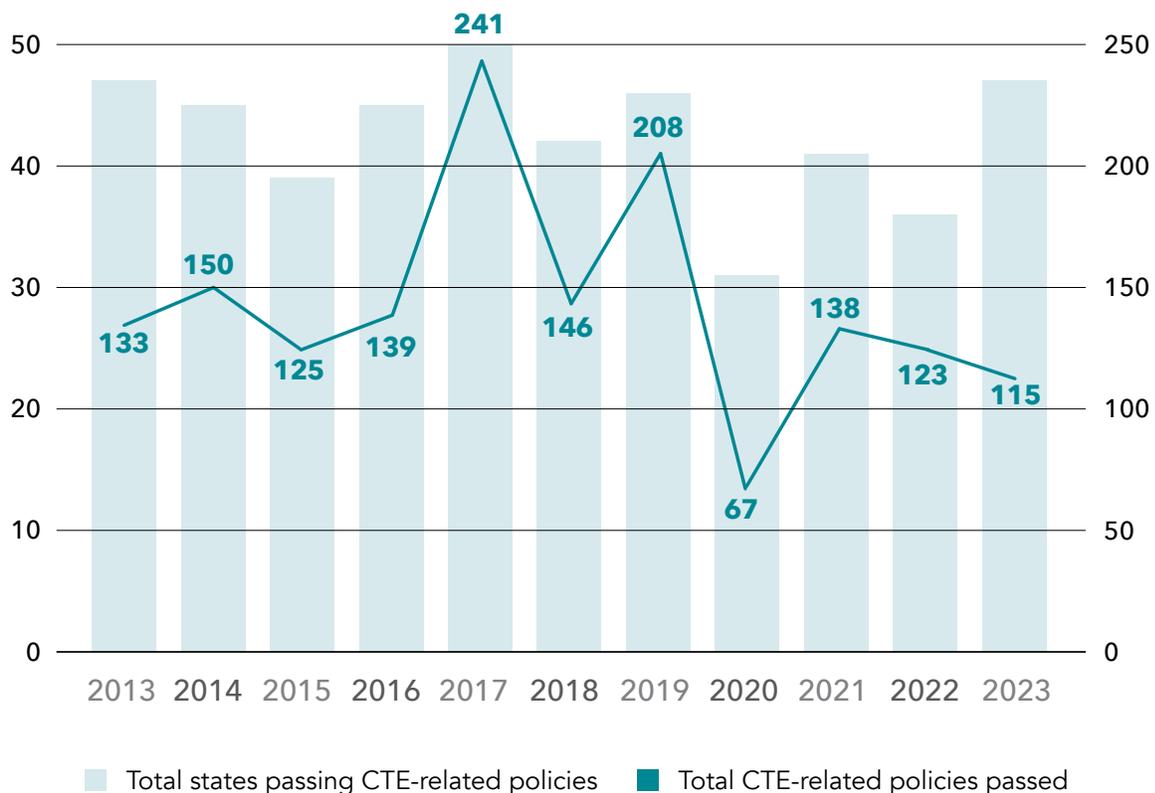
recorded the
highest number
with all

50 STATES

passing CTE-related
policies.

FIGURE 1

Number of States Passing CTE-related Policies and the Number of CTE-related Policies Passed (2013-2023)



Categories of enacted CTE-related policy in 2023

The following table shares the top 10 policy areas affecting CTE in 2023. For a complete listing of all policies and policy categories, please see the [full 2023 CTE state policy tracker](#). A single law or policy can address multiple policy categories.

Policy Category	# of Policies Enacted	States that Enacted Policies in this Category
1 Industry Partnerships and Work-Based Learning Policies address engaging industry to drive student learning through work-based learning or other means.	48	AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, HI, IA, IL, IN, LA, MD, MN, MO, MT, ND, NH, NJ, NV, OR, RI, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA
2 Data, Reporting, and/or Accountability Policies address data and research activities that support CTE, including the use of labor market information and the inclusion of career readiness indicators within accountability systems.	37	AL, AR, CA, HI, IN, FL, KS, KY, LA, MD, MS, NH, NV, PA, RI, SC, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WY
3 Funding Policies address significant changes in CTE funding, such as increasing or decreasing allocations, creating a scholarship or grant program, or investing in a pilot program.	32	AK, AL, AR, FL, ID, IN, KS, MD, ME, MI, MS, ND, NE, NV, OH, SD, TX, UT, WV, WY
4 Governance Policies address responsibility within the state for CTE, including new committees or task forces and transfers of authority.	24	AR, CO, DE, IA, ID, IN, MD, MS, ND, NH, OH, SC, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV
5 Graduation Requirements Policies address CTE courses that count for academic credit toward high school graduation requirements or adopt CTE or career readiness objectives into state requirements.	18	AR, FL, IL, IN, KY, ME, NC, ND, NV, OR, UT, WA
6 Access & Equity Policies address removing barriers for learners from diverse backgrounds to access CTE programs within their states.	17	CA, CT, DE, FL, ID, MD, ND, NM, VA, WA
7 Industry-Recognized Credentials Policies address attainment of credentials recognized by industry, including micro credentials, such as badges, and educational degrees.	17	AR, CO, DE, IA, ID, IN, MD, ME, MN, NV, UT, WA
8 Dual/Concurrent Enrollment, Articulation and Early College Policies address postsecondary credit attainment and transfer through dual/concurrent credit attainment, credit transfer agreements, and early college programs.	15	AR, CA, FL, GA, KY, LA, ME, MS, ND, NJ, NV, PA, UT, WA, WV
9 CTE Teacher Certification Policies address preparation, licensing, and credential requirements for CTE instructors and professional development for CTE educators.	11	AL, AR, DE, FL, IN, KY, LA, ME, ND, NE, NV, OK, TN
10 Career/Academic Counseling Policies address school counselors or career advisers providing guidance such as disseminating college and career information and implementing individual academic and career plans.	10	AL, AR, CA, FL, ID, IN, ME, NV, OK, OR, WA

CTE Clean Energy and Renewables



Clean energy and renewable energy jobs are a growing segment of the workforce, outpacing employment growth as a whole. In 2023, clean energy jobs increased in every state and grew at a rate of 3.9% nationally compared to the overall national job growth rate of 3.1%.³ In addition, the federal government is investing in this sector through the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) and the [CHIPS and Science Act of 2022](#), creating job opportunities throughout the next decade and beyond.

In 2023, several states chose to expand or develop CTE programs in the clean energy and renewables sector to address workforce challenges in these fields. While many of the policies were focused on creating or strengthening career pathways from K-12 to postsecondary institutions, some states' policies also promoted counseling and career exploration.



CONNECTICUT required the [Connecticut Clean Economy Council to develop a plan for green jobs workforce training](#) that includes work-based learning and certificate and degree programs, identifies funding to develop such programs, and incorporates a strategy to recruit underrepresented populations.



MAINE created a committee tasked with [studying the workforce needs of the Gulf of Maine offshore wind industry](#), including the possibility of a new training center. The study will explore how to include training providers such as area CTE centers, Great Bay Community College, and union apprenticeship and training programs.



WASHINGTON mandated that the state [Department of Commerce perform an independent assessment of opportunities for Washington](#) to capture new and emerging industries that align with statewide greenhouse gas reduction limits and strengthen its existing manufacturing base. The assessment should include evaluating the manufacturing workforce's transferable skills and identifying opportunities to close skills gaps and build an equitable manufacturing workforce pipeline. By June 1, 2025, the Department of Commerce must develop a proactive state industrial strategy based on the findings of this assessment.

Industry Partnerships and Work-Based Learning



Industry partnerships and work-based learning was the most common policy category in 2023, as it was in 2022, with 27 states enacting 41 policies in this area. This category includes business-education partnerships overall and work-based learning as a primary strategy to connect learners with businesses and career pathway programs. The industry partnerships and work-based learning category's position as the most common policy area showcases states' continued investment in responding to industry needs for a prepared workforce.

IN 2023

27
states

41
policy
actions



COLORADO codified the duties of the **Office of Future of Work into law**, including reporting policy recommendations to the governor at least once a year. The law stated that the General Assembly may appropriate money to the office. The bill also modified statutes related to apprenticeships to conform with federal apprenticeship regulations. The Office of Future of Work was created to understand, prepare for, and develop policy and programmatic solutions to foster an economy that works for everyone in Colorado through collaboration across state departments and with diverse stakeholders.



HAWAI'I mandated that the State Board of Education report on ways to **increase access to extended learning opportunities and course credits for nontraditional and external learning experiences**. These experiences were defined in the bill as unique learning programs designed to instill skills in learners that transcend the classroom and are able to be implemented through internships, apprenticeships, capstones, independent study, online coursework, community service, work-based learning programs, and other specialized venues. S.R. 150 also required the State Board of Education to identify the number of learners enrolled in existing extended learning programs for the 2023-24 school year and to create a process for community organizations to register to offer these kinds of experiences.



IOWA established the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship under the state Department of Workforce Development **to create a state apprenticeship credential in accordance with federal standards for registered apprenticeship programs, to approve or deny applications for registered apprenticeship programs and sponsors, to establish competency-based apprenticeship frameworks, and to determine reciprocity for apprenticeship programs registered in other states**. The office will also oversee youth apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships. S.F. 318 also established the Iowa Apprenticeship Council to serve in an advisory role within the Department of Workforce Development. Lastly, the law set new requirements for licensing authorities to grant occupational licenses to individuals who have completed an apprenticeship and passed a licensing exam and set new apprenticeship requirements pertaining to responsibility for on-the-job training and related technical instruction.

Data, Reporting, and/or Accountability



Data, reporting, and/or accountability was the second most common policy category in 2023, with 22 states enacting 37 policies in this area. Policies in this category include studies commissioned by the legislature, the provision of labor market information, and the collection and reporting of learner outcomes data.

IN 2023

22
states

37
policy
actions



HAWAII mandated that the Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations **complete a comparative study of its policies on youth employment as well as the federal requirements for youth employment under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938**. H.R. 60 also requested that while the department conducts this comparative study, it also report on how states with fewer certification requirements for minors engaging in employment ensure access and oversight for work-based learning for youths, whether current youth employment permitting requirements create any barriers, and anticipated actions to ensure that state permitting requirements do not exceed the federal minimum.



VIRGINIA commissioned a stakeholder workgroup to make **recommendations on reducing barriers and improving access to paid work-based learning experiences for English learners**. This group was expected to identify best practices and strategies to improve access to these experiences and submit its recommendations no later than November 1, 2023.



WASHINGTON directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to **facilitate the transition to a universal online high school and beyond plan platform that will ensure consistent and equitable access**. By January 2024, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction must have developed a list of vendors that can provide or build a platform, which must include a catalog of career exploration opportunities and resources; dedicated space for connecting with potential employers; and labor market, apprenticeship, and postsecondary outcomes data, among other requirements. The legislation also outlined requirements for the high school and beyond plan, which must begin with a career interest and skills inventory in seventh grade and include career goals and interests as well as information about CTE programs, work-based learning, and CTE equivalency courses, among other requirements. In addition, this law required school districts to annually provide learners in Grades 8-12 and their families with information about graduation pathways and strongly encouraged school districts to partner with community-based organizations that support career and college exploration and preparation.

Funding



Twenty states enacted 32 policies related to funding in 2023, the third most common policy topic. Policies in this category include scholarships, appropriations for industry incentive programs for work-based learning opportunities, funding for research into career pathways, and money to develop career and financial counseling programs.

IN 2023

20
states

32
policy
actions



NEBRASKA appropriated \$5,116,000 in categorical state funding for CTE, in addition to \$200,000 for Nebraska's Career and Technical Student Organizations, for the next two years. This funding marked Nebraska's first categorical appropriation for CTE.



NORTH DAKOTA required the State Board of Higher Education to provide an eligible learner with a scholarship equal to \$250 for one successfully completed dual credit course, \$500 for two successfully completed dual credit courses, or \$750 for three or more successfully completed dual credit courses. Eligible learners must have achieved a 30 or higher on the ACT or an equivalent score on a nationally recognized test of similar relevance. Additionally, they must maintain a physical presence in the state. This scholarship may be used toward tuition, room and board, books, and other fees.



WYOMING created regular competitive grants for public school districts to purchase CTE supplies, materials, and equipment and established rules for grant proposals. Grants will be awarded for 2 years and for no more than \$50,000 at a time. Applications must be submitted no later than June 30 of the applicable school year. The department will notify applicants no later than August 15 about its determination. Funding from the public school foundation program account was allocated for the purposes of this grant.

4

Governance



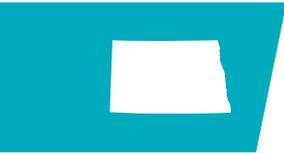
As the fourth most common policy area this year, 17 states enacted 24 policies related to governance. This category includes newly created agencies, councils, and committees and the transfer of authority among agencies or departments.

IN 2023

17 states	24 policy actions
---------------------	-----------------------------



IDAHO established the Idaho Career Ready Students Program, **which provides additional opportunities for learners in Grades 7 through 12 to experience CTE.** The bill created a governing council consisting of the administrator for the division of CTE; two secondary CTE teachers and one postsecondary CTE instructor, appointed by the Career Technical Educators of Idaho; and workforce and political representatives. The initiative will have access to \$10 million to offer grants to approved programs, with consideration for programs that align with community and workforce needs, plus an ongoing \$5 million in funding for middle school career exploration activities.



NORTH DAKOTA **changed responsibilities for and governance over distance education** from the state board or director for CTE to the state superintendent of public education.



VIRGINIA **created the state Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to administer workforce development programs.** The bill consolidated statewide workforce program evaluation and data sharing under the department and provided protections against improper disclosure of data. The bill provided for the Virginia Board of Workforce Development to conduct an independent evaluation of the operations and program objectives of the department on a biennial basis with the first report due December 1, 2025. The law also established definitions for apprenticeship and a corresponding Apprenticeship Council as well as rules for apprenticeship agreements and nondiscrimination in apprenticeship.



Graduation Requirements



As the fifth most common policy area, 12 states enacted 18 policies related to graduation requirements in 2023. Policies in this area are related to courses, credits, and other experiences required for graduation as well as diplomas and diploma endorsements awarded for CTE and career readiness participation.

IN 2023

12
states

18
policy
actions



ARKANSAS allowed the substitution of comparable elective coursework in CTE for required core academic classes and developed an approval process for doing so. This law also created the Career and Technical Education with Embedded Academics Certification Committee to review comparable academic and CTE standards and produce corresponding crosswalk documentation.



MAINE required cooperative agreements between school administrative units and CTE centers and regions to include an equivalency agreement for credit gained through a CTE program to be accepted as a core credit toward a high school diploma, beginning with the school year starting after June 30, 2025.



UTAH legislation awarded learners who have completed at least 300 hours or six individual courses in a CTE program a TRANSFORM certificate upon graduation from secondary education. This honor includes a \$500 scholarship to eligible Utah postsecondary institutions. The law also codified the Utah PRIME program to expand access to digital distance learning leading to CTE certificates and created a funding formula for participating school districts.



Systems Affected

This analysis categorizes policies by the systems and learner levels affected: secondary education, postsecondary education, adult education, and/or workforce development. This is the fifth year that policies have been categorized by system. In 2023, states passed 80 policies that affected CTE in secondary education, 51 policies related to postsecondary CTE, and 42 policies related to adult education and/or workforce development. As in prior years, this analysis identified more policies affecting the secondary system than any other system.

Given that CTE is at the nexus of the secondary education, postsecondary education, adult education, and workforce development systems, it is not surprising that a single policy may address multiple systems. These policies frequently illustrate how secondary schools and postsecondary institutions partner with each other and with employers and industries to provide high-quality and equitable CTE programs.

IN 2023 STATE PASSED POLICIES

80 secondary education

51 postsecondary education

42 adult education and/or workforce development

Examples of policies that affected multiple systems include the following:



ARIZONA required learners enrolled in noncredit workforce training programs **to be counted in a community college district's state aid and expenditure limitation**. The legislation also allowed a course that is offered for credit to award credit hours or contact hours, and it required that a noncredit workforce training or CTE course that is offered for contact hours be consistent with Perkins, included on the eligible training provider list, or requested by an employer.



WASHINGTON established a **regional apprenticeship pilot program** that will be carried out at five pilot sites and will provide learners with opportunities to earn postsecondary credits or industry-recognized credentials and preferred or direct entry into a state-registered apprenticeship program. The legislation also called for an evaluation of the pilot to be completed by June 2027. In addition, H.B. 1013 required the state superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the Employment Security Department and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, to convene a work-integrated learning advisory committee to advise on implementation and assist in the evaluation of the state's work-integrated learning initiative.



WEST VIRGINIA established a **four-year dual enrollment pilot program** administered by the Higher Education Policy Commission and the Council for Community and Technical College Education in conjunction with the State Department of Education and provided guidance on funding and annual reporting requirements.

Methodology

The policy activities included in this report and the accompanying policy tracker were compiled through a comprehensive national scan, drawing on information from numerous sources. Policies were identified and cataloged using government websites and media stories and were augmented by compilations such as those prepared by the Education Commission of the States and the National Association of State Budget Officers. Once compiled, the information was distributed to State CTE Directors for review, and any feedback was included in this final report and policy tracker. For the purposes of this report, policy activity was defined to be an action by state policymakers, including the state legislature, the board of education, the state education agency, the higher education authority, the governor's office, or any other state-level agencies, or a ballot initiative approved by voters. Although several national career readiness initiatives, such as the *New Skills ready network*, were underway across the states, involvement in these initiatives was not included unless it spurred notable state policy change.

To be included in this report, policies must have been passed during the 2023 calendar year, have a statewide impact, and be related to career readiness or CTE within the state. This report is designed to be value neutral. The inclusion of a specific policy or action is for informational purposes only and does not reflect any judgment regarding the quality or strength of that policy. Policies introduced in 2022 and passed in 2023 were included; policies that went into effect in 2023 but were passed in prior years were not included. However, if a state took meaningful action to implement in 2023 a policy passed earlier—for instance, a state board action approving new graduation requirements in 2023 in response to legislation enacted in 2022—that 2023 action was included. Policies were categorized as funding if they authorized new or increased state funding or if they decreased funding to a specific program. Funding policies were not included if they were implemented in 2023 but were authorized in prior years unless those policies repurposed or restructured existing funds in a way that affected CTE and career readiness.

Any policy that was enacted in response to the coronavirus pandemic that utilized federal funding for CTE-related programs was not included unless the funding was used in conjunction with additional state funding or through state executive/legislative orders.

While extensive efforts were made to verify the completeness and accuracy of this report, should discrepancies be noted, we would be happy to correct them at any time.

Please contact Advance CTE Policy Associate Velie Sando (vsando@careertech.org) or ACTE Research and Policy Associate Vilmer Alvarado (valvarado@acteonline.org).



STATE POLICIES IMPACTING CTE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Sources

- ¹ Ferguson, S. (2023, November 14). *Understanding America's labor shortage: The most impacted industries*. U.S. Chamber of Commerce. <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage-the-most-impacted-industries>
- ² National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (n.d.). *Stay Informed with the latest enrollment information*. <https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/>.
- ³ U.S. Department of Energy. (n.d.). *United States energy & employment report 2023*. <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/2023%20USEER%20EXEC%20SUMM-v2.pdf>