Using State Data to Partner With Researchers

Training Module Series #4
CTE Research Network

Mission

To expand the evidence base on the impact of career and technical education (CTE) programs on student outcomes by:

- Increasing the number of CTE impact studies performed.
- Strengthening field capacity to conduct and use rigorous CTE research.

The work of the Network member projects is supported by the Institute. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Institute or the U.S. Department of Education.
Practitioner Training Modules

This series of six modules is designed to support CTE educators in learning more about data and research.

1. Understanding CTE data and why it matters
2. Using data and research to improve CTE programs
3. CTE program evaluation: Why it matters to practitioners
4. **Using state data to partner with researchers**
5. Using research to design your CTE program for equity
6. How to communicate about your CTE program using research

[Image](https://pixabay.com/photos/home-office-workstation-office-336377/)
Module Contents

- Defining Key Terminology
- State Education Data
  - State accountability systems
  - Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)
  - CTE data systems
  - **Activity**: Using state data systems
  - Data reporting under *Perkins V*
  - Compliance versus improvement
  - Common Education Data Standards (CEDS)
- Partnering With Researchers
  - Value
  - Protecting student privacy
- Closing Reflection and Resources
Objectives

Upon completing this module, you will understand:

- Why states should consider partnering with researchers
- How to include CTE data in accountability systems and state longitudinal data systems
- How states can partner with researchers
- Real-world examples that showcase how research partnerships can work and the benefits they confer

Module Instructions

This module includes processes, activities, and tools you can use to drive change at your site.

Before you begin, we recommend downloading and printing the activity worksheets to help contextualize your viewing.
Activity 1: Opening Self-Reflection

Why might it be useful to integrate CTE data into your state education data system?

- Answer the questions included in Self-Reflection Activity 1 Worksheet.
- Restart the module when you have completed the worksheet.

Defining Key Terminology
What is an SLDS?

Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, or SLDSs, are used to store and access individual student data over time. These systems may include data on:

- Preschool programming
- K–12 education
- Postsecondary education (2-year and 4-year)
- Employment data

https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org/photos/81734e09-720d-4fed-85a6-564cdb9afdc5
Common Education Data Standards (CEDS)

A voluntary national initiative to standardize data management across education levels and states, including:

- Common data elements and definitions
- Analytic tools to help educators understand and use data
- Metadata from other education data initiatives
- A community of stakeholders

https://ceds.ed.gov/
Researchers

When we talk about states partnering with researchers, who exactly do we mean?

- People who carry out academic or scientific research
- Often university-based
- State government-based analysts or specialists who do research as part of their jobs

https://live.staticflickr.com/4152/5094787374_a9359e6e07_b.jpg
State Education Data

What data are included and why?
State Accountability Systems

School districts and colleges collect accountability data for a range of purposes, some of which are reported to the state education agency. These data include information on:

- Student engagement and outcomes
- Program administration
- Financial record keeping

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Statewide Longitudinal Data System

A data system that incorporates student-level data spanning the preschool, K–12, and postsecondary education levels

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/impact
States maintain data on CTE programming to comply with:

- State administrative reporting requirements
  - Inform CTE funding formulas
  - Justify equipment expenditures
  - Assess site and student performance
- Federal *Perkins V* reporting
  - Support compliance monitoring
  - Assess site and student performance
How are SLDSs maintained?

Student data in an SLDS may be stored in a centralized or decentralized database. To access data, states must:

- Assign each student a unique identifier.
- Maintain this identifier across education levels and systems.
- Maintain a data dictionary defining data elements and coding.
- Create business rules describing how data are to be collected and analyzed.
Example: Connecticut P20 WIN

Connecticut’s Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network is used to answer research questions relating to state education programs and workforce alignment. Participating state agencies include:

- Office of Early Childhood
- State Department of Education
- Board of Regents for Higher Education
- University of Connecticut
- Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
- Department of Labor
- Office of Policy and Management

https://www.ct.edu/p20win
Activity 2: Using State Data Systems

How might state data be used to answer questions you have about CTE in your state?

- Answer the questions included in the Activity 2 Worksheet.
- Restart the module when you have completed the worksheet.

Federal legislation requires that state administrators collect data on CTE programs and practices.

a. Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment
   i. Guide local program application
   ii. Assess site performance

b. Performance Indicators
   i. Annual assessment of state and site outcomes

c. State Plan Updates
   i. Narrative summaries of grant usage
   ii. Updates

https://perkins.ed.gov/pims/DataExplorer
How can CTE data be incorporated into state data systems?

- Compliance example: Work-based learning
- Did the student participate in an internship, apprenticeship, or off-site work experience at any point during high school?
  - Yes
  - No

How can CTE data be incorporated into state data systems?

Research and improvement example: Work-based learning

- Did the student participate in any of the following types of work experiences at any point during high school? Check all that apply:
  - Paid or unpaid internship
  - Youth apprenticeship
  - Registered apprenticeship
  - Clinical experience
  - On-the-job training
  - Work experience program
  - Other (specify):
Partnering With Researchers

Why collaborate?
Partnering With Researchers: Benefits

State CTE administrators may benefit from partnering with researchers by:

- Creating an evidence base
  - Conducting rigorous research
  - Producing targeted analyses
- Demonstrating program support
  - Showing value to the state
  - Sharing the return on investment
- Using the research to inform policy makers with information to support their decision making

https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2018/04/18/18/47/hands-3331216_960_720.jpg
Partnering With Researchers: Benefits

- State CTE administrators may benefit from partnering with researchers by:
  - Learning what works
    - Identifying high-value programs
    - Scaling promising practices
  - Identifying new possibilities
    - Exploring research options
    - Learning from best practice

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Finding Research Partners

State administrators should be proactive in partnering with researchers to evaluate programming. Options include:

- Creating a research request portal
- Partnering with state colleges and universities
- Collaborating with professional associations
- Contacting the CTE Research Network
- Providing professional development to staff
- Hiring experienced researchers

https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2016/11/03/11/57/accountant-1794122_960_720.png
Real-World Partnerships: CTEx

The Career & Technical Education Policy Exchange (CTEx) is a collaboration between Georgia State University and government agencies in Massachusetts, Michigan, and Tennessee, and several key researchers to advance data-driven policy development.

Examples of research initiatives include:

- What Makes an Effective CTE Teacher?
- College and Work After High School for Tennessee CTE Students
- CTE Access and Participation in Michigan

https://gpl.gsu.edu/ctex/
Real-World Partnerships

The Oregon Department of Education and Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest are collaborating to analyze state CTE course-taking data between 2006 and 2018. Analyses offer information on:

- Projected CTE concentration rates following changes in the state’s threshold for credit accumulation
- Disparities in student participation and concentration in CTE programs based on student demographics
- Associations between CTE concentration and high school graduation rates
- College enrollment and annual earnings of CTE concentrators following high school

http://blog.careertech.org/?p=16340
Privacy Considerations

The U.S. Department of Education’s Student Privacy Policy Office (SPPO) is responsible for the administration and enforcement of federal laws relating to the privacy of students’ education records and for the provision of technical assistance on student privacy issues for the broader education community. The two main tasks of the SPPO are:

- Investigating and enforcing the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects the privacy of student education records; and
- Developing policy and guidance on student privacy issues.

To learn more about the responsibilities of the SPPO, please visit: https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/about-us.
Closing Reflection and Resources
Activity 3: Closing Self-Reflection

How might you improve the usefulness of data included in your state CTE data system or SLDS?

- Answer the questions included in the Self-Reflection Activity 3 Worksheet.
- Restart the module when you have completed the worksheet.

References and Resources

Activity Handouts 1–3


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