

# Module 5: Using Research to Design Your CTE Program for Equity

Activity Handouts

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## Activity 1: Opening Self-Reflection

**Purpose**: This 5-minute exercise lays groundwork for the activities included in this training module. It also can help you identify a potential equity challenge you may be facing at your site. Use this activity to help ground your learning as your complete the module.

**Directions:** Think about the students enrolling in career and technical education (CTE) at your site.

1. Based on your own observations of your CTE programming, do you believe any groups of students are underrepresented? This may include students of differing genders or race-ethnicity, with special needs, or facing economic or social challenges.

*(For example, assume that students of color comprise 60 percent of the students at your site but only 40 percent of CTE concentrators. You could say that students of color are underrepresented in CTE at your site. You can also think about a specific program area (e.g., agriculture, business, construction.)*

1. If you believe a discrepancy exists, for which group(s) of students does it apply and why do you think it exists? Some possible factors that may frame your thinking could include:
* *Institutional bias*—systemic policies or practices within a school that might give one group of students an unfair advantage over another
* *Implicit bias*—unconscious attitudes or stereotypes held by administrators or teachers that may lead to a preference or aversion to some groups of students
* *Cultural competence*—the extent to which differences in the appearance, behavior, or culture of some groups of students are acknowledged and/or accepted by educators
* *Other*—consider how other factors might contribute to enrollment differences among students (e.g., parental influences, student interest)

## Activity 2: Critical Student Subgroups

**Purpose**: This exercise will help you identify the special population students achieving concentrator status in your CTE programs. [[1]](#footnote-2) Use this information to determine whether your special populations students are achieving concentrator status at rates equivalent to those of students who do not fall into any of the special populations categories.

**Directions:** To do this activity you will need to access data on students achieving concentrator status in CTE programs offered within your school or college. You also will need data on the overall enrollment of students in your site. Once you have obtained these data, enter the information in the cells provided. Use the questions below the table to help frame your analysis of the data.

* + - 1. Identify students using the following criteria:
* **Column A: Total enrollment** — enter total number of students enrolled in your site for the current academic year irrespective of their participation in CTE
* **Column B: Number of CTE concentrators** — enter the number of students in the current academic year who have achieved concentrator status at any point while attending
* Column C: Percent of CTE concentrators — divide Column B by Column A
* **Column D**: **Note Differences —** Mark an ‘X’ in any cell in which the percentage of special populations students falls below or exceeds that of non-special population students.

| Student Special Populations Status | Column ATotal enrollment in your site or college  | Column BNumber of CTE concentrators | Column CPercent of CTE concentrators (Column B / Column A) | Column DNote differences +/- 10 percentage points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Non-special populations students |  |  |  |  |
| Perkins V Special Populations |  |  |  |  |
| Individuals with disabilities |  |  |  |  |
| Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults |  |  |  |  |
| Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields |  |  |  |  |
| Single parents, including single pregnant women |  |  |  |  |
| Out of-workforce individuals |  |  |  |  |
| English learners |  |  |  |  |
| Homeless individuals |  |  |  |  |
| Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system |  |  |  |  |
| Youth with parents on active duty in the armed forces) |  |  |  |  |

* + - 1. Which subgroups would you see are critical to serve/support/pay special attention to in terms of equity?

Group:

*Why?*

Group:

*Why?*

Group:

*Why?*

Group:

*Why?*

Group: *Why?*

## Activity 3: Research Perspectives

**Purpose**: This exercise is your opportunity to add your perspective to the research.[[2]](#footnote-3)

**Directions:** Read the article *Building Bridges to Life After High School: Contemporary Career Academies and Student Outcomes* (<https://caldercenter.org/sites/default/files/WP%20176.pdf>). (specifically Section I, VI, VIII and tables 1,2, 7, 8, 9 and 10).

1. How might the research findings impact the perspectives of the readers and why?

2. How can what you experience in the field help expand the knowledge base of researchers?

## Strategies to Promote Equitable Access and Improve Performance Outcomes of Special Population Students

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Once you have identified performance gaps, you must act to address them. To inform your work, researchers have identified evidence-backed resources you can adapt to address the diverse needs of special population students, who may face barriers to participating in career and technical education (CTE) programs.*Strategies for Special Population Success[[3]](#footnote-4),* developed by the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity Education Foundation, offers creative ideas that you may use to address the needs of special population students. Consult the report for additional examples and the references section at the end of this document for links to other publications. | Strategies for Special Population Success cover |

##### Individuals with disabilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Wheelchair with solid fill* | * Ensure that classrooms and labs are accessible, including transportation, parking, curb cuts, table heights, door width, and turn space.
* Include CTE teachers in the design and planning for student Individual Education Programs and offer training on providing approved accommodations.
* Connect with employers who have successfully hired students with disabilities to identify working approaches to continue recruitment and network with other firms.
 |

##### Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth/adults

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Money with solid fill | * Provide financial aid and scholarships and offer support with the application process to ensure submission.
* Provide free or discounted books, materials, tools, and uniforms. For students in career and technical student organizations (CTSOs), offset organizational dues, activity fees, and the cost of event transportation.
* Build relationships with students and their families that promote cooperation and trust and respect privacy.
 |

##### Individuals preparing for nontraditional fields

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Astronaut female with solid fill* | * Introduce students to nontraditional career options in the early grades to help eliminate gender stereotypes for specific careers.
* Ensure that safety equipment and clothing are available in a range of sizes to accommodate individuals with different body sizes and stature.
* Enroll nontraditional students in cohorts of three or more per section to avoid gender or racial isolation and build peer support.
 |

##### Single parents, including single pregnant women

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Man with baby outline* | * Offer parenting and child development classes to support teen parents.
* Provide free or affordable on-site childcare that is available during class time.
* Offer support groups for parents to build social networks and a community of support.
 |

##### Out-of-workforce individuals

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Business Growth with solid fill* | * Connect individuals with training programs and services offered through other federal programs, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
* Provide supports for career planning, such as help with writing résumés, interviewing skills, job shadowing, and stress management.
* Adopt flexible schedules that allow individuals to attend courses online, on evenings or weekends, or via independent learning approaches.
 |

##### English learners

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Chat outline* | * Provide students and families with interpreters to foster engagement.
* Foster collaboration between CTE and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers to support instruction.
* Ensure that instructional materials are provided in different languages or employ a flipped classroom with prep materials offered in students’ native languages.
 |

##### Homeless individuals

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Home with solid fill* | * Offer free meals and school supplies, laundry and shower facilities, secure storage for personal items, and internet access.
* Connect school and community resources to offer trauma-informed wraparound services, including housing, employment, and health care referrals.
* Pair at-risk students with mentors who can provide encouragement and accountability through attendance monitoring and one-on-one follow-up.
 |

##### Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Luggage with solid fill* | * Take time to learn about the background of youth in foster care to understand their history and build trusting relationships with them and their foster families.
* Provide supplemental services, including tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and access to work-study programs or financial literacy training.
* Offer flexibility with homework, assignment due dates, and assessments.
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##### Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces and is on active duty

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Soldier female with solid fill* | * Protect students from stressful situations or reminders of their parents’ deployment.
* Connect students with homework assistance or free, online tutoring offered through <https://military.tutor.com>.
* Create support groups for children of military families.
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##### Additional Resources

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students with Disabilities Handout | *Making Good on the Promise:* [Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students with Disabilities](https://careertech.org/resource/improving-equity-access-quality-cte-programs-students-disabilities) | Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students Experiencing Homelessness Handout | [Improving Equity in and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students Experiencing Homelessness](http://blog.careertech.org/?p=16914) |

See: <https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/files/resources/AdvanceCTE_Making_Good_on_Promise_Students_Disabilities_07212020.pdf>

<https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/files/resources/AdvanceCTE%20Making%20Good%20on%20Promise%20Homeless%2009302020.pdf>

## Activity 4: Beginning the Journey

**Purpose**: This 5-minute exercise can help you plan for how you might use module resources and tools to undertake your own improvement efforts.

**Directions:** What are three strategies that you can apply from the research on equity in CTE to improve access, opportunity and outcomes for your nontraditional special population students?

* + - 1. Strategy:

*What will this accomplish? Why is this the right way to go about it?*

* + - 1. Strategy:

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* + - 1. Strategy:

*What will this accomplish? Why is this the right way to go about it?*

1. Facilitator note: If doing this activity with a group, consider asking individuals to pair up or create a small group to use the data to populate the chart. Within the pairs or small group, ask each individual to provide an answer to the question in #2 about paying special attention to subgroups. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Facilitator note: If doing this activity with a group, consider making this a 10-minute think-pair-share, with individuals working taking 5 minutes to brainstorm and 5 minutes to share with another person. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NE-Special-Populations-Brief-FINAL-WEB.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)