Infusing an Equity Approach Into
Career and Technical Education Research
Webinar Questions and Answers

Event Date: February 21, 2023

Event Time: 3:00–4:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Q: Can you talk about what makes this a career and technical education (CTE)-specific framework rather than for education research in general?

A: Many of the framework's components are applicable to the broader research endeavor. However, throughout the framework, we have included examples from CTE research projects, which are intended to help researchers contextualize how to think about the framework specifically in the CTE realm.

The specific CTE context will be important to understanding differential student access to programs and resources for CTE, including work-based learning. However, there may not be data to explore these questions, so researchers need to first understand what state- or school-level data are available before establishing research questions. The framework is applicable to other educational and workforce research settings. The main point here is for researchers to be aware of the specific context and the community in which education and workforce programs are provided, and being aware of where the access points are and the resources for this type of education.

Q: Will this framework be provided to research organizations that promote or accept CTE research proposals for conference presentations, such as the Northeastern Educational Research Association, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), the Association for Career and Technical Education Research (ACTER), the New England Educational Research Organization, or the American Educational Research Association?

A: As part of our dissemination plan for the framework, we have included a focus on other organizations that support researchers conducting research in CTE as well as other fields. We have already presented to ACTE and plan to present at other venues as well.

Q: What do the presenters think are the limitations of the Equity Framework for CTE Research at this time?

A: As the Equity Framework is a work in progress, we are looking for partners who can help test the framework and make some of those limitations explicit. Some potential revisions include (1) embedding a conceptual framework to help people use the framework, (2) considering how to address some of the

barriers to using an equity lens in research, and (3) being explicit about how you can use portions of the framework as needed.

We can think of this as our first stage of pulling together all that is necessary and needed to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in CTE research. In future stages, we will want to consider how to guide researchers around what parts of equity will be the focus. For example, data might not allow you to look at all the disaggregated intersectionality that is desirable. In proceeding with next steps in this research, we will start to confront barriers as we apply this framework and must work to overcome them. By applying the framework, we will continue to learn from it and revise it to be more effective.

Also, we are not saying that you must do everything mentioned from A to Z. We recognize that depending on where a project is in its life cycle, it may be challenging to adopt certain framework elements. Those at the start of a project may be better positioned to embrace aspects of the framework, while those who are midstream or nearing the conclusion of a project may have less latitude. Regardless of where teams are in the life cycle of their project, the authors hope that the framework will inspire teams to be both self-aware and self-reflective about conducting CTE research with an intentional focus on equity. We also hope the framework will inspire teams to design future research that will enhance the field's knowledge on the topic of equity in CTE.

Q: Is there a good data source for comprehensive nationwide CTE data by state/metro area/region that you could recommend?

A: Nothing like what you describe currently exists. However, the National Center for Education Statistics does have some data sets that include CTE variables. Each state has its own data for accountability, and some include CTE variables in their state longitudinal data systems. I would start by asking your CTE state director about this and whether the data can be examined by districts or regions in the state. Visit this link for CTE Research Network resources that provide background: https://cteresearchnetwork.org/index.php/resources/aera21

Q: What guidance can you provide for researchers who are interested in utilizing this framework in their own research? Can they freely cite and leverage this framework or do they require training?

A: This was created with federal funds, so it is in the public domain. Feel free to use it, and let us know how it works!

Q: Can you talk more about what you mean by choice?

A: In our research we cannot assume that a student outcome is the result of a "choice" when it may, in fact, be an outcome of a structural barrier. For example, women's lack of representation in advanced manufacturing may not be so much an individual choice but a choice made in the context of the barriers that women face in entering this field, such as negative stereotypes, potential harassment or marginalization, or lack of mentorship.

Q: Something I am curious about is how industries' influence on CTE contributes to inequity or, on the other hand, helps to reduce it?

A: Industry (and organizations) can certainly function as a contributor to inequity and also a disruptor. It will depend on the industry (or organizational) policies, strategies, and practices. Researchers can

explore whether these practices alleviate barriers or reproduce them. For example, does a company have opportunities for Black workers to be mentored by Black leaders in their organization for success and advancement, or do advancement opportunities flow in part through social networks that Black workers have been excluded from? Are recruitment strategies for women into occupations in which they are underrepresented highlighting visuals that include women of all colors, reaching women from different communities and education institutions and linked to strong and supportive on-ramps into high-opportunity quality jobs?

Q: I wonder if this framework also can serve as a template for CTE teacher training programs (therefore embedding the practice).

A: The framework was initially designed for researchers and would be a useful tool to include in research methodology programs. It also would be worthwhile to create a similar framework that focuses more explicitly on how to teach CTE with an equity lens. Such a framework would be useful to include in teacher training programs.