

December 17th Meeting
Meeting the Needs of All Students and Schools

Career and Technical Education

- *Key Concept 1:* There are three delivery types of CTE in Rhode Island: (1) freestanding career and tech centers that combine academics and technical training; (2) CTE centers that deliver technical instruction and partner with a satellite high school for academic instruction; and (3) comprehensive high schools that host individual CTE programs. Costs vary based on both the delivery and the program type. (Brief 6)
- *Key Concept 2:* Rhode Island’s CTE funding formula uses a combination of categorical funding and cost reimbursement. This approach provides state reimbursement for over half of all extraordinary CTE expenses statewide. Federal funding and out-of-district tuition cover most of the remaining costs. (Brief 6)
- *Key Concept 3:* RIDE should explore improved system management that promotes program quality and limits costs without limiting student access. (Discussion and Follow-up Request)
- *Key Concept 4:* The state-operated free-standing career and tech centers (Davies and the Met) are amongst the more expensive models because they provide technical programs and academic courses of study. These programs are funded like charter schools and receive some reimbursement for expenses from the CTE categorical fund. (Brief 6 and Discussion)

Discussion Notes

Discussion Notes	
Considerations to promote fairness in the way that the funding formula handles these issues	
Considerations to promote equity amongst student and school types in the way that the funding formula handles these issues	
Considerations that will help ensure that all recommendations for revision are grounded in data	
Other notes	

Issue Summary: Career and Technical Education

Career and technical education (CTE) presents unique funding challenges. There are claims that CTE is both over and underfunded through the funding formula. Currently, districts receive funding for career and technical education from two state/local sources: (1) reimbursement from the funding formula career and technical education categorical fund, and (2) out-of-district tuition.

Rhode Island Context and Data

CTE in Rhode Island is delivered through three primary mechanisms.

Type 1: Centers that offer many CTE programs in a single, freestanding school (Davies Career Center and the Met¹)

Unique characteristics: These schools are their own districts and do not have a “resident” population but rather, serve students regionally and statewide.

Cost drivers: This is the most expensive model because it combines full technical and academic programs of study. Unique cost drivers include enrollment attrition in the upper grades; the cost of transportation to school and for required workplace internships; the requirement to offer a full complement of student support services (guidance, social workers); smaller class size to ensure student safety; and expensive consumable materials.

Funding: These centers are funded like charter schools (state and local share) and receive reimbursement for some expenses through the CTE categorical fund. Over the three years between FY13 and FY15, the average annual award through the CTE categorical fund was \$405,000.

Type 2: Centers that offer many CTE programs in a technical center that operates as a satellite to a high school (Woonsocket, E. Providence, Newport, Chariho, Cranston, Warwick, and Coventry)

Unique characteristics: These schools are part of a district and serve resident students and out-of-district students on both full and part-time bases.

Cost drivers: This is the second most expensive model. Unique cost drivers include enrollment attrition in the upper grades; smaller class size to ensure student safety; and the higher material and expensive consumable materials.

Funding: Out-of-district students pay for access through a tuition model that includes the technical training costs, transportation, and any other incremental cost associated with the student’s experience in the career preparation program. In-district student costs are partially reimbursed to the district through the funding formula career and technical education categorical fund. Over the three years between FY13 and FY15, the average annual award through the CTE categorical fund was \$182,000.

Type 3: Comprehensive high schools that operate one or two career preparation programs as part of their programs of study (high schools statewide)

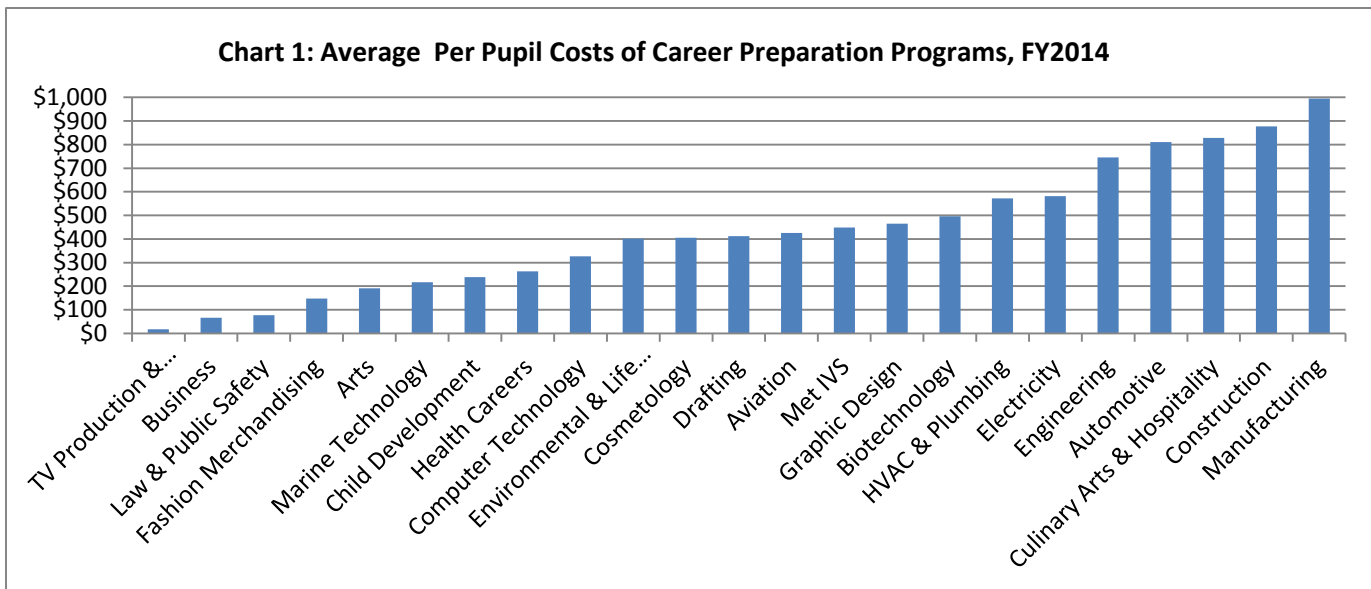
Unique characteristics: This tends to be the lowest-cost model. These programs are part of a district and serve resident and out-of-district students.

Cost drivers: The cost drivers in this area relate to start-up costs and the cost of consumable materials that are part of the program.

Funding: Out-of-district students are served through a tuition model: sending districts are required to pay for the technical training costs, transportation, and any other incremental cost associated with the student’s experience in the career preparation program. In-district student costs are reimbursed to the district through the funding formula career and technical education categorical fund. Over the three years between FY13 and FY15, the average annual award through the CTE categorical fund was \$25,000.

¹ There are two additional free-standing schools that combine career and academic programming: (1) Providence Career and Technical Academy, which serves only Providence students and is a school within Providence, and (2) New England Laborers Academy, which is a charter school in Cranston. The characteristics and cost drivers for these schools are somewhat different than those presented here.

Chart 1 provides the average, above and beyond, per pupil costs of CTE by program type.



Rhode Island Context and Data

The purpose of the career and technical categorical fund is to support start-up for new programs and to offset the higher than average per pupil costs associated with existing programs.

Twenty-one LEAs receive funding from this categorical in varying amounts ranging from an annual average of \$405,000 for free-standing centers to an annual average of \$25,000 for single programs embedded in comprehensive high schools. The FY 2016 budget is \$3.5 million. RIDE estimated that \$10 million was needed to fully fund the program.

National Practice and Examples

Across the nation, there are many different approaches to funding career and technical education. These approaches fall into five general categories, which are presented in Table 1, below.

State Funding Approach	Description	# of States
1. Weighted Funding	States that establish a single weight for CTE programs without differentiation	12
2. Categorical Funding	Supporting CTE programs with categorical funding	8
3. Proportional Allocation	LEAs are funded proportionate to its share of the state’s CTE population	9
4. Unit Based Funding	Unit- or program-based formulas allocate funds based on a set of educational inputs used to deliver CTE services.	7
5. Cost Reimbursement	Districts are reimbursed for all or a portion of CTE expenses, as determined by state policies.	9

Rhode Island’s funding formula approach is a combination of method 2 and 5 and provides direct state reimbursement for over half of all extraordinary CTE expenses statewide. Federal funding and out-of-district tuition cover the remaining costs.

Follow-Up Question #1: Ensuring Outcomes in Rhode Island Career and Technical Education

RIDE has created a career and technical education quality assurance process to, in part, promote program quality and to assist RIDE in evaluating career and technical education programs.

Program Review and Approval

All RIDE-approved CTE preparation programs are required to ensure high quality CTE programming. All RIDE-approved career preparation programs must:

- align to state academic standards and career readiness or industry standards;
- provide students with the opportunities to complete coursework that contributes to their graduation coursework requirements;
- adhere to career preparation standards; and
- provide participating students the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials whenever applicable to the program, and/or postsecondary credits, and/or advanced standing in training programs or jobs.

RIDE reviews CTE programs through an evidence-based application that is aligned to state CTE Program Standards and supported by on-site review teams, data and artifact review, and interviews with students, instructors, school counselors and administrators.

CTE Accountability System

RIDE has one of the few state-level CTE accountability systems that collects and reports data on CTE student and program quality in areas that include but are not limited to:

- dropout and graduation rates;
- credential and/or postsecondary credit-earning rates;
- program completion rates;
- enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education and technical training programs;
- postsecondary placement, and
- program costs and efficiency.