

Career & Technical Education (CTE) Reopening Guidance

October 5, 2020

Introduction

The primary documents regarding school reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found at [Back2SchoolRI.com](https://www.back2schoolri.com) and the [RIDE COVID-19 webpage](#). This document builds on those documents, and provides additional information specific to the functioning of CTE programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guiding principle underlying the successful operation of a CTE program under COVID-19 is to maximize student learning while maintaining safety for students and adults. The guiding principle is to maintain high expectations for student learning and outcomes, but take a flexible and adaptive approach on how to best help students meet those expectations.

While running any education program has become more difficult under COVID-19, CTE programs face particular challenges. This is because many programs prioritize “hands-on learning” that is hard to replicate in a virtual setting, and the industry partnerships that are the backbone of CTE become more difficult when industry is trying to navigate a challenging economic landscape. There are few easy answers, but RIDE, the CTE Board of Trustees (CTE Board), and broader Rhode Island CTE community are committed to partnering with schools to share whatever resources and tools may help schools navigate this challenging time

CTE Board Standards

CTE programs in Rhode Island are governed by RIDE and the CTE Board of Trustees (CTE Board), as described in Rhode Island’s [Perkins V State Plan](#). The [program standards](#) for each career field are set by the CTE Board and adopted by RIDE.

Most RIDE and CTE Board requirements are not impacted by COVID-19 and the move of large numbers of students to some form of distance or hybrid learning. For example, requirements about course sequences, whether credits are listed on transcripts, definitions of Priority Sectors, etc. are not changed by whether students are learning virtually or in-person. **Unless explicitly stated otherwise in a RIDE policy document, CTE programs are expected to continue to meet RIDE and the CTE Board requirements issued before the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The impact of the move to a distance learning or hybrid learning on a CTE program varies significantly by the career field—for example, computer science courses are easier to do virtually than culinary courses. Therefore, any modifications to the CTE Board Standards will be specific to each career field. Proposals for COVID-related modifications to standards should be brought to the relevant Industry Advisory.

Programs seeking modifications to the standards should contact the co-chairs of the relevant Industry Advisory. (See the [RIDE CTE website](#) for a list of advisory chairs and their contact information.) The Advisories, composed of representatives from industry, education, and higher education will discuss the proposal, and submit a formal recommendation of proposed changes to the CTE Board for consideration and approval during its monthly meeting. (For a list of meeting times, see the [meeting schedule](#)). If the CTE Board approves any changes, RIDE will update this guidance document and notify relevant programs of the change.

At this time, RIDE and the CTE Board have not received any proposals from the Industry Advisories for modifications to the CTE Board Standards, and has therefore not approved any changes. Programs are expected to continue meetings the current CTE Board Standards until and unless any such changes are approved by the CTE Board and adopted by RIDE.

For advice on how to run successful programs under COVID-19, see [COVID-19 Planning Guide from the Association for Career & Technical Education \(ACTE\)](#).

Work-Based Learning

All CTE programs have a work-based learning (WBL) requirement that must be completed before graduation. The requirements for work-based learning are outlined in the [Governor's Workforce Board WBL Guidance](#).

At this time, the RIDE, the CTE Board, and GWB have not issued any changes or modifications to the WBL Guidance related to COVID-19. If programs are unable to carry out their normally-planned work-based learning programming, they can explore alternative methods of hitting the standards outlined in the guidance. This may include doing virtual work-based learning, postponing some work-based learning to another time in students' high school career, or other options that maintain high expectations but take a flexible approach.

If programs do not feel their work-based learning requirements can be met given the realities of COVID, they can bring a proposal to their relevant CTE Board Industry Advisory, through the process described in the previous section.

For more information on conducting successful WBL during the pandemic, see [ACTE's Work-Based Learning planning guide](#).

Useful Resources

- RIDE's CTE website: www.ride.ri.gov/cte
- [COVID-19 Planning Guide from the Association for Career & Technical Education \(ACTE\)](#)
- For questions, contact paul.mcconnell@ride.ri.gov