



Press Release



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More Funding Needed for Career Tech Programs, State Board of Education Says

Despite Increased Enrollment, Opportunity Lacking for Some Students

LANSING – Michigan needs to invest further in career and technical education (CTE) programs so that more children have opportunities to prepare for high-wage and high-skills careers, State Board of Education members said in a [resolution](#) approved on Tuesday.

The resolution calls for the legislature and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to provide additional funding to local and intermediate school districts to open new high-quality career and technical education programs—particularly those in CTE deserts where participation in the programs is much lower than expected and in areas with opportunity gaps—to ensure equitable access across all schools.

CTE programs prepare students for careers in areas ranging from agriculture to skilled trades, to public safety, to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“Students who complete CTE programs gain valuable, practical skills and the opportunity to start exciting careers after high school and to build a strong foundation for success in post-secondary education,” said Board President Dr. Pamela Pugh. “All Michigan students deserve access to these opportunities, regardless of their race, socioeconomic status, or where they live.”

Over the next five years, an additional investment is needed to expand opportunities for students who, because of funding, geography, transportation, and cultural barriers, have not been able to access state-approved career-tech programming.

CTE provides students with work-based learning experiences to help Michigan develop and maintain a highly skilled, sustainable workforce.

CTE programs contribute to meeting several goals in [Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#), the board resolution says. Included are Goal 4, to expand secondary learning opportunities for all students; Goal 5, to increase the percentage of all students who graduate from high school; and Goal 6, to increase the percentage of adults with a post-secondary credential.

"In addition to preparing students for rewarding careers, CTE courses can also keep some children engaged at school so they are able to graduate and improve their life outcomes," said State Superintendent Dr. Michael F. Rice. "Students enrolled in CTE programs have significantly higher high school graduation rates and higher earnings in the labor market. They acquire skills that prepare them for successful career entry, advancement, and/or continuing education—including college—for high-wage, high-demand careers."

Enrollment in CTE programs has not only recovered from a decline during the pandemic, but now exceeds enrollment from before COVID. In the 2023-24 school year, 112,156 students enrolled in CTE programs, the third year of increases totaling more than 9,000 students, or 9%, since the 2020-21 school year enrollment of 102,988 at the low point of the pandemic and more than the pre-pandemic, 2019-20 school year enrollment of 111,073.

CTE completers, students who finish an entire series of courses in a given career area rather than a single course or two, have also increased the last three years, a total increase of more than 8,000 students, or 19% from 44,226 in 2020-21 to 52,625 in 2023-24, and greater than not only the 2019-20 pre-pandemic number of 50,416 but also any single year pre-pandemic.

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