



INDIANA COMMISSION *for* HIGHER EDUCATION

CTE Newsletter January 2025

This update is provided by the Career and Technical Education team at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (Commission). We welcome your support in encouraging anyone who would benefit from the information to join our listserv. Individuals can sign up [here](#). Questions can be shared with CTE@che.in.gov.

National CTE Month

February is National CTE Month, which provides a chance to recognize successes within CTE and raise awareness of the opportunities CTE provides Hoosier students. This year the Commission will be highlighting students and staff across the state to showcase their “CTE Why.”

Students, CTE instructors, and other stakeholders are encouraged to share their stories as to why they chose CTE. Print off [this poster](#) and have staff and students at your career center, school, institution, or organization snap a photo with their answer to “Why I choose CTE,” and post it on social media using the hashtags #CTEshowcase and #CTEMonth. Don’t forget to tag Learn More Indiana (@learnmorein) social media accounts. They will be reposting throughout the month of February.

New High School Diploma Requirements Approved

The State Board of Education (SBOE) unanimously approved Indiana’s new high school diploma requirements during the December SBOE meeting. The press release can be [found here](#) and a comparison of current requirements to new requirements can be [found here](#).

CTE programming will be central to helping schools meet the new requirements and achieve the outcomes prioritized through the new diploma, such as more students earning credentials of value and participating in high-quality work-based learning experiences. Initial guidance and clarification on a few topics closely related to CTE are shared below. Throughout 2025, a number of additional implementation resources and supports will be developed.

- **Course Eligibility:** CTE courses will count for several different course categories within the final rule. IDOE has released a [draft of course eligibility](#) and is taking feedback through tomorrow, January 31. Feedback on the draft list can be provided [here](#).
- **Employment Seal:** One of the options available to complete part of the Employment Honors Seal requirements is three courses in a CTE pathway. Available courses within each program of study can be found in the [Master Pathways Document](#). Introductory and foundational CTE courses are not specific to a single pathway, thus they will not count towards this requirement. These courses will count as personalized electives.



- **Work-Based Learning (WBL) Hours:** The final approved rule adjusted the WBL hour requirements for both the Employment Honors and Enrollment Honors Plus Seal. The Enrollment Honors Plus Seal requires 75 hours, and the Employment Honors Seal requires 150. These increments align with the 75-hour requirements that are present for WBL course codes, such as WBL Capstone (5974). Additional collaborative WBL guidance is forthcoming. The final rule also provides an updated definition of work-based learning. The definition can be utilized as an initial tool to help evaluate whether various experiences will count toward WBL hours.
 - **WBL Rule Definition:** *Sustained interactions between participants and industry professionals in real or simulated workplace settings. These experiences foster authentic work experience and develop knowledge, skills, and competencies. Experiences support participants in career exploration and readiness and are intentionally aligned and evaluated with course or training competencies. WBL requires a written partnership agreement and plan between the participant, parent or guardian, school, and employer partner.*

The CTE team is collaborating with IDOE to provide additional implementation guidance and supports around topics related to the new diploma. Questions can be directed to CTE@che.in.gov.

CTE Awards for Excellence

The CTE team annually spotlights excellence in both secondary and postsecondary Career and Technical Education through the Awards for Excellence (AFE). The 2025 ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 8, in Indianapolis. More details will be provided in the coming months.

AFE Nomination Forms are currently open and may be accessed below or on the CTE website. The deadline for nominations is Monday, March 3.

Nominations are accepted in four categories for both secondary and postsecondary, including students, programs of study, partnerships, and career advising. The Commission for Higher Education’s CTE team invites postsecondary institutions (each individual campus/branch can apply), high schools, and career centers to submit nominations. Additional information and each category’s nomination form are included in the links below:

- [Secondary Nomination Information](#)
- [Postsecondary Nomination Information](#)

Individuals are encouraged to share the nomination information with school faculty and staff at the secondary and postsecondary levels who may have nominations to submit.

CTE Resources

REMINDER: CTE Funding Memo – The CTE funding memo for the 2025-2026 school year was approved at the December State Board of Education meeting and can be [found here](#). The memo is developed annually by the Department of Workforce Development in consultation with the CTE team at the Commission for Higher Education.

A summary of changes from the 2024-2025 memo to this year’s memo can be [accessed here](#).



REMINDER: High School CTE Course Titles and Descriptions – Course titles and descriptions for all CTE courses available for the 2025-2026 school year can be [found here](#). All changes to the CTE section from last year are outlined at the beginning of the document and in the change log at the end.

IDOE is finalizing a companion document for the 2025-2026 school year which will include information such as course codes and titles, course durations, available credits, recommended and required course prerequisites, dual credit designations, and which course(s) support new and current graduation requirements.

REMINDER: CTE Master Pathways List – The CTE Master Pathways List has been updated to reflect the career cluster adjustments for the 2025-2026 school year in addition to changes made in the course titles and descriptions. The updated document can be [found here](#). Details on changes to the 2025-2026 CTE Master Pathways List can be found in our [December Newsletter here](#).

2025-2026 FAFSA

The 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is now open. Students are encouraged to file before the April 15 deadline. The Commission has announced a statewide completion goal to have at least 60 percent of high school seniors complete the FAFSA in advance of the April deadline.

CTE students who are interested in pursuing education beyond high school are encouraged to complete the FAFSA. Whether considering a four-year university, community college, or a short-term training program, students can benefit from filing the FAFSA and unlocking the opportunities it can provide. One specific program the FAFSA can help unlock is Indiana's [Next Level Jobs](#) program, which allows individuals with a high school degree to pursue eligible certificate programs in high-demand fields tuition-free.

The Commission's FAFSA Completion Dashboard is now live for the 2025-2026 form. You can monitor your school's and county's completion rates [here](#). Additional information and resources to support students in completing the FAFSA can be [found here](#).

Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship

REMINDER: Next Generation Hoosier Educators - The Commission is currently accepting applications for the Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship, which provides up to \$40,000 of financial aid to aspiring teachers. High-achieving high school and college students who plan to teach in Indiana for at least five years can receive up to \$10,000 per year of college (up to \$40,000 total) from the scholarship. Students must apply by Friday, January 31, at [ScholarTrack.IN.gov](#).

More information can be found in [this press release](#) or online [here](#). Questions can be directed to NextTeacher@che.in.gov.



External Opportunity: Indiana Work-Based Learning Conference

REMINDER: Registration is open for the Indiana [Work-Based Learning Conference](#). This event will be held on Thursday, February 13 in Noblesville and is hosted by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Institute of Workforce Excellence. It includes the annual IMPACT Awards where Hoosier students engaged in WBL, employers, innovative programs, and more are celebrated. To learn more about the event and register, [click here](#).