

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Roadmap: Return to Learn Guidance

Michigan schools provide educational opportunities in diverse settings, including career and technical education programs. Regardless of where instruction occurs, schools must take essential actions to mitigate risk and operate as safely as possible, while still maintaining the fidelity of the program.

The CTE Roadmap guidance is building upon the original guidance outlined in the [CTE Virtual Delivery Guidance Memo](#), which provides considerations for instructional strategies in each of the four major components of CTE when schools must offer remote learning due to COVID-19 building closures. Additional guidance for designing CTE instruction in remote learning environments can be found on the [MDE COVID-19 CTE Resource page](#) for each career cluster.

This guidance is also aligned to the six-phase approach to reopening in the [MI Safe Start Plan](#) and the [MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#). Districts may be required to move between phases, depending on the public health metrics in the region, and must be prepared to continue to provide high quality instruction in each phase. Each district must make decisions based on local policies, facilities, teachers, programs offered, and student needs.

Providing in-person instruction under social distancing guidelines, learning at a distance, or hybrid modes of instruction represents a significant challenge, especially for CTE educators. While learning at a distance cannot replace the hands-on instructional experience, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) recommends teachers review the program specific classification of instructional program (CIP) gap analysis and identify standards that may be delivered remotely. In some instances, a greater depth of instruction may be provided in a virtual format and in other instances the virtual format may reinforce previous instruction. Based on the available virtual delivery options, teachers should be mindful to address all the instructional standards listed under the 12 segments as practicable.

This guide provides *Key Questions to Consider in Instructional Planning* and specific considerations for each of the [MI Safe Start Plan](#) phases 1-5. Consider utilizing a team for instructional planning including, but not limited to, teachers, curriculum directors, career education planning district (CEPD) directors, principals, work-based learning coordinators, parents/guardians, and business advisory members.

Thoughtful consideration must be given to the four major components of a high-quality, state-approved CTE program:

- a. Classroom instruction that includes technical skills, academic skills, and career ready practices
- b. Hands-on laboratory learning experiences
- c. Work-based learning (WBL) opportunities with local business/industry partners
- d. Student leadership co-curricular experiences (i.e., career and technical student organizations (CTSO))

Consideration must be given to the four major components of a state-approved CTE program:

Key Questions to Consider in Instructional Planning

Academic, Technical, and Career Ready Instruction

- Which standards are best taught in-person and which might be taught virtually?
- What projects can be assigned for completion during periods of remote learning?
- What supports need to be in place for students with individualized needs?

Hands-on Laboratory Learning

- What demonstrations can teachers do via remote learning platforms?
- What lab equipment can be sent home with students for skill practice?
- What skills can only be taught in-person?
- Are there credential requirements that impact instructional decisions?

Work-Based Learning

- What WBL experiences can teachers implement during times of remote learning?
- What are the industry protocols that need to be considered for each program area?
- What classroom or lab skills might be enhanced by interactions with industry mentors?

Co-curricular Leadership Opportunities

- What leadership experiences can teachers implement during times of remote learning?
- What training or experiences are being offered through your CTSO?

Pre-pandemic, the Michigan Department of Education did not approve career and technical education programs that were delivered 100% virtually. In the pandemic, to serve children, the department is permitting in-person, online, remote but not online, or hybrid delivery models.

As noted in Memo 19-087, dated August 12, 2020, [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Instructional Delivery Guidance](#), for the 2020–2021 school year, teachers are expected to deliver as many segmented standards as practicable. Regardless of the CTE delivery model (in-person, online, remote but not online, or hybrid), state-approved CTE program status will be maintained, and districts may continue to:

- expend section 61a.1 funds on state-approved CTE programs,
- expend section 61b funds on 61b eligible state-approved CTE programs, and
- expend federal Perkins funding to support state-approved CTE programs.

Intermediate school districts (ISDs) and local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public school districts and public school academies (PSAs), that operate state-approved CTE programs should work with their CEPD director to design instructional plans.

CTE programs are delivered based on four major components of a high-quality state-approved CTE program: classroom, laboratory, student leadership, and work-based learning (WBL).

Each of these components require supervision and assessment by a certified CTE teacher to ensure student health and safety. The health and safety of staff and students are of foremost importance, and in these unprecedented times, we understand there may be a need to transition instruction into a virtual platform for part, or all, of the school year. Districts are encouraged to carefully consider what components and related standards of a program may be adapted to remote learning and which require in-person instruction. For example, a student cannot safely practice a welding standard in his or her family workspace without the in-person supervision of a certified teacher. However, in an information technology (IT) program, the teacher may set up a remote simulation that would allow students to safely perform an IT standard in a virtual laboratory.

During these unprecedented times, instead of focusing on what cannot be done, think creatively about what can be done to enhance student learning experiences. To assist in this endeavor, the CEPD council is currently identifying the standards that it believes can be delivered remotely. It is possible that all standards may not be delivered in a remote setting. District staff can contact their CEPD director for access to these lists.

Accurate reporting of student progression through CTE programs is vital to determine the impact of COVID-19 during these unprecedented times. Districts must report, with integrity, concentrator and completer numbers and carefully consider whether or not all the standards in a segment have been offered.

The [MDE CTE COVID-19 FAQ 2020-2021](#) provides answers to frequently asked questions around reopening programs for in-person instruction. District personnel are reminded to follow the work-based learning placement and supervisory requirements. School districts are advised to review district policy and liability insurance coverage for this additional program activity.

District employees are also encouraged to reference the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE) [High-Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19-Impacted School Year guide](#). To access specific sections of the guide, including a more comprehensive set of key questions to consider for each element, click on the links below that align with the high-quality programs of study criteria for CTE programs.

[System Supports](#)

[Access and Equity](#)

[Standards-aligned and Integrated Curriculum](#)

[Sequencing and Articulation](#)

[Student Assessment](#)

[Prepared and Effective Program Staff](#)

[Engaging Instruction](#)

[Facilities, Equipment, Technology and Materials](#)

[Business and Community Partnerships](#)

[Student Career Development](#)

[Career and Technical Student Organizations](#)

[Work Based Learning](#)

[Data and Program Improvement](#)

For additional ideas or CIP-specific questions, please contact your [OCTE program consultant](#) or visit the [CTE resource page](#) located on the MDE webpage.

Phases One - Three

Reference pages 14–20 in [MI Safe School: Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) for safety protocols, mental and social-emotional health, instruction, and operations guidance.

Academic, Technical and Career Ready Instruction

- Ensure all students have internet access, devices and software needed for instruction; develop alternatives for those without access
- Develop easy-to-navigate and accessible remote content and activities
- Plan for ways to teach employability skills, particularly communication, collaboration, and teamwork, in a virtual manner
- Adapt curriculum and assessment for virtual platforms; identify effective resources and tools
- Review postsecondary opportunities and implications in delivery

Hands-on Laboratory Learning

- Establish options for students to practice hands-on skills
- Connect with certification and licensing bodies to determine the impact of remote learning on practice and requirements
- Take advantage of remote proctoring, alternative testing sites, and other testing flexibilities for credentialing exams
- Determine what instructional techniques work in the in-person classroom that can be modified to the online space
- Explore ways to use simulations, at-home kits, video, or other tools to facilitate learning and practice

Connecting with Students

Throughout the year, review local district data and personal observations regularly for early warning signs of students needing additional support. Examples include attendance issues, lack of engagement, lack of participation during remote learning sessions, or poor grades. Identify appropriate supports or interventions, and enlist district resources to support students.

Phases One - Three

Continue to reference the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) [High-Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19-Impacted School Year guide](#) as you develop instructional strategies.

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

- Identify ways business partners can help navigate remote learning challenges
- Integrate WBL into remote instruction through industry-driven projects or by transforming the remote classroom into a simulated business
- Use virtual and simulated platforms for WBL
- Collaborate with industry partners to use simulations to enable students to practice employability skills in authentic workplace scenarios

Co-curricular Leadership Opportunities

- Host local and regional meetings and elections through virtual platforms
- Design leadership development and competitive events for virtual platforms
- Determine which events will be available to students virtually and how to help them prepare
- Engage business and community partners in remote leadership and competitive activities
- Adapt current service projects or fundraisers for the virtual space

Planning resources:

[The Office of Career and Technical Education](#)

[Career and Technical Student Organizations](#)

[Work-Based Learning](#)

Phases One - Three

Reference pages 21–36 in [MI Safe School: Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) for safety protocols, mental and social-emotional health, instruction and operations guidance.

Academic, Technical and Career Ready Instruction

- Prioritize content and standards to help learners build the most relevant knowledge and skills in the event of future closures
- Involve program advisory boards; ask them to contribute to these decisions
- Plan for ways to teach employability skills, particularly communication, collaboration, and teamwork, in a socially distanced manner
- Determine and document which standards can most easily be taught through remote instructional methods and which require in-person practice
- Sequence curriculum in “chunks” of in-person and remote time

Hands-on Laboratory Learning

- Design projects and group work with social distancing in mind; have devices in the classroom so learners and instructors can collaborate remotely and maintain distancing, even when they are in the same physical space
- Maximize in-person time by moving instruction and at least some demonstration to the remote space
- Determine what instructional techniques work in the in-person classroom that can be modified to the online space
- Send kits of materials home with consideration for students’ safety; determine how to promote safe usage and what instructions to include

Connecting With Students

Throughout the year, review local district data and personal observations regularly for early warning signs of students needing additional support. Examples include attendance issues, lack of engagement, and lack of participation during remote learning sessions, or poor grades. Identify appropriate supports or interventions, and enlist district resources to support students.

Phases One - Three

Continue to reference the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) [High-Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19-Impacted School Year guide](#) as you develop instructional strategies.

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

- Identify employers that can accept learners on the worksite
- Communicate expectations, provide training, and assure compliance with social distancing and learner safety on the worksite
- Integrate WBL into in-person or remote instruction through school-based models
- Use virtual and simulated platforms for WBL

Co-curricular Leadership Opportunities

- Host local and regional meetings and elections with social distancing or through virtual platforms
- Design leadership development, fundraisers, community projects, and competitions, for social distancing or virtual platforms
- Engage business and community partners in remote leadership and competitive activities
- Schedule Career and Technical Student Organization activities to maximize participation of learners on campus and at home

Planning resources:

[The Office of Career and Technical Education](#)

[Career and Technical Student Organizations](#)

[Work-Based Learning](#)

Phase 5 Five

Reference pages 37–52 in [MI Safe School: Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) for safety protocols, mental and social–emotional health, instruction and operations guidance.

Academic, Technical and Career Ready Instruction

- Prioritize standards and content; recover any standards lost during the spring of 2020 that need to be retaught
- Create a plan for adapting curriculum for social distancing or virtual platforms
- Review curriculum tools that were most effective during the spring of 2020 and should continue to be used
- Provide multiple methods of assessment, multiple forms of feedback, and accommodations
- Provide additional supports to help students plan for transitions
- Rebuild the classroom community to support learners’ social-emotional needs

Hands-on Laboratory Learning

- Evaluate the need to frontload hands-on practice or a particular set of knowledge and skills in the event of future closures
- Plan to substitute more socially distanced activities or simulations for technical skills meant to be executed as a group working together in close quarters
- Design project-based, hands-on, and collaborative learning for social distancing
- Plan for additional time and personal protective equipment needed for skill practice and assessment

Connecting With Students

Throughout the year, review local district data and personal observations regularly for early warning signs of students needing additional support. Examples include attendance issues, lack of engagement, and lack of participation during remote learning sessions, or poor grades. Identify appropriate supports or interventions, and enlist district resources to support students.

Phase 5 Five

Continue to reference the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) [High-Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19-Impacted School Year guide](#) as you develop instructional strategies.

Work-Based Learning

- Identify business and community partners' capacity and willingness to engage in WBL
- Identify employers that can accept learners on the worksite
- Communicate expectations, provide training, and assure compliance with social distancing and learner safety on the worksite; include in training agreements
- Integrate WBL into in-person or remote instruction through school-based models
- Continue to leverage virtual platforms for career advisement, career fairs, and other career development and exploration experiences

Co-curricular Leadership Opportunities

- Modify processes or schedules to allow for social distancing and maximize participation
- Engage officers as leaders and role models to promote safe practices
- Prepare for modifications to traditional event formats as the year unfolds
- Engage students with the community in virtual or low-contact activities, depending on local guidelines

Planning resources:

[The Office of Career and Technical Education](#)

[Career and Technical Student Organizations](#)

[Work-Based Learning](#)