

FAMILY GUIDE

Career Technical Education (CTE)



Introduction

This Family Guide is designed to support families of middle and high school students participating in Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). CTE programs provide students with rigorous, standards-aligned instruction that integrates academic knowledge with real-world technical and employability skills, preparing them for college, career, and lifelong success.

Through CTE, students explore career options, earn industry-aligned skills, and engage in hands-on, project-based learning connected to high-demand industries. This guide explains how CTE supports student success, how progress is monitored, and how families can partner with schools to strengthen student outcomes.

Strategic Plan Priority: Postsecondary Readiness

CTE directly supports LAUSD's Strategic Plan by advancing student readiness across multiple pillars:

Pillar I:

Academic Excellence

CTE integrates academic standards with technical skills, ensuring high-quality, relevant, and engaging instruction for all learners.

Pillar II:

Joy & Wellness

CTE classrooms foster belonging, confidence, and purpose by connecting learning to students' interests, cultures, and future goals.

Pillar III:

Engagement & Collaboration

CTE strengthens partnerships among schools, families, industry partners, and community organizations to support student success.



CTE Defined/Target Population

Description of Initiative

Career Technical Education is a sequenced, multi-year program of study aligned to California CTE Standards and industry sectors. Students enrolled in CTE pathways:



Participate in **hands-on, project-based learning**



Develop **technical, academic, and employability skills**



Explore careers through **industry-aligned curriculum**



Engage with **industry professionals**, competitions, and work-based learning opportunities

CTE pathways culminate in capstone experiences that may include industry certifications, portfolios, internships, or articulated college credit.

Target Population/Grade Level

CTE pathways serve students in grades **6–12**, with concentrated pathway experiences primarily offered in grades **9–12**. Programs are designed for:



Students exploring career interests



Students seeking real-world applications of academic learning



Students preparing for postsecondary education, industry certification, apprenticeships, or direct entry into the workforce

Materials or Curriculum

CTE instruction is supported by:



California CTE Model Curriculum Standards

Industry-aligned instructional materials and equipment

Project-based and performance-based assessments

Integrated academic and technical coursework

Digital platforms and learning management systems

Curriculum reflects labor market needs, cultural relevance, and real-world application.

Key Milestones



Career Exploration

Students explore career sectors, interests, and pathways.



Skill Development

Students gain foundational and advanced technical skills aligned to industry standards.



Work-Based Learning

Students participate in job shadowing, guest speakers, internships, or simulated workplace experiences.



Pathway Completion

Students complete a sequenced course of study and demonstrate readiness for college and career.



Understanding Progress Monitoring in CTE

CTE progress monitoring helps ensure students are building the **academic knowledge, technical skills, and workplace behaviors** needed for college and career success.

Teachers use multiple measures to track growth and provide timely feedback and support.



Academic Progress

Students' academic progress is measured through grades, assignments, and assessments aligned to pathway outcomes and academic standards. These measures show how well students understand concepts and apply learning to real-world career contexts.



Technical Skill Development

Technical skills are monitored through hands-on projects, performance tasks, and demonstrations aligned to industry standards. Rubrics, portfolios, and capstone projects help teachers assess skill mastery over time.



Employability Skills

Technical skills are monitored through hands-on projects, performance tasks, and demonstrations aligned to industry standards. Rubrics, portfolios, certification assessments and capstone projects help teachers assess skill mastery over time.



Tips & Activities for Families

Support Career Conversations



Talk regularly with your child about their career interests, strengths, and future goals. Ask how their CTE classes connect to college, industry certifications, or career pathways, and encourage exploration of different options.

Encourage Organization and Time Management



Help your child develop routines to manage both academic and technical coursework. Support the use of planners, calendars, or digital tools to track assignments, projects, and deadlines.

Promote Real-World Connections



Connect classroom learning to everyday experiences, community resources, and real-world careers. Point out how skills learned in CTE are used in jobs, businesses, and industries around you.

Stay Engaged with the School



Attend pathway showcases, exhibitions, and family engagement events to celebrate student learning. Staying connected with teachers and counselors help families better understand program expectations and available supports.

Questions to Ask Your Child

What skills are you learning in your CTE class?

Ask your child to explain both the technical skills and workplace skills they are developing, and how those skills can be used in real careers.

How does this pathway connect to your future goals?

Discuss how the pathway supports college plans, industry certifications, apprenticeships, or career opportunities after high school.

What projects or hands-on activities are you working on?

Encourage your child to describe current projects, labs, or performance tasks and what they are learning through real-world applications.

What support do you need to be successful?

Help your child reflect on challenges and identify support from teachers, counselors, or family members.

What certifications, college credit, or career experiences can you earn through this pathway?

Talk about opportunities such as industry certifications, internships, job shadowing, or articulated college credit.

What skills are you most proud of developing so far?

Encourage reflection on growth, confidence, and progress, not just grades.

Resources

**LAUSD Career Technical
Education (CTE)**

**Student, Family, and
Community Engagement (SFCE)**

California Career Zone

**Community Colleges and
Apprenticeship Programs**



Learn About Our CTE Teachers, Pathways & Industry Partners



CTE Showcase Recap



Meet CTE teachers



**Transforming Education: Self-Efficacy in
Students' Everyday Lives**

Glossary

Career Technical Education (CTE)- Instruction that combines academic learning with technical and career skills to prepare students for college and the workforce.

Pathway- A multi-year sequence of CTE courses focused on a specific industry sector.

Work-Based Learning- Opportunities for students to learn through real or simulated workplace experiences, such as internships, job shadowing, or industry projects.

Industry Certification- A credential that verifies a student's skills and knowledge meet industry standards.

Industry Sector- A group of related careers and occupations, such as Health Science, Information Technology, Engineering, or Arts, Media, and Entertainment.

Employability Skills- Skills needed for success in any job, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, professionalism, and responsibility.

Capstone Project- A culminating project that allows students to demonstrate technical skills and knowledge gained throughout a pathway.

Articulation/Dual Enrollment- Opportunities for students to earn college credit while still in high school through aligned coursework.

Apprenticeship A structured program that combines classroom instruction with paid, on-the-job training in a skilled trade or profession.

References

1. LAUSD Strategic Plan
2. California CTE Model Curriculum Standards
3. LAUSD Division of Instruction