



Strategic Plan for Utah's Secondary Career and Technical Education

Utah State Board of Education
Career & Technical Education
2024 - 2029



Utah State Board of Education

Table of Contents

Purpose	2
Strategic Plan Framework	3
Goal 1: Awareness & Outreach	4
Goal 2: Industry Alignment	6
Goal 3: Postsecondary Alignment	8
Goal 4: Durable Skills	10



Purpose

The vision of Utah's secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs is to prepare students for success by providing them with relevant and rigorous learning experiences that align with the needs of Utah's workforce and connect them to postsecondary opportunities.

Utah's secondary CTE programs are guided by the following principles:

- Every student has the opportunity for success by graduating from high school with an industry credential and a connection to a postsecondary program (first credential).
- Every student has the opportunity to access CTE programs regardless of geographic location, through a variety of delivery modes, including online, blended, and face-to-face.
- Every student has the opportunity to engage in hands-on and project-based learning that fosters creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills.

Approximately 70% of jobs today require less than a 4-year degree which results in:

- More students taking CTE courses
- The need for credentials and certifications
- Demand for increased work-based learning opportunities including internships and apprenticeships

Utah's secondary CTE programs are designed to support students in exploring their career aptitudes and interests, discovering their passions and developing their potential. CTE programs help students develop the knowledge and skills that are essential for success in careers in a dynamic and diverse world.

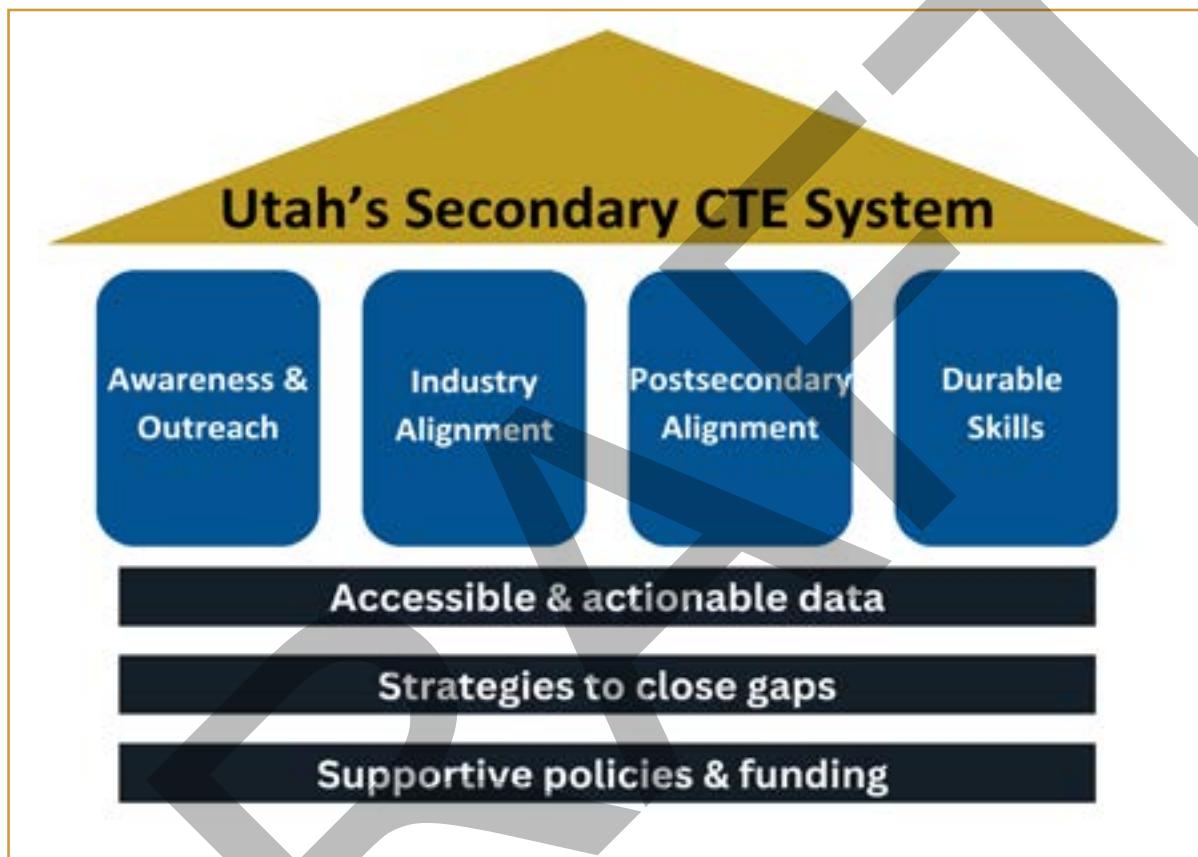
Stakeholder Engagement Process

As part of the strategic planning process, USBE sought feedback from three sources:

- Survey - 738 respondents
- Interviews
- Focus Groups

Strategic Plan Framework

Goal: By 2029, 50% of Utah graduates will complete a secondary CTE pathway, including completing required coursework, earning an industry-recognized credential of value, and being provided an opportunity to participate in a high-quality work-based learning experience.



The strategic plan contains four goals, which are the major categories of strategies that USBE will pursue to advance CTE:

- Awareness and outreach
- Industry alignment
- Postsecondary alignment
- Durable skills

There are also three additional cross-cutting foundations that underlie all of the goals:

- Accessible and actionable data
- Strategies to close gaps
- Supportive policies and funding

Goal 1: Awareness & Outreach

Lack of awareness of the benefits and opportunities provided by CTE programs continues to be a challenge in Utah. Career development can happen in many places, including CTE and academic courses, through work with school counselors, and through Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). Utah will expand its outreach to students and families, to help them understand how CTE programs can help prepare them for college and career success, and provide counseling and advising to help students discover career fields they hope to pursue. Ensuring that students, parents, and business/industry partners not only know what CTE is but truly understand the benefits and share the positive message is key to the long-term success for CTE.

Utah will support a robust counseling and advising system that helps students discover their aptitudes, passions, strengths, and identify the courses and experiences that help them progress toward their career goals.

Strategies & Goals for 2024-2029

Strategy	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
AO-1. Expand outreach to parents and families about the benefits of CTE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight student success/work at State Board Meetings and through available communications mediums. Provide ready made documents to share with stakeholders. Provide marketing and communication training for LEAs. Maintain official USBE CTE Social Media pages to communicate offerings and connection to high-wage, in-demand careers. Develop a social media plan for statewide messaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an information sharing/marketing plan with parents and students. Provide informational materials to community members. Facilitate counselors working with CCA courses to help students create career mapping plans. Work within Region Consortium to create regional or LEA specific promotional material on the pathways that are being offered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote secondary CTE programs and the pathways to careers. Provide additional information to USBE aligned to pathways to highlight the benefits of CTE.
AO-2. Improve college and career advising systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a statewide career advising toolkit to include promising practices (including virtual and AI driven) for career advisement. Provide structure and supports for improving and standardizing career advisement such as professional development opportunities. Emphasize the benefits of career pathways and Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) attainment for students with teachers, school counselors, building administrators, and students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the participation of LEA and campus administrators, counselors, and teachers in professional development to improve career advising practices. Facilitate the introduction and use of career advising resources and materials. Work directly with teachers, school counselors, building administrators, and students to share the benefits of career pathways and IRC attainment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide aligned College Career Readiness Plans. Create advising platforms aligned to Utah's pathway progression models. Understand and value credentials earned by high school students.
AO-3. Expand career exploration opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze effectiveness of College and Career Awareness in middle school and elementary grades. Organize course offerings for increased opportunities in middle school. Develop standards and administrative supports for enhanced middle grade and elementary career exploration. Seek new funding targeted at middle school CTE programs in high skill, high wage, and in-demand or emerging occupations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide students with opportunities to participate in "day in the life" activities for various careers. Develop and expand middle grade and elementary career exploration opportunities with local industry partners. Actively demonstrate the positive impact of CTE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide lesson plans or alignment with YouScience resources. Commitment from industry partners to create programs that align to secondary student opportunities on all levels.

Cross Cutting Foundational Principles			
Strategy	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
Accessible and actionable data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop reporting processes and standards to measure awareness and outreach outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize the use of data in the development of local awareness and outreach materials and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share data relevant to secondary CTE to help inform the state's and LEA's awareness and outreach activities such as labor trends, program enrollment, and emerging opportunities.
Strategies to close gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess current resources for messaging and understand where we have gaps. Analyze usage of state CTE resources. Enhance LEA understanding of PCBL and model the levers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the effectiveness of resources and messaging and address gaps. Increase awareness and outreach activities for learner populations with significant deficits in participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share resources and materials relevant to learner populations with significant participation deficits.
Supportive policies and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the increase of state CTE funding specifically for high quality middle school CTE programs and elementary exploration opportunities. Compliance with Federal guidelines for recruitment and marketing. Promote the development of a CTE Pathway Completer seal for graduation diplomas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include awareness and outreach goals in districts and campus action plans. Promote the development of a local CTE Pathway Completer seal for graduation diplomas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create alignment and support policies for statewide, regional, and local education agencies, to include exploration and engagement activities. Understand and value credentials earned by high school students.

Goal 2: Industry Alignment

Utah will align its programs to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries and provide students with industry-recognized credentials and work-based learning experiences that will lead to career success. Using labor market information (LMI), Utah will continue to develop aligned programs of study and identify high-wage, in-demand career fields in the state. CTE Pathways in Utah are aligned and connected to careers—both ones that happen directly after high school and those after college, “College is 1, 2, 4 or more”.

Strategies & Goals for 2024-2029

Strategy	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
IA-1. Evaluate and develop high quality CTE programs and courses to ensure alignment with high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries. Sunset programs and courses that no longer meet this criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update definitions for industries and careers that are high-skill, high-wage, and/or in-demand or emerging. • Develop structures to identify high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries. • Create and use advisory boards to inform decisions about pathways and skills in secondary CTE courses. • Analyze programs of study to maintain alignment to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries. • Sunset existing programs that are no longer aligned to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging occupations. • Facilitate CTE teacher learning about the High Quality Instruction cycle to ensure that classroom experiences are positive and appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate programs to ensure alignment to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries. • Expand CTE programs in prioritized sectors aligned to state, regional, or local industry needs. • Develop a program sunsetting process for pathways no longer meeting local or regional industry needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop relationships with local education agencies and regional education consortiums. • Participate in advisory boards and provide input on industry standards and programs offered regionally and locally. • Provide information on high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries.
IA-2. Increase employer partnerships through advisory committees, work-based learning, and labor market aligned industry-valued certifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regional- and state-level advisory boards. • Provide guidance on the development of local advisory boards. • Develop recruitment and marketing materials on the value of advisory committees. • Develop a tool-kit on designing and maintaining an effective advisory committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize making connections with local businesses and expand partnerships. • Develop and host an advisory committee for every pathway offered with at least 2 industry partners with the flexibility to meet this standard with regional stakeholders. • Maintain active advisory committees for all pathways. • Conduct outreach and partner with including but not exclusive to local and regional workforce boards, industry associations, chambers of commerce, and postsecondary institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize partnerships with the Unified Economic Opportunities Commission, GOEO, Talent, Education, & Industry Alignment Board, and DWS to create a statewide focus on high demand occupations. • Provide input on the effective recruitment of stakeholders and the benefits of participating on an advisory committee. • Participate on advisory committees providing input on WBL and IRCS.
IA-3. Increase number of students earning stackable, industry-recognized credentials (IRCs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an industry-driven process for identifying IRCS • Align Career Pathways Charts to culminate in IRCS. • Align courses to industry certifications. • Provide statewide teacher PD on how to facilitate students earning an IRC. • Regularly update skill certificate assessments to ensure alignment with CTE course standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer approved assessments in every CTE classroom and help students understand the value of certifications. • Develop an outreach plan for students and parents on the benefits of earning an IRC. • Conduct training for teachers, counselors, and administrators on the benefits of earning an IRC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication about current and future workforce needs at the state, regional, and local levels. • Provide input on the messaging and communication of IRCS in Utah that are of value to local industry partners. • Understand and value credentials earned by high school students.

IA-4. Increase participation in K-12 work-based learning and opportunities provided by industry partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ a full-time WBL specialist to support LEAs through training and resources. Provide additional resources to assist LEAs with developing high-quality WBL opportunities to include an updated manual and tool-kit with a guide and best practices including rural and regional examples. Provide LEAs with a WBL structure including a definition of Utah's WBL continuum. Create a structure for LEAs to offer WBL such as capstones, apprenticeships, and virtual opportunities. Review corporate relationship building communications to enhance correspondence between LEAs and industry on WBL opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct program specific outreach to local and regional industry partners to increase WBL opportunities. Promote WBL opportunities to students and parents. Conduct training for teachers, counselors, and administrators on the availability and promotion of the range of WBL opportunities. Employ state resources to improve WBL communications and messaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a partnership with local and regional education agencies to offer WBL opportunities. Provide input on communicating with and messaging to industry partners on WBL opportunities and practices.
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Cross Cutting Foundational Principles			
Principle	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
Accessible and actionable data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to expand opportunities for access to labor market data included in the Utah Career Pathways (UCPP) dashboard. Develop WBL data reporting standards to include quality collection and reporting practices. Develop data collection systems for IRCs. Develop a state data dashboard to share WBL data with the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize labor market data (UCPP) to determine local economic needs and align programs and courses to those needs. Utilize and comply with state data validity standards to ensure quality data collection and reporting standards are implemented for WBL and IRCs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share data on high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries.
Strategies to close gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate WBL participation and IRC attainment at the state level and develop resources to assist LEAs with the recruitment and marketing to all student populations and develop promising practices to close gaps. Evaluate the participation of all students in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries and develop promising practices to close gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate WBL participation and IRC attainment of all students and apply promising practices to close gaps. Evaluate the participation of all students in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries and apply promising practices to close gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the development of promising practices to improve WBL participation, IRC attainment, and participation in programs of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries for all learners.
Supportive policies and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support increased funding to provide growth for CTE programs as required in state statute, as well as charter school funding. Support opportunity for career-ready and/or college-ready credential attainment by every graduating student. Support increased funding to provide for new WBL opportunities in the schools. Define policies regarding funding, academic credit, and employer liability. Promote the development of Work Based Learning graduation seal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend changes in administrative policies that will improve WBL participation, IRC attainment and participation in a program of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries. Actively advocate for increased funding for CTE programs and WBL. Promote the development of a local WBL graduation seal on the high school diploma. Support opportunity for career-ready and/or college-ready credential attainment by every graduating student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide input on barriers to employers offering WBL in Utah and suggest mitigating and supportive policies. Recommend changes in administrative policies that will improve WBL participation, IRC attainment and participation in a program of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand or emerging industries.

Goal 3: Postsecondary Alignment

Utah will align high school programs to postsecondary-level coursework and industry standards, to ensure students get a head start on the next phase of their education. All estimates suggest that participation in a high-quality CTE programming boosts the probability of on-time graduation from high school by 7 to 10 percentage points. Learners from special populations groups see even greater positive effects. The Utah state team and stakeholders will accomplish this task by:

- Connecting advanced courses to pathways and expanding access to advanced courses in CTE pathways.
- Connecting secondary course work to technical colleges, community colleges, and four-year universities in career pathways.
- Increasing the opportunities for concurrent enrollment to expand access to college credits.
- Work with partners to create a strong transfer and articulation process which will ensure that students can use their course credits, regardless of where they go to college, including credit for prior learning.

Strategies & Goals for 2024-2029

Strategy	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
PA-1. Increase the number of students who are considered college and career ready (students who earn credit, at "C" grade or better, in CE or IB or AP OR who are a CTE pathway concentrator).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with postsecondary to align courses to CE opportunities. Build partnerships with Technical, Community, and 4- year Colleges to find courses that can be potentially aligned. • Ensure that IB, AP, and CE CTE courses are aligned in career pathway maps. Expand these opportunities for all students. • Expand use of technical college core codes to be included in the metric of college and career readiness. • Development of strategies and practices to provide a system of support for LEAs to increase the number of concentrators and completers. • Develop and implement a strategy to highlight student participation and concentration in CTE programs and Career & Technical Student Organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships with local postsecondary institutions to identify potential CE opportunities and communicate them with the USBE. • Develop practices on local awareness of CTE concentrator opportunities. • Work with their respective postsecondary partners to make sure each CTE Pathway they offer has a direct alignment. • Facilitate teachers working with postsecondary to become qualified to teach CE courses. • Evaluate current CTE course offerings to ensure pathway concentration and completion opportunities and adjust course offerings accordingly. • Work with USBE to utilize the strategy to highlight student participation and concentration in CTE programs and CTSOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with alignment efforts between secondary, postsecondary, and workforce. • Assist USBE with the creation of courses aligned to CE. • Co-develop with teachers training to enhance instructional practices in the CE courses. • Recognize the value of CE, IB, AP, and CTE pathway concentration. • Promote cluster and sector events targeted at specific populations of students.
PA-2. Develop a crosswalk between CTE career pathways and Guided Pathways/ Majors at Utah's colleges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create promotional material for the High Demand careers with pathway to degree alignment. • Partner with school counseling and other LEA stakeholders on a distribution plan. • Connect to School Leadership conference to share information about CTE programs and the value of CTE as a protective factor for the mental health of students. • Share out Utah's definition of "College means 1, 2, 4, or more" with various stakeholders to ensure understanding of the broad options available to students after high school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt the pathway to career charts in student counseling to the courses being offered at the LEA. • Utilize state resources to highlight high demand careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input on any durable skills that emerge and the content areas that they apply to through participation on Local, and state advisory boards.
PA-3. Increase articulation and transfers between K-12 and postsecondary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with K-12 school counselors through the USBE counseling dept to educate counselors on CTE pathways and the benefits to students of concentrating in and completing pathways. • Develop a Utah Alignment Toolkit. • Include postsecondary partners in the course revision process for all courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share CTE pathway information with local businesses. • Develop a recruitment and marketing strategy to inform students and parents. • Work with teachers, school counselors, and building administrators, to increase understanding of the benefits of CTE pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and expand local partnerships. • Share the value of student participation in CTE pathways in secondary and postsecondary education.

Cross Cutting Foundational Principles			
Principle	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
Accessible and actionable data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide LEAs with data on how many students are taking advantage of CE and how many teachers could be teaching CE and are not. Provide LEAs with Special Population data for each student group. Provide LEAs with data on college persistence and attainment rates, graduation rates, and career placement data for CTE completers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use state provided data to expand CE courses. Develop consistent reporting practices on students participating in CE courses and secondary teachers as instructors in CE programs. Set LEA and campus improvements goals based on career placement data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the data reporting practices on CE enrollment. Contribute to the data reporting practices on teachers participating in CE opportunities.
Strategies to close gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review discrepancies within special populations and CE participation and attainment and why some sub-groups are underrepresented. Develop a guide to help teachers meet CE course and college requirements. Review discrepancies within special populations to look at AP, IB, CTE concentrators. Share evidence-based strategies for closing the gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate CE programs for participation by special population students and subgroups and address gaps. Evaluate AP, IB, CTE programs for participation by special population students and subgroups and address gaps. Implement evidenced-based strategies to close the gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist LEAs with reporting on CE participation by special populations and sub-groups. Maintain connections to and passing of special population students from secondary to postsecondary (SSID alignment).
Supportive policies and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a policy on concurrent enrollment and prior learning. Develop an alignment guide for CE and CTE alignment and completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement high-quality alignment practices. Provide students and parents with information on CE and CTE completion status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support policies associated with CE enrollment and completion aligned to CTE completion.

Goal 4: Durable Skills

Durable Skills are a combination of knowledge, experience, and abilities that are useful and in demand across all industries and jobs. These include skills like critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity – as well as character skills like resilience, growth mindset, and leadership. Utah's CTE system will intentionally help students build durable skills (also known as “employability skills,” “workplace skills,” or “soft skills”) aligned to Utah's Portrait of Graduate.

Strategies & Goals for 2024-2029

Strategy	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
DS-1. Assess the national landscape for durable skills. Collaborate with academic programs to ensure that durable skills are intentionally taught in all K-12 classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Utah's durable skills align with Utah's Portrait of a Graduate. Provide professional learning to teachers to help them understand practices that are useful in teaching durable skills. Collaborate with USBE specialists to help them understand practices that are useful in teaching durable skills. Provide training to teachers on which durable skills are incorporated into specific courses through annual Summer conferences, webinars, and other communication tools. Provide content-specific durable skills charts for pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the durable skills being taught through CTE courses and pathways. Share the benefits of the durable skills curriculum with students and parents. Facilitate teacher understanding and promote the importance of teaching durable skills in every classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify industry specific durable skills in specific pathways ie. health science = empathy. Serve on curriculum revision committees and provide input on the durable skills that need to be taught within courses.
DS-2. Integrate and measure durable skills in the strands and standards of each CTE course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess CTE course strand and standards to ensure how to best integrate durable skills. Utilize performance assessments as a potential way to evaluate durable skills. Ensure that the performance assessments specifically call out the durable skills that will be gained through the completion of course performance skills. Update the various skills assessments to explicitly measure durable skills in the context of content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train teachers to use the course S&S, blueprints and performance skills to create adequate scopes and sequences for courses. Utilize available resources to further durable skills education in all classrooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide input during course revisions.

Cross Cutting Foundational Principles

Principle	Utah State Board of Education CTE will:	Local Education Agencies will:	Partners will:
Accessible and actionable data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop metrics and data collection methods. Explore accountability or reporting systems based on these metrics. Measure skill attainment through available exams, license, and pathway completers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train administrators and teachers on the data collection practices for durable skills. Use durable skills access data to expand access to all learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the development of durable skills data collection methods, and measures of success.
Strategies to close gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate at the state level the percentage of special population students participating in and receiving durable skills training and apply promising practices to address gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate at the local level the percentage of special population students participating in and receiving durable skills training and apply promising practices to address gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the development of resources to promote the benefit of durable skills training to special populations students and families.
Supportive policies and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop integration policies for durable skills and CTE and core academic courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include durable skills training goals in LEA and campus improvement plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support durable skills policies and funding.