



# Framework for High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship: Career and Technical Education

## AT A GLANCE

There is often alignment between pre-apprenticeship and career and technical education (CTE). This pre-apprenticeship framework outlines the six essential elements of a high-quality pre-apprenticeship program with a focus on CTE. It builds on [JFF's existing Framework for A High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship](#) to provide specific recommendations for utilizing existing CTE elements to develop pre-apprenticeship programs and offers examples of promising practices implemented by pre-apprenticeship programs that currently operate within CTE programs.

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- Educate Maine Automotive Technology Pre-Apprenticeship at CTE Region 10, Brunswick, ME
- Syracuse City School District (SCSD) Manufacturing Technology Pre-Apprenticeship Program at Corcoran High School, Syracuse, NY
- West Linn-Wilsonville (WLWV) School District Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship Program at Riverside High School, Tualatin, OR

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# 01.

## Introduction

In recent years, employers in the United States have experienced a shortage of qualified workers and a skills gap in the workforce. Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a viable solution to address this shortage. RA provides an opportunity for participants to earn wages while earning a recognized industry credential that validates the skills acquired. Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of services that offer participants structured training opportunities to prepare them for entry into an RA program.

Career and technical education (CTE) is a practical, hands-on approach combining the academic and technical skills participants need in many traditional skilled trades and industries like information technology, energy, health care, and manufacturing. CTE can help education and business partners create career pathways that begin in middle school, connect with seamless program credit articulation between secondary and postsecondary education, and ultimately transition learners into the workforce.

Since there is already alignment between the [CTE career clusters](#) and apprenticeable occupations, pre-apprenticeship programs within CTE can be a foundational learning opportunity to prepare young people for entry into a Registered Apprenticeship. The U.S. Department of Education encourages states to use [Perkins V](#) funding to support the development of Pre-Apprenticeship and RA programs between secondary and postsecondary CTE through a sequence of courses. [Perkins](#) was codified with the primary purpose of developing the

“academic knowledge and employability skills” of secondary and postsecondary students who enroll in CTE programs, which aligns well to the core elements of apprenticeship programs. CTE programs of study can be aligned with pre-apprenticeship program learning outcomes needed by participants to meet the core foundational industry standards of an apprenticeship program.

This pre-apprenticeship framework outlines the six essential elements of a high-quality pre-apprenticeship program with a focus on Career and Technical Education (CTE). It builds on JFF’s existing [Framework for A High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship](#) and provides specific recommendations for utilizing CTE elements to develop pre-apprenticeship programs. It also offers examples of promising practices implemented by pre-apprenticeships that currently operate within CTE programs. Pre-apprenticeships are designed to prepare participants for success in Registered Apprenticeships or other high-quality apprenticeship programs and, ultimately, careers. New or existing programs can use this framework to help guide their growth and development both in creating formal pre-apprenticeships and in strengthening their existing training practices.

## Transparent Entry and Success Requirements

CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should be made accessible for all young people who want to participate. They should ensure that entry and success requirements are clear and fully defined from the beginning. This helps prospective participants to understand what will be expected of them during and after program completion. At the same time, having clear and specific success requirements helps ensure that they are prepared for a successful transition into apprenticeship.

**Clearly articulates entry requirements, including stipulations on any academic prerequisites, employability skills, and social-emotional skills.**

### WHAT IS PRE-APPRENTICESHIP?

Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of services that offers participants structured training opportunities to prepare them for entry into a Registered Apprenticeship or other high-quality apprenticeship program. Unlike the Registered Apprenticeship system, there is no formal registration process for pre-apprenticeship programs at the federal level. However, some states, including Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida, and Wisconsin, do register or formally recognize high-quality pre-apprenticeships that meet certain standards.

The U.S. Department of Labor has outlined several **essential elements** for pre-apprenticeship in its Training and Employment Notice (**TEN 23-23**) and its Training and Employment Guidance Letter (**TEGL 13-16**). These elements include providing participants with meaningful work experience, essential skills and competencies, and in-demand credentials that align with employer needs. Elements also include offering academic and career navigation, mentorship, supportive, wraparound services, and connections to Registered Apprenticeship.

## EDUCATE MAINE AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

**Educate Maine** is a business-led education nonprofit focused on increasing student career readiness and advancing educational attainment for Maine people. Educate Maine sponsors an Automotive Technology pre-apprenticeship program at the [Region 10 Technical High School](#) in Brunswick, ME, in partnership with Goodwin Chevrolet and Mazda, and Darling's Auto Group. The pre-apprenticeship is open to students in grades 11 and 12 who are over 16 and in good academic standing. To ensure alignment and collaboration, Maine implements a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship sponsors that outlines how each partner agrees to support the program and details how the pre-apprentice will be prepared for direct entry into the Registered Apprenticeship program.

The Educate Maine Automotive Technology pre-apprenticeship is designed so that participants spend about 50% of their training in a shop setting where they work on cars, and select seniors have the opportunity for short-term, paid work experience at Goodwin Chevrolet and Mazda or Darling's. Pre-apprenticeship completers earn OSHA 10 certification, an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) student patch, S/P2 Safety and Pollution certificates, and a Maine State Inspection license if they meet the age requirement. Completers who move into a registered apprenticeship program receive advantages such as a guaranteed interview and advanced credit toward their apprenticeship on-the-job learning and Related Technical Instruction (RTI). Pre-apprentices also earn dual credit that counts toward college credit if they wish to continue to higher education. Three local community colleges have agreed to grant 3 college credits for completion of the 2-year program, one of which offers up to 15 college credits for dual enrollment students.

As an intermediary, Educate Maine can provide wraparound services not offered or eligible through the education system. Educate Maine conducts a process to provide or refer pre-apprentices to wraparound supports, such as transportation support, financial support, tools, clothing, technology, etc. This helps participants be fully present and focus on learning the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for their career advancement.

CTE programs may implement varied entrance requirements, such as grade level and whether a student is on track to graduate. To help ensure that participants can successfully enter and complete pre-apprenticeship programs, CTE instructors and staff should communicate all the skills and requirements they will need to succeed. This includes the academic, employability, and social-emotional skills needed for the occupation. CTE programs may also require entrance exams. This can include placement, interest, and aptitude tests. Participants whose interest and aptitude align with the occupation(s) the pre-apprenticeship focuses on will experience higher levels of success in the program and the connected RA programs.

**Academic Requirements:** Pre-apprenticeship programs often prepare people for career pathways that need higher-level reading and math skills. CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should explain clearly what reading and math skills are needed to join and have plans in place to ensure participants gain the necessary skills during training to move on to apprenticeships, higher-level training, or other career pathways smoothly. Since many CTE programs have support systems in place that offer extra help with reading and math, participants have a better chance of improving their skills and succeeding in their careers. Clearly explaining these support systems and how to access them to participants will further ensure that they will be successful within the program.

**Employability and Social-Emotional Skills:** Employability skills are a [core component](#) of CTE program curriculum. These skills include professionalism, teamwork, critical thinking, leadership, and written and verbal communication skills. CTE programs can also teach [Social-Emotional Learning \(SEL\)](#) skills like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and the ability to persevere in their programs. These should also be connected to the occupation and work environment context. There are many different SEL curriculum programs that can be included in the training, such as [7mindsets](#), [Character Counts](#), and Second Step.

It is important to include [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#), a human-centered approach, and acknowledging that participants carry life experiences outside of their training that may affect how they can show up and engage. Learners' ability to engage differs from person to person. It's important to offer a variety of options that match their abilities and experience. [UDL guidelines](#) include strategies to develop SEL skills such as self-regulation, motivation, coping skills, self-assessment, goal setting, and executive function.

**Clearly articulates expectations for participation, such as self-management, persistence skills, and other success requirements.**

CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should clearly explain to participants the self-management, persistence skills, and any other non-academic or technical skills required for success in the program. CTE instructors and staff can help participants determine if they are ready for the program before they begin and then focus on the development of these skills during training. They can also implement student ambassador programs and peer-to-peer mentor programs to help communicate these requirements to prospective participants. Also, teachers and staff can help participants recognize and understand these [career readiness](#) skills and behaviors by providing concrete examples, and experiences such as informational interviews, short, well-organized job shadows, rotations through all aspects of an occupation.

**Clearly articulates requirements for successful transition from the pre-apprenticeship program to at least one apprenticeship program, including skills, credentials, and other aspects that ensure access to stable employment (such as a driver's license, fees, drug testing, or GED).**

Pre-apprenticeships are often the first step in a career pathway within an occupation or industry. CTE program instructors and staff provide post-graduation transition support through career





counseling, placement services, networking opportunities, and wraparound support while the participants are in the program. However, the most successful programs also explain from the beginning how the program serves as the foundation for the career pathway. Identifying and communicating these requirements gives participants the information they need to transition to apprenticeship. This can also help participants make informed choices about their future careers and ensure they don't miss any important steps in their training or employment

**Identifies and flags for participants which requirements, such as physical capabilities or absence of specific criminal convictions, cannot be overcome through program supports, and works with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to add accessibility by removing these barriers whenever possible.**

CTE programs may need to identify any barriers that could prevent participants from being hired into the occupations and industries for which they are training. Instructors and staff should identify barriers and help participants understand what they mean for their future goals. If participants might have trouble obtaining employment in a certain career, instructors and staff may need to help them identify a different one. When possible, programs should work with employers, workforce and education partners, community-based partners and the legal system to remove barriers that are in place.

Also, CTE programs should identify and communicate any physical requirements for the training and the careers connected to it. This includes assessing participants' comfort level with the physical aspects of a job and helping them determine if the occupation is the best fit. CTE programs should work with employers, apprenticeship sponsors, vocational rehabilitation, and community-based partners to provide accommodations to ensure that all young people can participate. The [Job Accommodation Network](#) is a free and expert resource on job accommodations and disability employment issues that CTE programs can leverage to support this work.



Programs should also work with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to ensure the program is as accessible as possible for everyone.

**Implements strategies to help participants address gaps in requirements for entry into an apprenticeship.**

Pre-apprenticeship programs should have clear strategies to help participants evaluate their starting point and monitor progress. This means helping them identify what skills they need, find gaps, and close them with real-world learning experiences. Many CTE programs use assessments like WorkKeys and the Test for Adult Basic Education to assess academic and technical skills. Teachers can then use benchmark exams throughout the program to ensure participants master the competencies necessary for a successful transition to an apprenticeship, employment, or continuing education. This can help identify where participants may need more help or time before they enter the program and while they progress through training.

## **Alignment with Skills Sought by Local Employers and High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs**

Pre-apprenticeship programs should integrate in-demand technical and employability skills that prepare participants for apprenticeships, while also providing the foundation for long-term career growth and development. CTE programs work with [industry partners](#)

to identify, design, and review CTE programs of study. This includes serving on formal advisory boards and committees. There, they can provide guidance on industry standards and credentials, and review program coursework to ensure the program is aligned with industry standards.

**Supports participants in acquiring employability skills such as teamwork, written communication, problem solving, initiative, flexibility, and reliability.**

### **CTE ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

CTE advisory boards or committees are an important part of developing CTE programs that meet the size, scope and quality definition outlined in Perkins V. The legislation encourages programs to develop quality standards that identify the skills and competencies students must achieve to gain industry-recognized credentials of value. CTE program advisory committees, which are generally comprised of business and industry representatives and faculty, use labor market information to develop the types of programs that will lead to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations.

In addition to basic academic skills, pre-apprenticeship programs should also address important personal and workplace success skills. These skills should be embedded into daily activities, and participants should be able to practice them in real-life situations. One common method CTE programs use is [Project-Based Learning](#), where students can collaborate in groups on projects to learn communication and teamwork skills. Other activities, such as role plays or practicing in simulations, can help participants learn to think critically and advocate for themselves when needed. It is helpful to involve employers and apprenticeship sponsors in these activities.

**Supports participants in acquiring sufficient skills and academic credentials for entry into a high-quality apprenticeship or an entry-level job with advancement potential in the industry.**

Using labor market information (LMI) to assess occupation demand is critical when designing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs and identifying the most in-demand and accessible career pathways. Data found in the CTE Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) can help justify the need for pre-apprenticeship programs and ensure that the programs lead to quality jobs. LMI can be accessed through state and local workforce boards and the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). CTE programs should also engage employers and RA sponsors to align pre-apprenticeship programs and curricula with industry needs.

**Aligns curriculum with a range of training and employment pathways.**

Successful pre-apprenticeship programs include training that connects participants to a range of training and employment pathways. They focus on providing both technical and employability skills and set the groundwork for more advanced technical skills needed for different career pathways. This approach can help CTE participants determine if RA is the right



## COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The **Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment** (CLNA) is a tool used to determine program needs, support, and funding for activities sponsored by eligible Perkins V institutions. The CLNA must have input from business and industry stakeholders, secondary and postsecondary institutions, community members and organizations, and workforce agencies that support economic growth. A critical component of this assessment is Labor Market Information. By using this data, stakeholders work to identify in-demand occupations and future growth in various workforce sectors that will meet the needs of the community. This process helps inform secondary and postsecondary educators on the types of programs needed and the necessary skills for students to be successful in the workplace. Also, it helps to highlight gaps within programs of study that do not include special populations as defined in Perkins V legislation. The assessment results are to be included in the eligible institutions' local application for Perkins participation, along with the strategies and activities designed to address gaps in the programs of study.

next step for them and, if not, what other options align with their goals. It is important for CTE programs to work with RA sponsors and partner with higher education and other training providers to ensure that credits earned in pre-apprenticeship programs provide credit toward higher education. Working with these partners helps design programs to give participants more choices after graduation.

### **Designs instruction and training to reach underserved populations.**

It is important that pre-apprenticeship programs are designed to work for everyone. CTE leaders can provide professional development and mentorship opportunities for instructors to learn how to teach in a way that gets everyone involved and excited about learning. Utilizing Universal Design for Learning strategies helps CTE instructors plan lessons and tests to meet all learners' needs. This helps instructors meet learners where they are and provides multiple strategies based on the individual's needs.

## **Culmination in One or More Industry-Recognized Credentials**

High-quality pre-apprenticeship programs allow participants to earn at least one industry-recognized credential or another short-term credential like OSHA 10. These credentials are typically stackable and portable to support a participant's growth along a career pathway. Stackable credentials are a series of certifications that can be earned over time and can move an individual along a career pathway.

**Facilitates earning credentials that support direct entry into the workforce, are aligned with labor-market demand, and are validated by regional or national employers or industry associations.**

LMI should be used to identify high-demand credentials. This is important because it ensures that the certificates participants

earn align with industry demand and will provide the greatest value and will transfer across occupations. Stakeholders from schools, colleges, workforce boards, and businesses should be included in CTE program advisory committees to identify and review credentials. LMI can be accessed through state and local workforce boards and the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

**Facilitates earning credentials that are stackable and portable.**

CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should ensure that participants can earn credentials that appeal to employers and secure pathways to advancement for them. Because CTE programs sit at the intersection of education and workforce, pre-apprenticeship programs within CTE are positioned to offer certificates that are [transferable and stackable](#). There are several types of credentials that can be stacked, including micro-credentials and industry credentials. Micro-credentials are usually earned through competency-based assessments where participants demonstrate skills in specific topic areas. Industry credentials typically involve demonstrating a broader set of skills by passing an exam. Stackable credentials can often serve in place of a college degree, which is helpful for young people who have not finished college. However, it is also important to ensure that CTE coursework counts toward college credit, so that the path from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship can also lead to getting a college degree.

**Facilitates earning credentials that prepare participants or align with the skills identified for training and curriculum.**

It is important that the credentials that participants earn align with what the industry and employers need. CTE programs should engage employers in the development process to ensure that the certificates earned in a high-quality pre-apprenticeship program will prepare young people for entry and success along a career pathway. They can help identify the credentials and certifications needed and provide input while designing





curriculum. Programs can also partner directly with credential providers, like the [American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute](#) and the [National Center for Construction Education & Research](#), to help ensure alignment between credentials and curriculum.

**Embeds preparation for earning industry-recognized credentials into the curriculum, including supports such as test delivery.**

High-quality pre-apprenticeship programs should not only prepare participants to earn industry-recognized credentials but should also support participants in the process of earning the [credential itself](#). Many industry-recognized credentials are obtained through third-party organizations. Program leaders should work with those providers to determine what accommodations are allowed for certification exams, and how these modifications meet participants' individualized education program requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, if applicable. Sometimes, obtaining a certificate can be expensive, especially if an individual needs more than one. JFF suggests that pre-apprenticeship program providers cover costs associated with credentials whenever possible and work with partners to do this.

## **Development of Skills Through Hands-On Activities and Work-Based Learning**

[Work-Based Learning](#) (WBL) is an important component of any successful training program, including CTE and pre-apprenticeship. It adds important value to these programs, leading to higher employee engagement, workplace satisfaction, and increased diversity and inclusion. Work-based learning helps participants by placing them in real work situations where they can build skills and are exposed to equipment and processes. Since WBL is a [core component of CTE](#), alignment with this element of a high-quality pre-apprenticeship happens naturally.

**Embeds hands-on activities into the curriculum, including work-based learning or on-the-job learning, that are relevant to the target occupation.**

Work-based learning should align with the work required for an occupation. It should also align with the program's overall curriculum and help participants develop skills they can use across many occupations. Employers play an [important role](#) in the design and development of WBL activities. They can identify and communicate what skills are needed, as well as host WBL opportunities. Work-based learning should prepare participants for many different training and occupation options and help them understand how different occupations are connected. Quality WBL also helps participants understand all aspects of the occupations and industry, including the workplace culture and what's expected of them.

**Structures hands-on activities to make clear what skills are gained, how they are validated, and how they can be applied in a future career.**

To increase the impact of WBL and help participants apply classroom learning to tasks in the real world, programs should include opportunities for reflection and career exposure. This helps participants understand what skills they are building and how they are connected to their long-term career and education goals.

Some effective strategies for embedding reflection activities into WBL include:

- Portfolios that track skill gains and credentials earned. JFF recommends that participants manage their own portfolios to develop ownership and responsibility.
- Work journals (written or video journals), reflective writing activities, and peer-to-peer discussions about what participants are learning.

**SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (SCSD)  
MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY  
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP**

**MACNY, The Manufacturers Association's** Apprenticeship Division established a **Manufacturing Technology pre-apprenticeship program** with the Syracuse City School District (SCSD) at Corcoran High School in Syracuse, NY. The program is open to any student in at least grade 9. For equitable opportunity, there are no minimum grade standards and no required letter of recommendation. All incoming grade 9 students are eligible to enroll in the program; there are 28 available seats and students are selected by lottery.

The SCSD designed the program's curriculum with input from several area manufacturers and MACNY members and it was certified by the New York State Education Department in 2021. The state of New York requires CTE programs to provide at least 54 hours of work-based learning. However, participants in the pre-apprenticeship program must attain at least 60 hours. To support participation in work-based learning, SCSD provides insurance waivers to employers to cover the liability of hosting participants under 18 and has modified schedules for seniors to spend their afternoons at on-the-job learning opportunities.

Beginning in grade 11, participants attend Onondaga Community College for classes such as Machine Tools I & II, Engineering Drawing, Freshman English, and OSHA-10 for General Industry. The pre-apprenticeship was designed so that graduates will have already satisfied some of the related instruction requirements of the Industrial Manufacturing Technician occupation should they pursue Registered Apprenticeship. In addition to direct entry to Registered Apprenticeship, the pre-apprenticeship also offers a pathway to earning an associate of applied science degree in Mechanical Technology from Onondaga Community College.



- Engagement with employers who can help them connect skills to specific occupations.
- Using existing career exploration tools such as O\*Net and Career OneStop.

**Structures hands-on activities in a classroom, worksite, or lab to be experiential, problem-based, and designed with input from employers and apprenticeship sponsors.**

High-quality WBL focuses on hands-on and problem-based learning and includes input from employers and RA sponsors. JFF suggests that pre-apprenticeship programs should involve employers as planners, instructors, and investors so that participants are prepared for various occupations. CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should engage employers to support program alignment with industry needs. This allows employers to work with participants and see how valuable young workers can be to the workforce, and the practices needed to create safe, positive, and supportive work environments. It also helps participants connect with employers so they can learn more about different occupations available and make useful connections for the future.

**Prioritizes opportunities for work-based learning, in which the participant completes meaningful job tasks in a workplace.**

It is important that WBL take place in actual workplace settings because it helps participants build professional relationships, understand different career paths, and learn in-demand skills. WBL that occurs at a worksite also supports career exploration and helps participants connect their classroom learning to real-world applications. If worksite experiences are unavailable, CTE programs can use [simulated WBL](#) to mimic real job tasks. This can be helpful for participants who cannot easily get to job sites because of where they live or face barriers such as lack of resources, or transportation to participate in WBL activities.

**Uses work-based learning to develop participants' understanding and ability to navigate company and industry culture, as well as specific position functions and workplace policies and procedures.**

Work-based learning is a critical career exploration component. It provides opportunities for participants to experience an occupation and decide if it's a pathway they want to pursue. They can also see how occupations in the same industry are different. Work-based learning also helps participants understand the full experience of working in a specific industry. They learn about workplace policies and procedures, and how to navigate human resources and other supports that may be available.

## **Providing Academic, Career Exploration, and Wraparound Supports**

High-quality pre-apprenticeship programs provide participants with strong support in academics, career exploration, and other wraparound service areas. They ensure these are at the heart of the program, blending classroom learning with real-world job skills to help participants transition to and complete an RA program successfully.

CTE programs can include several important program elements to support participants, like help with training, school counseling, on-the-job learning, and information about different industries and career paths, including wages and opportunities for advancement.

CTE programs often have the resources to provide participants with academic support to prepare them for the next step in their training and transportation support to and from work-based learning sites. They can also work with internal and external partners to ensure participants have access to mental health services, child care, housing, and food so they can focus on their studies.







**Offers orientation to the industry and exposure to a range of occupations, career paths, wages, and information about job opportunities.**

Career exploration and exposure activities are important to help participants map a career pathway beyond entry-level positions. Pre-apprenticeships should support participants in creating a plan that includes both short- and long-term goals, including dealing with any challenges that might come up.

CTE programs work with each student to make a personalized [education and career plan](#). This plan reflects the student's interests, abilities, and goals, including career exploration and exposure activities. They should include exploring what skills, credentials, and continuing education are required to enter and advance. They can also include interviews, career fairs, job shadows, short internships, and industry or alumni guest speakers.

**Supports exploration of postsecondary credential options aligned with career interests.**

While pre-apprenticeships usually lead to registered apprenticeships (RA), they should also show participants other pathways available after training. In CTE programs, participants often have chances to earn college credits that count toward further education. This could be by taking early college classes while still in high school, or by earning stackable credentials. CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should work with colleges and other training providers to ensure credits earned can be used toward further education.

To help participants understand all next possible steps after pre-apprenticeship, CTE programs can offer opportunities to visit college campuses or for college staff as guest speakers. They can also provide opportunities for participants to participate in college and career events or have people from colleges speak in their classrooms.

**Supports participants in developing a career plan identifying short- and long-term goals, including potential barriers and possible solutions.**

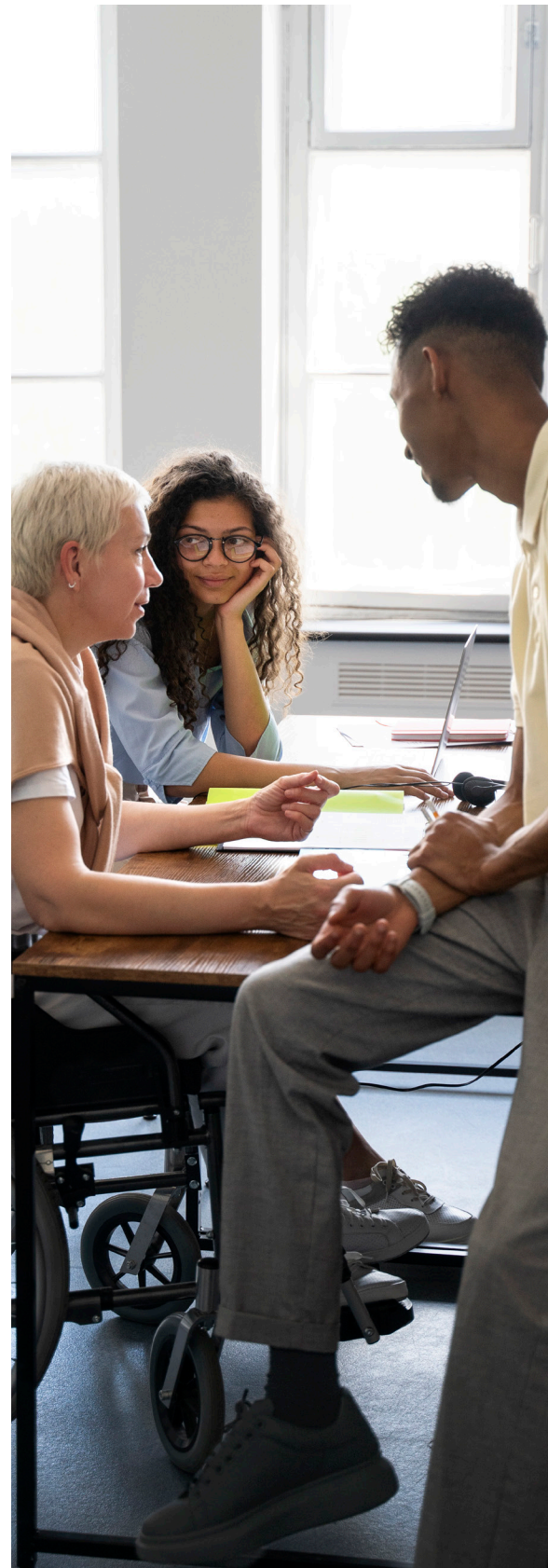
In high-quality CTE programs of study, students develop a personalized, multi-year [education and career plan](#) that fits their interests and goals. CTE pre-apprenticeship programs can help participants overcome challenges and prepare for long-term success. They can do this by providing mentors and career coaches, career exploration support, on-the-job learning, and opportunities to meet people and build connections with a professional network. Other helpful practices include alumni engagement, job readiness services such as resume building and mock interviews, career fairs, student portfolios, and financial literacy workshops.

**Provides wraparound supports such as tutoring and case management, including access to resources for child care, mental health, transportation, and housing.**

Wraparound support services can help participants close skill gaps, support career advancement, and provide a supportive environment to complete their training. These services also help participants persist through their training and enter their chosen career path by providing more on-ramps and ongoing engagement. These services can include child care, housing, and transportation assistance, connecting participants with mental health or health care services, mentorship, and case management. Programs can offer these services in-house or partner with local community-based organizations and agencies to ensure participants have all the support they need.

Specific strategies that CTE programs can include are:

- Provide 1:1 tutoring.
- Offering supplemental courses.
- Transitional employment support.



## WEST LINN-WILSONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT HEALTHCARE PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Riverside High School within the West Linn-Wilsonville (WLWV) School district in Tualatin, OR developed a health care pre-apprenticeship within the Health Occupations CTE program. The health care pre-apprenticeship at Riverside High School allows participants to explore the health care industry as a potential career path and prepare participants for a Medical Assistant (MA) or Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Registered Apprenticeship. The program is open to any high school first-year student in the CTE Health Occupation program. Participants are supported by their health occupations teacher and school counselor to meet these requirements.

The Riverside High School health care pre-apprenticeship has built in a work-based learning component that includes a lab that mimics a medical care setting and includes numerous hospital beds, simulated training kits (Digestion, kidneys, concussion kits, geriatric simulator, IV training arms), CPR manikins, and health care equipment. It also includes access to interactive training technology that models body systems and medical math. Participants are involved in work-based learning in the classroom and at community partners' facilities.

To ensure the program aligns with the necessary skills to enter the Certified Nursing Assistant or Medical Assistant Apprenticeship programs, WLWV engages industry partners within their CTE advisory group, and the CTE program is taught by a registered nurse. Participants who complete the pre-apprenticeship program earn pre-apprenticeship and First Aid/CPR certificates.

Participants explore the different occupations and various entry points into the health care profession and can connect with many industry partners through class talks, career tours, and job shadows. Those who complete this pre-apprenticeship program are automatically eligible to interview for the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Apprenticeship with Long Term Care Works and rank higher in the application for the Medical Assistant Apprenticeship with Allied West

- Provide access to the required technology and hardware (computers, software, etc.).
- Stipends or scholarships.
- Transportation, child care, housing, health services, living stipends.
- Connecting participants to other service providers as needed.

## Transition Into a Registered Apprenticeship or Other High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs

A high-quality pre-apprenticeship program connects to registered apprenticeships or other high-quality apprenticeship programs. When the partnership between pre-apprenticeship and RA sponsors is formalized, it confirms that participants will earn the skills required to enter the apprenticeship. In the final phases of their programs, CTE pre-apprenticeship programs can help participants prepare for life after graduation. This could include continuing to build employability skills, resume building, interview preparation, mentoring, and providing ongoing case management services. They should also point participants toward all the various paths that are available after training. This is especially helpful for those who finish pre-apprenticeships but aren't ready for a Registered Apprenticeship yet or want to keep learning instead.

### **Partners with industry, employers, unions, intermediaries, and the public workforce system to facilitate placements.**

Participants need to have support when they complete their training and move on to their next steps. Partnerships with different groups like employers, unions, workforce intermediaries, and public workforce partners are key for this transition. Career and Technical Education (Perkins V) sits at

a [unique crossroads](#) that connects education and workforce development systems at the local, state, and national levels.

CTE programs can offer extra support through [Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) programming when they partner with local workforce boards. This can give eligible CTE students more support and help to connect them to employers. This can include covering some of the on-the-job and/or classroom training costs.

Some employers might be unsure about working with young people because they worry it might be too risky or may need too much support. However, strong partnerships with CTE programs can show them the valuable skills and knowledge young adults bring, and how hiring them can positively impact a business or industry. CTE programs should involve these partners in the development process from the start to show them the benefits of pre-apprenticeship. It's also a good idea to connect these partners to student ambassadors to discuss their goals and help shape the program.

**Works with program sponsors to determine their form of selection preference for program graduates, such as guaranteed interviews or direct entry into a high-quality apprenticeship.**

To ensure participants can transition smoothly from a pre-apprenticeship to a RA program, CTE pre-apprenticeship programs should fully understand the entry requirements and selection criteria of apprenticeship programs. They should design their programs with these requirements in mind.

It's also important for programs to make sure there are formal agreements and memorandums of understanding (MOU) in place for hiring and placing participants in jobs and apprenticeships. They should establish the number of participants hired after they finish their pre-apprenticeship program. In states with official pre-apprenticeship programs, these agreements between RA sponsors and employers are often required.





**Connects program graduates who do not enter an apprenticeship to a postsecondary education and training option, or an employer in a related field for an interview.**

JFF suggests that pre-apprenticeship programs make clear connections to other continuing pathways available to them in addition to RA. This can provide participants who are interested in apprenticeships with more options, and those who need an employment right away will have access to job placements.

CTE programs can also help participants connect with colleges by creating articulation agreements with higher education institutions. This will allow participants to earn college credit while through the pre-apprenticeship program.

## **Conclusion**

Many CTE programs already implement the six essentials for high-quality pre-apprenticeship. Employers are engaged to ensure that coursework prepares participants for entry into in-demand occupations and is aligned with current industry standards. Participants experience hands-on activities, in addition to classroom learning. CTE participants can often earn college credits and certificates that prepare them for direct employment or continuing to higher education.

The strategies in this framework are suggestions to strengthen the connection between CTE and registered apprenticeships (RA) and to use the opportunities that are already part of the CTE system. It's also a guide for anyone who wants to create new pre-apprenticeship programs within CTE programs.

## Resources to Support the Design of High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeships within CTE

- JFF [Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) (2020)
- JFF: [Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program: IT](#) (2020)
- JFF: [Work-Based Learning Framework](#) (2018)
- JFF: [Program Design Framework for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Registered Apprenticeship](#) (2022)
- Association of Career and Technical Education: [ACTE Quality CTE Program of Study Framework](#) (2018)
- Advance CTE: [Opportunities for Connecting Secondary Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Students and Apprenticeship Programs](#) (2017)
- US Department of Labor: Training and Employment Notice No. 23-23: Quality [Apprenticeship](#) (2024)





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