

TECHNICAL EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM REPORT

for Allen County



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The Don Wood Foundation is a private foundation, established in 2018 by Don Wood, founder of 80/20, Inc., that serves and supports innovators, leaders, collaborators, and skilled workers with the potential to create and sustain opportunities in manufacturing. The Foundation partners with non-profits and educational institutions to provide sustained investment that supports the development of a diverse workforce through exposure, education, and training to create strong communities rooted in the advancement of manufacturing. Visit donwoodfoundation.org and follow Don Wood Foundation on LinkedIn and Facebook.

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TPMA empowers organizations and communities through strategic partnerships and informed solutions that create positive, sustainable change. For community champions who are loyal to improving local and regional economic outcomes, TPMA provides professional consulting services and delivers transparent insights to the complete workforce, education, and economic development ecosystem that allows them to move forward, together. TPMA envisions a world that thinks strategically, works collaboratively, and acts sustainably. Visit tpma-inc.com and follow TPMA on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

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Technical Education Ecosystem Report

for Allen County

The Don Wood Foundation, dedicated to the growth and strengthening of the manufacturing industry in northeast Indiana, initiated a study in 2023 to evaluate the technical education ecosystem in Allen County. The aim was to discern the successes, challenges, and areas ripe for funding allocation in technical education. Collaborating with Ambassador Enterprises, a Fort Wayne-based equity firm committed to community impact projects, and TPMA, known for its expertise in technical education research and analysis, the project team set out to assess how these educational programs align with local employer demands and community needs. TPMA's comprehensive assessment focused on the benefits of technical education in equipping students with employability skills, technical knowledge, and necessary training for current and future workforce demands.

The study involved a detailed analysis of career and technical education (CTE) data from Allen County's four public school districts (East Allen County Schools, Fort Wayne Community Schools, Northwest Allen County Schools, and Southwest Allen County Schools) and interviews with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including employers, higher education institutions, and public and private high school administrators and students. This multifaceted approach provides a holistic view of the CTE landscape, capturing varied perspectives on the effectiveness and impact of current programs.

Below is an overview of the key findings during the analysis of the current CTE ecosystem in Allen County, highlighting both the strengths and areas for improvement. Addressing these findings through targeted actions and policies can significantly enhance the effectiveness and reach of technical education in the region, aligning it more closely with the needs and opportunities of the local economy and its workforce.

- 01. UNIQUE REGIONAL EXAMPLE:** The Grow Allen initiative stands out as a beacon of comprehensive career path development. This initiative, unique in its approach, has successfully rallied support from all four public school districts in Allen County. Its broad acceptance before implementation signifies a collective commitment to enhancing career readiness and opportunities for students across the region. The initiative's strategic focus on aligning educational pathways with local labor market trends foster a workforce that will be well-prepared to meet the region's economic needs.
- 02. CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS AT FORT WAYNE CAREER ACADEMY:** The Fort Wayne Career Academy, though a vital part of the CTE landscape, faces a significant challenge in meeting the growing demand for CTE education. Serving only about 6% of high school students in the county, the academy's limited capacity highlights a pressing need to expand CTE offerings. This constraint is further accentuated by the implementation of Graduation Pathways, which has increased the demand for diverse CTE options. The limited capacity of the Career Academy necessitates exploring alternate avenues and expanding existing programs to ensure broader accessibility for students seeking technical education.
- 03. LOW ENROLLMENT IN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING COURSES:** Despite the prominence of the manufacturing sector in Allen County's economy, enrollment in advanced manufacturing CTE courses is surprisingly low, accounting for only 1.9% of the total CTE student body. This gap points to a potential misalignment between the county's economic drivers and the focus of its technical education programs. Addressing this mismatch is crucial for cultivating a workforce that can support one of the county's key industries and for providing students with relevant skills for future employment.
- 04. UNDERREPRESENTATION OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS:** The study reveals that only a small fraction (2.2%) of CTE students are living at or below the federal poverty level. This low representation is concerning, given the potential of CTE programs to provide pathways to high-wage, high-demand jobs. It suggests the need for more targeted outreach and support mechanisms to ensure that CTE programs are accessible and appealing to students from all economic backgrounds, particularly those who might benefit most from these opportunities.
- 05. INNOVATIVE EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP:** The collaboration between Allen County school districts (SACS, NACS, FWCS) and Plumbers and Steamfitters, and HVAC Service Technicians of Local 166 is a standout example of effective employer involvement in the CTE ecosystem. This collaboration offers students hands-on training and work-based learning experiences directly linked to employer needs, serving as a model for how employer engagement can significantly enhance the quality and relevance of CTE programs.
- 06. PERCEPTION VS. REALITY OF COLLEGE CTE CREDITS:** A critical finding is the disconnect between the perceived and actual value of college credits earned through CTE courses. While schools, students, and parents view these credits as a significant advantage for post-high school career and educational pursuits, colleges and employers often do not share this perception. This discrepancy raises questions about the messaging around the benefits of CTE credits and suggests the need for clearer communication and alignment between high school CTE programs, postsecondary and workforce expectations.

Overview of Recommendations:

Below are recommendations for aligning Allen County's CTE programs more closely with the needs of the modern workforce and the economic realities of the region.

Prioritize Industry-Recognized Certifications over College Credits in CTE Courses.

Shift the focus of CTE programs towards industry-recognized certifications that are known to have a direct impact on employability instead of focusing on CTE college credits that are not broadly understood by employers. Ensure these certifications are included in the Graduation Pathways approved list, thus fulfilling Box 3 graduation requirements, and enhancing students' job prospects.

Increase enrollment capacity for CTE students outside of the FWCS system.

Particularly due to the new requirement for students to submit a "Letter of Intent to Enlist" to use ASVAB scores for graduation requirements, there's an urgent need to expand CTE enrollment capacity beyond Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS). With 76% of Fort Wayne Career Academy's seats currently occupied by FWCS students, the remaining capacity must be divided among students from all other Allen County schools, exacerbating the challenge of accommodating the growing interest in CTE. Cost, proximity, and transportation further complicate access to CTE training. There is a critical need for a strategic approach for equitable access and alignment with evolving educational and workforce requirements.

Provide students with career coaching to aid them in selecting a pathway that matches their goals and interests, preparing them for enrollment, employment, or enlistment.

Enhancing career coaching for high school students in Allen County is essential for directing them towards career paths that not only match their aspirations and interests but also meet the needs of the local job market. The inclusion of industry professionals as career coaches adds a layer of practicality and relatability to the coaching process. It offers students the chance to start building professional networks early and gain insights from mentors experienced in their fields of interest, making career exploration a more enriching and impactful experience.

Actively Involve Employers in the CTE Ecosystem.

Use the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 166 partnership as a benchmark for integrating employers into the CTE ecosystem. This partnership exemplifies how employer involvement can elevate the quality of training and work-based learning opportunities. Encourage other businesses and industries to form similar partnerships with schools, offering students hands-on experience and insights into the workforce. This could involve internships, mentorship programs, or collaborative curriculum development.

Implement Youth Apprenticeship Programs.

Look to successful models like NE INFAME and Marion County's Modern Apprenticeship Program (MAP) for guidance on implementing youth apprenticeship programs in Allen County. Explore funding opportunities, such as those offered by Ascend Indiana's accelerator program, to establish these apprenticeships. These programs blend classroom learning with on-the-job training, providing students with a comprehensive skill set.

Equip Students with Future-Ready Skills.

Focus on equipping students with a blend of technical expertise, adaptability, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. These skills are essential for success in rapidly evolving industries. Adopt and promote programs like Junior Achievement 3DE, which use problem-based curricula to develop these future-ready skills. Such programs prepare students to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing job market.

Key Takeaway: Embrace Collaborative Decision-Making.

It is imperative for stakeholders in Allen County — including educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and community organizations — to take decisive and collaborative action. Using the Grow Allen model facilitates the collaboration of Allen County's four public school systems, local businesses, and non-profit organizations. This joint effort promotes strategic investments in educational programs, strengthens partnerships between schools and industries, and underscores a commitment to offering equitable and effective educational pathways for every student. Finally, ensure that private high schools are at the table as a collaborator.

CONCLUSION

The transformation of the Career and Technical Education ecosystem must be prioritized to meet the evolving demands of the local economy and ensure that youth are equipped with necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities to thrive in the workforce. The future economic health of Allen County and the success of the next generation depend on the ability to respond to these challenges with innovation, commitment, and a shared vision. Joining forces can make Allen County a model of excellence in technical education and workforce development.

Career and Technical Education Overview

The landscape of CTE education has undergone significant changes in the past few years, mainly due to Indiana passing multiple pieces of legislation. The following sections provide an overview of these changes and conclude with a summary of some of the key aspects of the legislation. With the goal of collectively strengthening the bridge between high school education and the workforce, these legislative efforts collectively emphasize work-based learning experiences and expanding opportunities for earning academic credits through nontraditional learning experiences. It also ensures the safety and protection of students in work-based learning settings. Additionally, they introduce novel concepts like the Career Scholarship Account, which offers financial support and career planning resources to eligible students, thereby facilitating a more targeted and efficient approach to career readiness.

The integration of recent legislative changes with Indiana's Graduation Pathways requirements is a key focus, underscoring the mandate for students to demonstrate a variety of skills and competencies to earn their diploma. This holistic educational approach, which merges academic achievement with employability skills and postsecondary readiness, is a deliberate effort to equip students for the varied challenges of the contemporary world. Furthermore, the combined impact of these legislative and educational shifts is explored, revealing their contribution towards creating an adaptive, relevant, and student-centered CTE framework in Allen County.



Key Definitions

Next Level Programs of Study:

One significant component of the technical education ecosystem in Indiana is the Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS). Launched by Indiana's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) in the 2022-2023 school year, NLPS aims to enhance the consistency, quality, and intentional instruction of CTE throughout the state.¹ NLPS encompasses a range of courses and pathways, known as CTE concentrators, designed to equip students with the skills and competencies necessary for success in various career fields. These programs of study undergo vetting by education and industry leaders to ensure alignment and quality, and they must offer students an opportunity to earn a credential of value. For a program of study to qualify as the CTE concentrator requirement for Box 3 of Indiana's Graduation Pathways, a student must complete at least three courses within the same program of study: a principles course, a concentrator A course, and a concentrator B course.² While not mandatory for graduation, participation in a high-quality work-based learning (WBL) experience at the conclusion of the program is strongly encouraged as it provides students with a chance to apply their skills and knowledge in real-world situations.

CTE Funding Designations for High Schools:

CTE funding for high schools in Indiana is categorized into three levels of value: high, moderate, and less than moderate. This funding is known as Form 30A reimbursement funding. These designations are based on the demand and wage potential of occupations associated with CTE courses at the state level.³ However, it should be noted that these designations may not align with the actual labor market demand in Allen County. Despite potential misalignment, these value designations determine the amount of CTE funding that is allocated to schools in the county, which may influence the courses offered by these schools. Private schools such as Bishop Dwenger High School neither have access to this CTE reimbursement funding from the state, nor any other state funding for CTE.

Credentials of Value:

In the context of high school CTE students, "credentials of value" refer to nondegree credentials that validate job-relevant skills.⁴ These credentials, including college credits, technical certificates from Indiana colleges, and industry-recognized certifications, are increasingly significant in the technical education landscape because they provide students with a means to acquire and demonstrate competencies directly applicable to the labor market. Currently, there is a heightened emphasis on the importance of credentials of value for Indiana's high school students, with the Indiana Department of Education recognizing the increased access to high-value postsecondary credentials, and the number of students earning these credentials as a key area of focus in their comprehensive approach to rethinking the high school experience.⁵

InTERS Data:

The Indiana Technical Education Reporting System (InTERS) serves as the platform for collecting and managing data related to CTE, which is subsequently reported to Vocational and Technical Education for the Federal Report.⁶ This system plays a pivotal role in tracking student progress, evaluating program effectiveness, and ensuring compliance with federal reporting requirements. School districts across the state are required to upload their CTE data into InTERS annually through the completion of Form 30A, which is a document of record stating the number of students enrolled in each CTE course and the associated number of credits.⁷ The majority of the CTE data presented in this report was directly sourced from the InTERS system for the 2022-2023 school year, providing an up-to-date and accurate depiction of the technical education ecosystem in Allen County. It should be noted, however, that private schools (e.g., Bishop Dwenger High School, Bishop Luers High School, and Concordia Lutheran High School) do not submit a Form 30A since they are not eligible for CTE reimbursement funding and are, therefore, not included in the following CTE data analysis. Administrators, guidance counselors, and students from these private high schools were interviewed as part of the stakeholder engagement process for this study, and the data from those interviews is included in subsequent sections of this report.

1 - Governor's Workforce Cabinet. Career Pathways / Programs of Study. <https://www.in.gov/gwc/cte/career-pathways-programs-of-study/>

2 - Office of Career and Technical Education. Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) Overview.

https://www.in.gov/gwc/cte/files/NLPS-Review-Doc-w-Competencies_21-22-SY.pdf

3 - Indiana Department of Workforce Development. SY 22/23 Career & Technical Education Program Categorizations and Funding Recommendations. <https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/Changes-to-the-2022-23-CTE-Funding-Memo-Recommendations.pdf>

4 - National Conference of State Legislators. Credentials of Value. <https://www.ncsl.org/education/credentials-of-value>

5 - Indiana Department of Education. Indiana Department of Education Outlines Plan to Rethink the High School Experience.

<https://www.in.gov/doe/about/news/indiana-department-of-education-outlines-plan-to-rethink-the-high-school-experience/>

6 - Governor's Workforce Cabinet. InTERS/Performance and Accountability. <https://www.in.gov/gwc/cte/intersperformance-and-accountability/>

7 - Central Indiana Corporate Partnership. Career and Technical Education in the State of Indiana.

<https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/CTE-in-the-State-of-Indiana-Final.pdf>

Graduation Pathways

The modernization and refinement of CTE is critical as schools fully implement and roll out Indiana's Graduation Pathways. This includes a focus on more closely aligning CTE programs with the needs of employers and the career goals of students.

Prior to the implementation of Graduation Pathways, to earn an Indiana High School Diploma, students were required to meet two requirements:

1. Meet course and credit requirements; and
2. Pass the Graduation Qualifying Exams (GQE) in English and math.

The Indiana State Board of Education approved new graduation requirements, known as the Graduation Pathways, in 2018, with the Class of 2023 being the first group of high school students required to follow them⁸.

However, beginning with the class of 2019, high schools were given the option to "opt in" students from the classes of 2019-2022 to the newly established graduation requirements⁹, commonly referred to as Graduation Pathways, detailed in the table below. This transitional approach provided high schools with a few years to adapt and prepare for the change in requirements. Additionally, it offered more students the opportunity to benefit from these new educational offerings, ensuring a smoother shift to the updated graduation framework.

Starting with the class of 2023, all Indiana high school students are now required to fulfill three key criteria to graduate. These criteria, known as "boxes," include earning the necessary credits for a high school diploma, demonstrating employability skills, and exhibiting postsecondary-ready competencies¹⁰.

Within each of these boxes, students have a variety of options, or "pathways," to meet the respective requirement. It is important to note that Graduation Pathways do not specifically refer to career or college tracks; rather, they encompass the diverse methods and options students can choose to fulfill these three graduation criteria. The following table provides a detailed overview of the available pathways within each graduation requirement box.

Most students who are enrolled in CTE courses in Allen County are pursuing the "career technical education concentrator" pathway or the "dual credit" pathway in Box 3, though several students are choosing to use the "honors diploma" pathway instead. Notably, two private high schools in the county, Bishop Dwenger and Concordia Lutheran High School, have adopted a locally created pathway that focuses on careers in Fine Arts for some of their CTE students. To be recognized as fulfilling the Box 3 requirement, these locally created pathways must receive approval from the Indiana State Board of Education. Finally, it should be noted that FWCS also uses the Fine Arts pathway, because once it is approved, a locally created pathway can be used by any high school in the State.

8 - <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/INDOE/bulletins/1e85888>

9 - Meeting Indiana's Graduation Exam Requirements. Indiana Department of Education. <https://www.in.gov/doi/files/ways-meet-gqe-or-grad-pathways-req-2018-19-final.pdf>

10 - <https://www.in.gov/doi/files/Grad-Pathways-Flyer.pdf>

OVERVIEW OF GRADUATION PATHWAYS AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS

BOX	OVERVIEW
High School Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Diploma ○ Core 40 Diploma ○ Academic Honors Diploma ○ Technical Honors Diploma
Employability Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completion of a project-based learning experience ○ Completion of a service-based learning experience ○ Completion of a work-based learning experience
Postsecondary Ready Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Honors diploma ○ ACT or SAT ○ Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) ○ State- and industry-recognized credential or certification ○ State-, federal-, or industry-recognized apprenticeship ○ Career technical education concentrator ○ AP/international baccalaureate/ dual credit/Cambridge International courses or College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exam ○ Locally created pathway*

*Locally created pathways refer to competencies and/or assessments determined at the local level, extending beyond the existing postsecondary readiness competencies. Locally created pathways serve as indicators that a student possesses the essential knowledge and skills required for success beyond high school.

Recent CTE Legislation

The following legislation passed by the State of Indiana is reshaping the way high school education, particularly CTE, aligns with the dynamic needs of the job market and the career aspirations of students. At the heart of this transformation is a series of legislative measures, including House Enrolled Acts 1549, 1094, 1002, Senate Enrolled Act 196, and House Bill 1635, each playing a pivotal role in redefining and enhancing the CTE ecosystem. Below is a summary of each of these key pieces of CTE legislation.

House Enrolled Act 1549 (2020) is instrumental in strengthening the connection between employers and educational institutions. By directing the Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Education, and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to provide guidance and resources on postsecondary enrollment opportunities with work-based learning experiences, this bill helps CTE centers align their programs with the needs of employers. This initiative empowers CTE centers to offer more robust work-based learning opportunities, ensuring that students are well-prepared for future careers.

Senate Enrolled Act 196 (2020) further supports CTE centers by streamlining the process for students to obtain credit for non-school educational experiences. This simplification encourages students to engage in additional learning experiences outside traditional classrooms, including those offered by CTE centers. It recognizes the value of experiential learning and allows students to receive academic credit for their participation in CTE programs, fostering a more dynamic and comprehensive education.

House Enrolled Act 1094 (2022)¹¹ demonstrates the state's commitment to ensuring the safety and protection of high school students involved in work-based learning courses. The legislation mandates that employers purchase adequate liability and worker's compensation insurance coverage, and that the employer is responsible for covering any associated costs. By providing a clear framework for employer liability and insurance coverage, this bill alleviates concerns and challenges related to the hiring of youth under the age of 18. Currently, there is no option for state-sponsored insurance coverage. CTE centers benefit from this legislation as it encourages more employers to participate in work-based learning opportunities, thereby expanding the range of options available to students.

11 - Indiana, Public Law 140. IC 20-20-38.5 §2. (2022) HEA 1094

House Enrolled Act 1002 (2023)¹² offers significant benefits to CTE programs, expanding work-based learning opportunities and college and career awareness for high school and postsecondary students. A main component of House Enrolled Act 1002 (HEA 1002) is the Indiana Career Scholarship Account (CSA) program which provides financial support for students enrolled in eligible postsecondary education, training, and certifications, reducing barriers for students. These eligible courses or education experiences include apprenticeships, applied learning experience, work-based learning, and credentials attainment. The CSA funds can be used by students to cover expenses related to career coaching, postsecondary education and training, transportation, equipment, as well as certification and credentialing examinations. This innovative approach to CTE funding provides \$5,000 annually to eligible 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students at an Indiana public or private school.

To start, students with a CSA will meet with an intermediary—an organization facilitating connections between individuals and companies seeking new talent. This intermediary plays a crucial role by guiding students in developing a personalized plan aligned with their chosen career path. The intermediary could be an employer offering a joint CTE program, a facilitator for modern youth apprenticeships, or a college awarding the Indiana College Core (ICC).

The intermediary serves as the bridge connecting students to essential support services, communicating with both students and their schools. In this collaborative effort, the sending school takes responsibility for providing the CTE curriculum, while the employer contributes through on-the-job training and skill evaluation. This integrated approach ensures a cohesive and comprehensive experience for students.

Students currently enrolled in a CTE program are ineligible for CSAs. However, they can still participate in local CTE centers, ensuring they maintain access to valuable hands-on learning experiences. Although CTE centers at public schools can serve as scholarship account providers, they do not receive CTE grants for students with scholarship accounts.

House Bill 1635 (2023) addresses the use of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery exam (ASVAB) as a graduation qualification and requires that any student using a score on the ASVAB to graduate to also submit a form affirming their intent to enlist in the military. Additionally, the Indiana State Board of Education is mandated to review and update guidance on using the ASVAB for graduation, and schools are not permitted to require students to use any qualification, including the military exam, to graduate. These provisions seek to ensure that the use of the ASVAB as a graduation pathway aligns with students' career goals and provides a diverse range of options for college and career readiness.

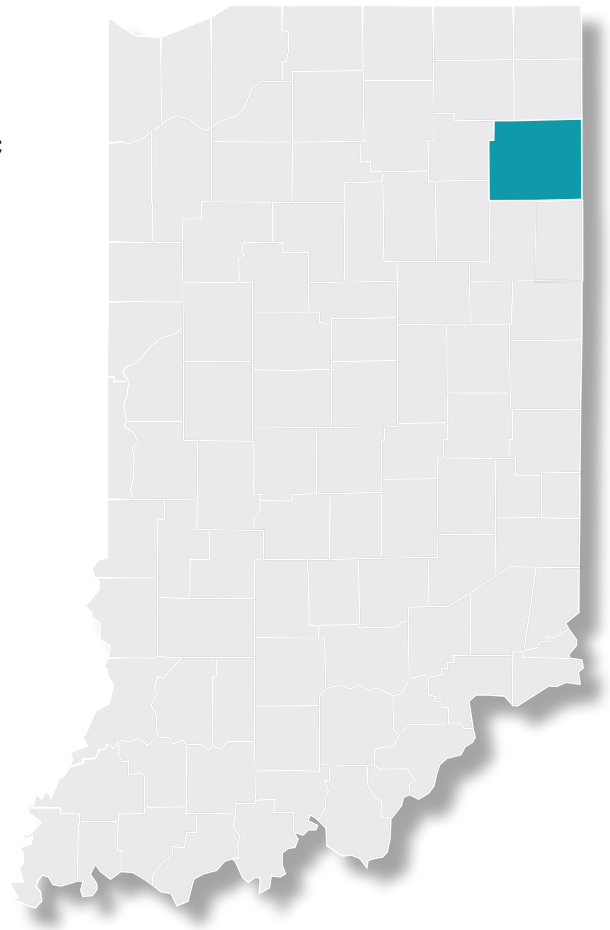
12 - Indiana. Public Law 202. IC 5-34-1-7 § 6 (2023). HEA 1002: Sec. 6.



Technical Education in Allen County

The technical education ecosystem in Allen County, Indiana, is a complex and dynamic entity, influenced by statewide initiatives, funding structures, credentialing systems, and data reporting mechanisms. A deep understanding of these factors is essential for accurately interpreting technical education data within the county, which in turn supports strategic decision-making in program development, resource allocation, and policy implementation.

This section explores the diverse range of CTE offerings available in Allen County, evaluating how they align with the state's labor market demands. It also focuses on the involvement of students living below the federal poverty level in the technical education framework and investigates the frequency of students earning college credits before completing high school.



Baseline Data

Table 1 presented below summarizes the enrollment numbers of students from Allen County public high schools in CTE courses at their respective high schools during the 2022-2023 academic year. This data is derived from the September 2023 InTERS Form 30A report. Be aware that students enrolled in multiple CTE courses within the same academic year are counted multiple times, which can result in an enrollment percentage greater than 100% in some instances, as observed at New Haven High School.

TABLE 1: ALLEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CTE ENROLLMENT SY2022-2023

	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	# OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CTE	% OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CTE
ALLEN COUNTY TOTAL	20,535	26,651	129.8%
East Allen County Schools	4,628	5,745	124.1%
East Allen University	302	321	106.3%
Heritage Jr/Sr High School	737	878	119.1%
Leo Jr / Sr High School	1,368	1,298	94.9%
New Haven High School	1,494	2,446	163.7%
Woodlan Jr/Sr High School	727	802	110.3%
Fort Wayne Community Schools	8,351	13,640	163.3%
North Side High School	1,474	1,713	116.2%
Northrop High School	2,136	3,792	177.5%
R Nelson Snider High School	1,899	3,134	165.0%
South Side High School	1,423	2,218	155.9%
Wayne High School	1,419	2,783	196.1%
Northwest Allen County Schools	2,557	2,122	83.0%
Carroll High School	2,557	2,122	83.0%
Southwest Allen County Schools	2,548	2,829	111.0%
ESACS Virtual School	78	67	85.9%
Homestead High School	2,470	2,762	111.8%
Fort Wayne Career Academy	--	2,315	--
Private High Schools	2,451		
Bishop Dwenger High School	927		
Bishop Luers High School	504		
Concordia Lutheran High School	610		
Blackhawk Christian High School	410		

NOTE: students enrolled in multiple CTE courses within the same academic year are counted multiple times, which can result in an enrollment percentage greater than 100%.

Students from all high schools in Allen County, including those enrolled in private institutions, can attend the Fort Wayne Career Academy (formerly known as the Anthis Career Center) for half of the school day to participate in CTE classes. The 2,315 CTE students associated with the Fort Wayne Career Academy, as detailed in Table 1, encompass attendees from a variety of high schools and districts across the county. However, Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) oversees the Fort Wayne Career Academy, resulting in a significant portion of its available slots being reserved for FWCS students. Consequently, the remaining seats for students from other school districts within Allen County, as well as those from private high schools and homeschooling backgrounds, are comparatively limited.

CTE Offerings in Allen County

Table 2 represents the distribution of students across different CTE programs of study in Allen County. The courses included in this data were only ones that qualified for CTE funding at the high value, moderate value, or less than moderate value funding designations and therefore do not include introductory, career exploration, pilot, or work-based learning (WBL) courses.

These pathways are categorized into three value levels: high, moderate, and less than moderate. The value levels are determined based on the demand and wage potential of jobs in the corresponding industries at a state level. High value pathways prepare students for high-demand, high-wage jobs, while less than moderate value pathways correspond to industries with lower demand or wage potential. Importantly, the value level also influences the funding that schools receive for these courses, with more funding allocated to high value pathways. Below is a more detailed explanation of how these designations are determined:

- The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) used the IN Demand Ranking methodology to evaluate demand and wage for occupations associated with CTE courses per IC 20-43-8.¹³ Each occupation was evaluated on a decile scoring system across five variables, which was then summarized to equate to an overall value (known as a Flame Threshold) of between 0.00 and 5.00. This was the same methodology that was used and adopted by the SBOE for SY18/19 CTE course designations.
- IN Demand Ranking scores (Flame Threshold) of each occupation were summed and averaged to equate to an overall CTE course score known as a Flame Funding Level. Less than moderate value CTE courses scored within a 0.00-2.99 threshold. Moderate value CTE courses scored within a 3.00-3.49 threshold, and high value CTE courses scored between 3.50 and 5.00.¹⁴

The chart below shows how the Flame Funding Level (CTE course score) of a CTE course corresponds to the Flame Threshold (IN Demand Ranking score).

FLAME FUNDING LEVELS WITH FLAMES THRESHOLD		
Course Designation	Flame Threshold	Reimbursement Rate (per credit, max of 3)
Less than Moderate Value	0.00-2.99	\$200
Moderate Value	3.00-3.49	\$400
High Value	3.50-5.00	\$680

While these value designations align to the labor market demand of the state of Indiana and not that of Allen County, the school districts in each county choose which programs in each designation to offer to their students. Therefore, these value designations still show an accurate picture of the technical education system.

¹³ - Governor’s Workforce Council. IN Demand Ranking Methodology. <https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/IN-Demand-Ranking-Methodology.pdf>

¹⁴ - Indiana Department of Workforce Development. SY 22/23 Career & Technical Education Program Categorizations and Funding Recommendations. <https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/Changes-to-the-2022-23-CTE-Funding-Memo-Recommendations.pdf>

Table 2 presents a categorization of CTE students enrolled in courses identified as high value, moderate value, or less than moderate value, and excludes CTE students enrolled in “introductory” courses. These students were excluded from this breakdown because introductory courses lack direct alignment with the Indiana labor market, focusing instead on initial exposure rather than specific skill development relevant to current job opportunities.

TABLE 2: ALLEN COUNTY CTE VALUE DESIGNATION BREAKDOWN

DISTRICT	STUDENTS IN HIGH VALUE CTE COURSES	STUDENTS IN MODERATE VALUE CTE COURSES	STUDENTS IN LESS THAN MODERATE CTE COURSES	TOTAL # OF CTE STUDENTS
COUNTY TOTALS	60.9% (15,399)	27.3% (6,901)	11.8% (2,989)	25,289
EACS	77.1% (3,880)	20.6% (1,037)	2.3% (115)	5,032
FWCS	59.6% (9,494)	25.2% (4,017)	15.1% (2,409)	15,920
NACS	33.9% (641)	52.8% (1,000)	13.3% (252)	1,893
SACS	56.6% (1,384)	34.7% (847)	8.7% (213)	2,444

In the countywide total, 60.9% (15,399 students) are enrolled in high value CTE courses, reflecting a strong preference for or availability of programs leading to high-demand, high-wage jobs. Meanwhile, 27.3% (6,901 students) are in moderate value, and 11.8% (2,989 students) are engaged in Less than moderate value CTE courses, totaling 25,289 CTE students across the county.

Looking at individual districts, EACS has the highest percentage of students in high value courses at 77.1% (3,880 students), indicating a significant focus on programs leading to lucrative and in-demand careers. Conversely, the percentage of students in high value courses is the lowest in NACS, at 33.9% (641 students) with the highest enrollment in moderate value courses at 52.8% (1,000 students).

FWCS follows the county trend closely, with a majority in high value courses at 59.6% (9,494 students), and a relatively larger proportion in less than moderate courses at 15.1% (2,409 students) compared to other districts. SACS has over half of its students in high value courses at 56.6% (1,384 students), with a substantial number in moderate value courses as well.

Overall, the data reflects a county-wide emphasis on preparing students for high-demand, high-wage jobs, with variations among districts in their focus on moderate and less than moderate value courses. Each district’s strategy reflects its unique educational priorities and the perceived needs of its students in relation to the job market.

CTE Student Demographics

Socioeconomic Breakdown

Table 3 represents the demographic breakdown of students living below the federal poverty level that were enrolled in CTE programs of study in the 2022-2023 school year in Allen County. This data for CTE students came from the Form 30A report each district submitted and only includes courses that qualified for CTE funding at the high value, moderate value, or less than moderate value funding designations. The overall demographic averages for each high school came from an Indiana Department of Education report titled "School Enrollment by Special Education and English Language Learners (Updated SY 2022-2023)"¹⁵.

TABLE 3: CTE STUDENT BREAKDOWN BY FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL

	EACS TOTALS		
	Student Total	Students Living Below Federal Poverty Line	
		Number	Percent
High Value CTE	3,880	317	8.2%
Moderate Value CTE	1,037	86	8.3%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	115	7	6.1%
Student Total	5,745	422	7.3%

	FWCS TOTALS		
	Student Total	Students Living Below Federal Poverty Line	
		Number	Percent
High Value CTE	9,494	83	0.9%
Moderate Value CTE	4,017	34	0.8%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	2,409	21	0.9%
Student Total	15,955	139	0.9%

	NACS TOTALS		
	Student Total	Students Living Below Federal Poverty Line	
		Number	Percent
High Value CTE	641	5	0.8%
Moderate Value CTE	1,000	6	0.6%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	252	2	0.8%
Student Total	2,122	16	0.8%

	SACS TOTALS		
	Student Total	Students Living Below Federal Poverty Line	
		Number	Percent
High Value CTE	1,384	7	0.5%
Moderate Value CTE	847	9	1.1%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	213	0	0.0%
Student Total	2,829	19	0.7%

	COUNTY TOTALS		
	Student Total	Students Living Below Federal Poverty Line	
		Number	Percent
High Value CTE	15,399	412	2.7%
Moderate Value CTE	6,901	135	2.0%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	2,989	30	1.0%
Student Total	26,651	596	2.2%

In Allen County, the enrollment landscape of students in CTE courses reveals a significant intersection with economic need. Out of 26,651 total CTE students, 596, or 2.2%, live below the federal poverty line. This data becomes more telling when considering that 45.2% (8,179) of all high school students in the county qualify for free and reduced lunch due to their family's income level—a common indicator of economic hardship. While not a direct comparison, the free and reduced lunch qualification rates provide a broader context to the economic challenges faced by students.

Delving deeper into district specifics, EACS shows a notable engagement of economically disadvantaged students in CTE courses. While 44.3% (2,050) of its high school students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 7.3% of its 5,745 CTE students live at or below the poverty line. This suggests a robust participation of students facing economic hardships in CTE programs. FWCS, with 60.7% (5,071) of its high school students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, shows a lower relative engagement of impoverished students in CTE courses at 0.9%. Conversely, NACS and SACS, with 20.3% (520) and 21.1% (538) of their high school students respectively qualifying for free and reduced lunch, have the lowest percentage of impoverished students in CTE courses, both hovering around 0.8%.

15 - Indiana Department of Education. <https://www.in.gov/doe/files/school-enrollment-ell-special-education-2006-23.xlsx>

Race and Ethnicity Breakdown

The following section presents a comprehensive breakdown of the racial and ethnic composition of CTE students in Allen County, Indiana, as outlined in Table 4. This data is compiled from the Form 30A submissions by each district for the 2022-2023 school year and is corroborated by county and district totals from the Indiana Department of Education's report titled "School Enrollment by Special Education and English Language Learners (Updated SY 2022-2023)."¹⁶ The detailed information reflects the diversity within CTE programs and provides insights into the demographic distribution of students pursuing various career pathways in the county.

TABLE 4: CTE STUDENT BREAKDOWN BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

	ALLEN COUNTY TOTALS														
	CTE Student Total	Asian Students		Black Students		American Indian Students		Pacific Islander Students		White Students		Hispanic Students		Multiracial Students	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Value CTE	12,068	1,252	10.4%	2,667	22.1%	46	0.4%	33	0.3%	6,060	50.2%	1,836	15.2%	174	1.4%
Moderate Value CTE	5,482	398	7.3%	948	17.3%	13	0.2%	1	0.0%	3,218	58.7%	814	14.8%	90	1.6%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	2,206	93	4.2%	495	22.4%	6	0.3%	7	0.3%	1,096	49.7%	487	22.1%	22	1.0%
CTE Student Total ¹⁷	20,954	1,842	8.8%	4,200	20.0%	67	0.3%	42	0.2%	11,290	53.9%	3,220	15.4%	293	1.4%
Total High School Students in the County	18,514	1,520	8.2%	2,946	15.9%	36	0.2%	30	0.2%	10,175	55.0%	2,499	13.5%	1,308	7.1%

	EACS TOTALS														
	CTE Student Total	Asian Students		Black Students		American Indian Students		Pacific Islander Students		White Students		Hispanic Students		Multiracial Students	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Value CTE	3,366	602	17.9%	558	16.6%	16	0.5%	12	0.4%	1,871	55.6%	284	8.4%	23	0.7%
Moderate Value CTE	926	147	15.9%	97	10.5%	8	0.9%	0	0.0%	567	61.2%	99	10.7%	8	0.9%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	111	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	109	98.2%	2	1.8%	0	0.0%
CTE Student Total	5,016	812	16.2%	712	14.2%	26	0.5%	13	0.3%	2,981	59.4%	439	8.8%	33	0.7%
Total High School Students in the County	4,628	500	10.8%	462	10.0%	10	0.2%	7	0.2%	3,050	65.9%	367	7.9%	232	5.0%

¹⁶ - Indiana Department of Education. <https://www.in.gov/doe/files/school-enrollment-ell-special-education-2006-23.xlsx>

¹⁷ - Students enrolled in multiple CTE courses within the same academic year are counted multiple times, reflecting in the total number of CTE students being greater than the total number of high school students.

FWCS TOTALS															
	CTE Student Total	Asian Students		Black Students		American Indian Students		Pacific Islander Students		White Students		Hispanic Students		Multiracial Students	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Value CTE	6,910	538	7.8%	1,998	28.9%	25	0.4%	12	0.2%	2,773	40.1%	1,425	20.6%	139	2.0%
Moderate Value CTE	2,877	176	6.1%	747	26.0%	5	0.2%	0	0.0%	1,301	45.2%	571	19.8%	77	2.7%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	1,672	81	4.8%	485	29.0%	6	0.4%	7	0.4%	615	36.8%	456	27.3%	22	1.3%
CTE Student Total	11,492	797	6.9%	3,233	28.1%	36	0.3%	19	0.2%	4,709	41.0%	2,459	21.4%	239	2.1%
Total High School Students in the District	8,351	565	6.8%	2,125	25.4%	20	0.2%	13	0.2%	3,095	37.1%	1,732	20.7%	801	9.6%

NACS TOTALS															
	CTE Student Total	Asian Students		Black Students		American Indian Students		Pacific Islander Students		White Students		Hispanic Students		Multiracial Students	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Value CTE	577	32	5.5%	26	4.5%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	482	83.5%	34	5.9%	1	0.2%
Moderate Value CTE	918	27	2.9%	29	3.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	795	86.6%	66	7.2%	0	0.0%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	226	8	3.5%	4	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	203	89.8%	11	4.9%	0	0.0%
CTE Student Total	1,926	78	4.0%	66	3.4%	1	0.1%	2	0.1%	1,661	86.2%	116	6.0%	2	0.1%
Total High School Students in the District	2,557	117	4.6%	81	3.2%	1	0.0%	3	0.1%	2,077	81.2%	141	5.5%	137	5.4%

SACS TOTALS															
	CTE Student Total	Asian Students		Black Students		American Indian Students		Pacific Islander Students		White Students		Hispanic Students		Multiracial Students	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Value CTE	1,215	80	6.6%	85	7.0%	4	0.3%	8	0.7%	934	76.9%	93	7.7%	11	0.9%
Moderate Value CTE	761	48	6.3%	75	9.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	555	72.9%	78	10.2%	5	0.7%
Less than Moderate Value CTE	197	4	2.0%	6	3.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	169	85.8%	18	9.1%	0	0.0%
CTE Student Total	2,520	155	6.2%	189	7.5%	4	0.2%	8	0.3%	1,939	76.9%	206	8.2%	19	0.8%
Total High School Students in the District	2,548	126	4.9%	168	6.6%	5	0.2%	7	0.3%	1,928	75.7%	194	7.6%	120	4.7%

In Allen County, Indiana, the racial and ethnic makeup of students in CTE courses reflects and sometimes diverges from the broader demographics of each district and the county, revealing disparities and imbalances in CTE enrollment.

Countywide, CTE programs are predominantly attended by White students (53.9%), Black students (20.0%), Hispanic students (15.4%), and Asian students (8.8%). When compared to the overall high school population in the county — 55.0% White, 15.9% Black, 13.5% Hispanic, and 8.2% Asian — the representation of Black students is notably higher in CTE, and Hispanic students are slightly underrepresented. This indicates a particular engagement of Black students in CTE pathways relative to their overall population.

In the EACS district, CTE programs have a notable representation of Asian (16.2%) and Black students (14.2%), against the backdrop of a majority of White students (59.4%). The district's total high school demographic is 65.9% White, 10.8% Asian, and 10.0% Black, suggesting that Asian and Black students participate in CTE programs at higher rates than their representation in the overall student body.

FWCS reveals an interesting trend where Black students make up a significant portion (28.1%) of the CTE student body, closely reflecting their 25.4% share of the general high school population. The proportion of White students in CTE is 41.0%, slightly higher than their 37.1% representation in the district's total high school population. This indicates a slight imbalance with more White students participating in CTE programs compared to their overall population, while also showing strong engagement with Black students.

NACS shows a significant majority of White students in its CTE programs at 86.2%, compared to the district's high school population, which is 81.2% White. Black and Hispanic students are underrepresented in NACS's CTE programs compared to their presence in the overall student body, indicating a potential disparity in access or interest in CTE pathways.

SACS demonstrates a majority of White students in CTE at 76.9%, slightly higher than the 75.7% in the overall district's high school population. Similar to NACS, there is underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students in CTE programs, suggesting disparities in enrollment that may need addressing.

These insights into the racial and ethnic composition of CTE programs in Allen County highlight both reflections and divergences from the broader student demographics. While some districts show proportional representation or strong engagement of minority students in CTE, others reflect significant imbalances. Understanding and addressing these disparities is crucial to ensuring equitable access to the valuable career pathways that CTE programs offer.

Credentials of Value

The analysis in this section elaborates on the data outlined in Table 5, concentrating on the dual credits awarded in high value, moderate value, and less than moderate value CTE courses across different districts in Allen County, Indiana.

Dual credits play a pivotal role in Indiana’s CTE framework, allowing students to simultaneously earn credits towards their high school diploma and a postsecondary degree or certificate. These credits, often provided through partnerships with Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University, are a cornerstone of CTE courses, preparing students for both collegiate success and career readiness. Upon completion, these credits are recognized by both the student’s high school and the partnering postsecondary institution. For students continuing to higher education, these dual credits can be presented to their college or university, potentially expediting their path to a degree. However, the acceptance and transferability of these CTE dual credits are subject to the discretion of the receiving higher education institution and are not universally guaranteed.

Looking at the high value CTE courses, which align with high-demand and high-wage careers, there is a total enrollment of 15,399 students countywide, with 6,634 dual credits awarded. This substantial number of dual credits indicates a strong emphasis and successful integration of college-preparatory components in these courses. FWCS, with the highest enrollment at 9,494 students, awards 3,166 dual credits, suggesting a significant commitment to offering these advanced opportunities, though the dual credits awarded per student are relatively lower compared to other districts. EACS, with a smaller enrollment of 3,880, stands out for awarding 2,249 dual credits, indicating a highly effective implementation of dual credit programs. SACS, though having only 1,384 students in these courses, also shows impressive results with 1,174 dual credits awarded. NACS, with the smallest enrollment (641 students) and dual credits awarded (45), suggests an area for potential growth and development.

The moderate value CTE courses, which prepare students for careers with moderate demand and wage potential, have 6,901 students enrolled countywide with 4,731 dual credits awarded. FWCS leads in both enrollment and dual credits in this category, with 4,017 students and 2,980 dual credits, reflecting a strong alignment of these courses with postsecondary opportunities. NACS shows a commendable effort in offering substantial dual credit opportunities (764 credits) for its 1,000 students. EACS and SACS also contribute positively but on a smaller scale in terms of both enrollment and dual credits.

TABLE 5: DUAL CREDITS AWARDED BY VALUE DESIGNATION

	HIGH VALUE CTE COURSES	
	Student Total	Total # of Dual Credits Awarded
County Total	15,399	6,634
EACS	3,880	2,249
FWCS	9,494	3,166
NACS	641	45
SACS	1,384	1,174

	MODERATE VALUE CTE COURSES	
	Student Total	Total # of Dual Credits Awarded
County Total	6,901	4,731
EACS	1,037	420
FWCS	4,017	2,980
NACS	1,000	764
SACS	847	567

	LESS THAN MODERATE VALUE CTE COURSES	
	Student Total	Total # of Dual Credits Awarded
County Total	2,989	1,319
EACS	115	0
FWCS	2,409	1,277
NACS	252	42
SACS	213	0

The less than moderate value CTE courses, focusing on careers with lower market demand, show a different trend. With a total of 2,989 students enrolled countywide and 1,319 dual credits awarded, these courses have the lowest dual credit engagement. FWCS, however, shows a strong commitment to offering dual credit opportunities even in these courses, with 1,277 credits awarded to its 2,409 students. In contrast, EACS and SACS have limited or no dual credit offerings in these categories, with EACS having no dual credits awarded for its 115 students and SACS also not offering dual credits in this category.

Alignment to Labor Market Demand

This data presents a multifaceted view of the CTE landscape in Allen County. High value courses are the most robust in terms of dual credit achievements, reflecting their alignment with high-priority workforce needs. Moderate value courses also show a strong presence of dual credit opportunities, especially in FWCS and NACS districts. The less than moderate value courses, while lower in dual credit engagement, still reveal significant efforts in districts like FWCS.

This section provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the technical education system in Allen County in meeting the needs of its key industries, examining how well the current CTE courses are equipping students with the skills required for meaningful employment and how they contribute to the growth and sustainability of the local economy.

Largest Industries in Allen County

To gauge the extent to which CTE programs align with the demands of the local labor market, this analysis begins by identifying the top industries in the county based on labor market reports from Lightcast. The next step involves mapping these leading industries to relevant CTE programs. This mapping process aims to pinpoint which programs directly prepare students for careers in these industries or provide skills and credentials that align with the entry-level requirements of these sectors. The analysis uses Form 30A data, detailing the breakdown by individual districts in the county and overall county totals.

As shown in Table 6, the top industries by number of jobs in 2023 in Allen County are in the healthcare and social assistance, manufacturing, and retail trade industries. Transportation and warehousing grew by 39% from 2018 to 2023, adding 2,738 jobs. The county is also expected to see significant growth in the professional, scientific, and technical services sector (13%) and a decline in the information sector (31%). The Information sector includes businesses that create and distribute information. It encompasses broadcasting, content providers, telecommunications, computing infrastructure, data processing, web hosting, and related services.¹⁸



18 - Information: NAICS 51. U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/iag/tgs/iag51.htm>

TABLE 6: INDUSTRY SIZE BY NUMBER OF JOBS IN ALLEN COUNTY, IN 2018-2028¹⁹

NAICS	INDUSTRY	2018 JOBS	2023 JOBS	2028 JOBS	PERCENT CHANGE (2018-2023)	PERCENT CHANGE (2023-2028)
62	HealthCare and Social Assistance	35,443	38,000	40,877	7%	8%
31	Manufacturing	29,325	30,899	31,435	5%	2%
44	Retail Trade	22,088	22,699	22,698	3%	(0%)
90	Government	20,467	19,621	19,699	(4%)	0%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	17,255	17,174	17,120	(0%)	(0%)
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	13,736	13,329	13,799	(3%)	4%
23	Construction	11,889	13,042	13,321	10%	2%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	11,726	12,692	12,962	8%	2%
52	Finance and Insurance	9,362	9,920	9,898	6%	(0%)
42	Wholesale Trade	8,899	8,686	8,095	(2%)	(7%)
48	Transportation and Warehousing	6,947	9,684	10,369	39%	7%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6,885	7,764	8,030	13%	3%
61	Educational Services	4,269	3,946	3,891	(8%)	(1%)
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,870	2,816	2,845	(2%)	1%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,468	2,695	2,772	9%	3%
51	Information	2,464	1,702	1,339	(31%)	(21%)
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,052	2,251	2,380	10%	6%
22	Utilities	481	471	504	(2%)	7%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	381	363	354	(5%)	(2%)
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	103	113	106	10%	(6%)
TOTAL		209,111	217,867	222,494	4%	2%

19 - Lightcast (2023). Industry Table for 2023 in Allen County. Occupational and Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (Self-Employed and Extended Proprietors).

Of the CTE programs of study offered to Allen County high school students in the 2022-2023 school year, the following programs best align with these top industries. NOTE: Since the retail trade industry does not have a direct connection to CTE programs of study, it is not included in this list.

- healthcare and social assistance: health services; human services
- manufacturing: advanced manufacturing
- transportation and warehousing: transportation, distribution, and logistics
- professional, scientific, and technical services: business and financial operations, architecture and engineering, computer and mathematical, office and administrative support, sales and related occupations

Table 7 below shows the breakdown of Allen County CTE students enrolled in these aligned pathways in the 2022-2023 school year.

TABLE 7: CTE ALIGNMENT TO INDUSTRY DEMAND

	COUNTY TOTAL	EACS	FWCS	NACS	SACS
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,988 (20.5%)	1,359 (23.7%)	2,907 (21.3%)	234 (11.0%)	488 (17.2%)
Manufacturing	460 (1.9%)	211 (3.7%)	189 (1.4%)	30 (1.4%)	30 (1.1%)
Transportation and Warehousing	544 (2.2%)	136 (2.4%)	390 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (0.6%)
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12,139 (49.9 %)	2,212 (38.5%)	7953 (58.3%)	670 (31.6%)	1,304 (46.1%)

The healthcare and social assistance sector, poised for an 8% increase with a total of 40,877 jobs, currently aligns with 20.5% of the county's total CTE enrollment. This is particularly notable in EACS, where 23.7% of CTE students are engaged in relevant courses, and in FWCS, with 21.3% enrollment. These figures suggest a strong and proactive approach towards gearing students for this burgeoning field. However, NACS and SACS, with lower enrollment percentages in this sector, might need to augment their focus to better prepare students for the growing opportunities in healthcare and social assistance.

In contrast, manufacturing, slated for a 2% job increase totaling 31,435 positions, seems underrepresented in CTE enrollments, accounting for just 1.9% of students countywide. EACS appears more attuned to this sector's steady growth with 3.7% student involvement. However, the overall minimal focus in other districts, including FWCS, NACS, and SACS, highlights a potential gap between current educational offerings and future industry needs.

The transportation and warehousing sector, expected to see a 7% growth with 10,369 jobs on the horizon, is not receiving proportional attention in CTE programs, evidenced by the mere 2.2% countywide enrollment. FWCS, with 2.9% of its students in related courses, is slightly ahead in preparing students for this sector, but the negligible or absent focus in districts like NACS and SACS may be a missed opportunity considering the sector's promising growth.

The most striking observation is in the professional, scientific, and technical services sector, which, despite a modest 3% projected increase to 8,030 jobs, garners a substantial 49.9% of CTE enrollments. This is especially pronounced in FWCS, where 58.3% of CTE students are engaged in this pathway. EACS and SACS also demonstrate substantial involvement in this sector. NACS's engagement, while lower, is still significant. This heavy concentration suggests a keen awareness and response to the current demand in these fields, though it raises questions about the balance and diversification of CTE programs in relation to all key industry sectors.

Overall, Allen County's CTE offerings show an intricate and evolving connection with the region's economic landscape. While there's a commendable focus on burgeoning sectors like healthcare and professional services, the data indicates room for growth in aligning CTE programs more closely with all sectors poised for expansion, such as manufacturing and transportation. A balanced and forward-looking approach in CTE programming will be crucial in equipping students not just for the jobs of today but for the emerging opportunities of tomorrow's economy.

CTE Assets in Allen County

Opportunities for K-12 students to explore potential career pathways, both within the school day and in the community

Students can discover potential careers through a variety of approaches including engaging curriculum models and exploration opportunities.

At the Amp Lab, a FWCS program, students engage in half-day programming with opportunities for hands-on collaboration with businesses and organizations, to develop workplace skills while addressing real-world challenges. The Amp Lab has 11 certified teachers and approximately 370 students. Of these, about 100 students work on businesses they have created, while the others collaborate with 14 businesses or community organizations to solve specific challenges they have presented.

As a result of their practical experience, Amp Lab students earn dual credit through Indiana Tech, with 157 students earning at least six dual credits. Starting in the academic year 2024-2025, enrollment will be open to incoming 11th and 12th graders in Allen County, extending beyond FWCS students. Amp Lab will accept up to 80 non-district participants for the upcoming academic year while maintaining capacity for 400 FWCS students,²⁰

The Junior Achievement 3DE program is an innovative approach to career exploration that will soon be offered in all five FWCS high schools. The focus of 3DE is to transform high school education to be more practical, hands-on, and relevant to real-world experiences.²¹ Students are organized into cohorts, remaining together for multiple classes, and working together to tackle real-world business challenges provided by business partners, exposing them to multiple Allen County employers and providing them with unique and engaging opportunities to learn about a wide variety of jobs and career paths. The 3DE model has been very successful across the country, resulting in 22% decreased absenteeism, 34% increased graduation rates, and 56% higher college enrollment.²²

Immersive learning and career exploration opportunities are also available at the J. Kruse Education Center. The Career Coaching Academy at The Center provides personalized guidance to adults, veterans, and individuals aged 13 and above. Through assessments of their values, interests, personality, and strengths, the academy assists them in exploring complementary or related career opportunities. Moreover, the Center is in the process of creating interactive exhibits called PODS (Personal Opportunity for Different Skills), providing students with hands-on exploration experiences within 16 Career Clusters. This allows students to acquire practical experience across a diverse range of careers.

Similarly, the Jim Kelley Career Pathway Center, a key component of the Boys and Girls Club of Fort Wayne, provides diverse programs for youth to discover career pathways through collaborations with local industries and employers. With five specialized learning labs dedicated to automotive, manufacturing, construction trades, health sciences, and IT/Robotics/CAD, the Center offers extensive exposure to various careers. Students visiting the Center not only explore these career options but also undergo employability skills training, obtaining valuable OSHA and CPR certifications. The Center leverages partnerships with higher education institutions, such as IU Fort Wayne, allowing students to explore health science careers through hands-on learning experiences and on-campus visits to labs.

Northeast Indiana Works, the non-profit workforce development organization for the region, is actively engaged in marketing and providing experiences for students to gain a better understanding of modern manufacturing. Manufacturing Experience Camps are for 8th-grade students to learn about different aspects of manufacturing. Students engage in demonstrations and hands-on activities related to Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs), electrical, circuitry, and 3D printing.

20 - Amp Lab opens to non-Fort Wayne Community Schools students. The Journal Gazette. https://www.journalgazette.net/local/schools/amp-lab-opens-to-non-fort-wayne-community-schools-students/article_e6648976-b61d-11ee-8a87-abfe45a37adc.html

21 - <https://www.3deschools.org/>

22 - <https://www.3deschools.org/impact>

Career exploration activities with experiential and work-based learning prepares students for employment, enrollment, or enlistment after graduation.

Students credit their work-based learning experiences to help them navigate their next steps after high school. During a focus group featuring high school students from various CTE pathways, a participant from the early childhood education pathway expressed that her role as a cadet teacher provided valuable hands-on experience. She shared that while it can be an adjustment to create her own lesson plans, she found the opportunity beneficial.

"The experiences that I've had at the Career Center have helped me realize that teaching is what I want to do, and I plan on attending college to get my bachelor's degree."

Another student shared that he had a general interest in a STEM career but was not sure which pathway to select or what he wanted to do after high school. Choosing the manufacturing pathway, he attributes his clarity about post-graduation plans to the hands-on experience, industry tours, and paid internship opportunities.

"Having the opportunity to program robots and learn the electrical components of circuits and how they work, I'm finding out that I'm actually pretty good at some of these things and I enjoy some of them. I definitely want to continue learning especially in the robotics and automation side because it really is the future."

Continuing to give students access to hands-on, career-connected learning experiences will consistently result in better-prepared graduates. In Fall 2024, FWCS will implement The Schools for Success model, guaranteeing access to CTE opportunities and hands-on learning for all FWCS students. Regardless of the chosen school and pathway, all students can earn college credits, engage in internships, and obtain certifications, connecting their academic studies with real-world relevance.

Collaborations with employers and industry partners are providing schools with expanded training opportunities for students.

Plumbers and Steamfitters, and HVAC Service Technicians of Local 166 (Local 166) members are plumbers, steamfitters, welders, and HVAC service technicians working with contractors in northeast Indiana. Understanding the value of a talent pipeline with high school students, Local 166 was the first building trades local union to incorporate internship language into their collective bargaining agreement.

Currently, Local 166 has a strong partnership with the local school districts and currently trains 40 students on-site in the pre-apprenticeship program. High school seniors from SACS, NACS, FWCS can participate in the paid internship program, earning 35% of the journeyman rate without benefits. Upon successful completion of the internship, students are eligible to enroll in Local 166's apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program is very competitive, with 400 applicants and only 44 spots are available. However, approximately 60% of those enrolled in the apprenticeship program were enrolled in pre-apprenticeship.

While the pre-apprenticeship training in the trades is resource heavy, Local 166 and participating school districts split the cost, with the school covering 2/3 of the instructor cost. The remaining 1/3 is covered by the union from foreman wages, with union members contributing a dollar an hour to the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee fund. Gaining membership support has been instrumental in the success and sustainability of the initiative.

Local 166 anticipates continued growth among pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training, with plans to build another building to potentially expand training for all five years of apprenticeship programs. Beyond benefiting high school students, this partnership is cost-effective for Local 166, saving resources on recruitment and aiding in the identification of suitable individuals for both union and industry partners.

Strategic and collaborative approaches are supporting student success.

The Grow Allen initiative, led by Ambassador Enterprises, represents a vital asset to the CTE Ecosystem in Allen County, Indiana²³. It adopts a holistic approach to enhance career path development for students entering the workforce in northeast Indiana, focusing on four fundamental pillars: early learning, life skills, work-based learning, and advocacy. This initiative stands as a model of collaborative effort, with superintendents from the county's four school corporations working in tandem with representatives from CTE training areas, early learning sectors, and business leadership.

Grow Allen's comprehensive strategy is particularly instrumental in bridging the skills gap in the region's workforce. By aligning educational pathways with local labor market trends, it ensures that high school students are equipped with both the technical skills and the real-world experience needed in today's job market. This is especially crucial in Allen County, where there is a growing demand for skilled workers, as reflected in the initiative's commitment to work-based learning.

The initiative's role in breaking down silos between different educational and professional sectors is invaluable. It fosters collaboration across various roles, from educators to business leaders, creating an integrated network that supports students' transition from education to employment. This concerted effort is essential for advancing the future of education and career readiness in the region.

Grow Allen's success in coordinating these efforts serves as an exemplary model for other organizations in the region. By adopting a similar collaborative and unified approach, these organizations can optimize their success and impact, further enhancing the CTE ecosystem in Allen County. The initiative's focus on early learning and life skills ensures that students are not only career-ready but also equipped with essential life competencies, making them well-rounded individuals prepared for the challenges of the modern workforce.



23 - <https://ambassador-enterprises.com/grow-allen-building-a-collaborative-path-to-student-success-and-economic-prosperity-in-north-east-indiana/>

CTE Gaps in Allen County

Students living at or below the federal poverty level are not enrolling in CTE courses at the same pace as their peers.

The enrollment data for CTE courses in Allen County, Indiana, underscores a significant gap in addressing the needs of students living at or below the federal poverty line. This gap becomes starkly evident when considering the broader economic backdrop of the student population. Of the 26,651 students enrolled in CTE programs, only 596, or a mere 2.2%, are living under the federal poverty line. This statistic is particularly alarming given that a substantial 45.2% (8,179 students) of the high school population in the county qualifies for free and reduced lunch, an indicator commonly associated with economic hardship. While the free and reduced lunch qualification rates cannot be directly equated with living below the federal poverty line, they nonetheless provide a contextual understanding of the economic challenges faced by a large segment of students.

These figures suggest that many students who could benefit from CTE programs are either not accessing them or are not being adequately reached by these programs. This situation highlights the critical need for continued support and targeted outreach efforts. There is a pressing need to ensure that CTE programs are accessible and appealing to all students, particularly those who face economic barriers. By doing so, CTE can fulfill its potential as a pathway to career readiness and economic mobility for a broader and more diverse student population.

Students are not enrolling in the manufacturing pathway to keep up with the industry demand in Allen County.

The underrepresentation of students in the manufacturing pathway within the CTE ecosystem in Allen County is a notable gap, especially when juxtaposed with the projected job growth in this sector. Despite manufacturing being slated for a 2% increase in jobs, totaling 31,435 positions, its presence in CTE enrollments is disproportionately low, accounting for only 1.9% of students across the county. This misalignment is a cause for concern, considering the sector's potential for employment growth and economic contribution.

The low enrollment numbers in manufacturing CTE pathways suggest a need for closer collaboration between schools, industry partners, and community stakeholders. Such partnerships could foster more relevant, hands-on learning experiences and provide students with a clearer understanding of the career opportunities in manufacturing. Moreover, enhancing marketing and outreach efforts to better communicate the benefits and potential of careers in manufacturing could stimulate student interest and enrollment in these pathways.

"The programs that are the hardest to navigate are advanced manufacturing. I think most of the time the gap isn't necessarily in student interest, it's in ecosystem comprehension. The average 16-year-old doesn't know if they should be interested in those types of opportunities."

Changes in legislation regarding CTE and graduation requirements present challenges for school districts in the implementation.

Recent legislative changes, notably HEA 1635, may lead to a decline in ASVAB completion, presenting an opportunity for CTE programs to assist students in meeting graduation requirements. As students increasingly turn to CTE to fulfill graduation requirements, there is increased demand for additional CTE instructors. Becoming a CTE instructor involves following one of four licensure pathways, outlined in the options below. (More information of CTE teacher licensure is in Appendix A)

1. The Workplace Specialist I License is ideal for industry professionals seeking CTE teaching certification, requiring either 5,000 hours in the last 5 years or a 2-year degree in the relevant area. The initial 2-year license is renewable for 1 year upon the director's request.
2. The Career Specialist Permit allows teaching in a specific content area at the secondary level, with three qualification options. Renewals include a pedagogy requirement for the first renewal and a Professional Growth Plan showing 40 hours for subsequent renewals.
3. The Unlicensed Vocational Instructor permits hiring unlicensed instructors for up to 50% of CTE courses, meeting specific requirements.
4. The Adjunct Permit requires four years of subject-specific experience, and mentorship by another teacher.

Despite the diverse pathways available to become a CTE instructor and efforts to make licensure more accessible, there are still challenges in finding a sufficient number of teachers. The outcomes of the new graduation requirements are not fully evident, but the anticipated substantial increase in CTE enrollments is expected to persist over the next school years. In the 2023-24 school year, four of the participating school districts at the Fort Wayne Career Academy EACS, NACS, SACS, and private high schools) have less than 3% of their students enrolled in a CTE pathway. This percentage is anticipated to rise as school districts offer more in-house training. As a result, the demand for qualified instructors is escalating, creating a pressing need for additional educators to meet the interests and demands of students.

"The biggest obstacle is that right now the workforce demand is so high that a lot of these individuals work in that field and make a whole lot more money than what the high schools offer."

Limited available seats at the Fort Wayne Career Academy force high schools to seek out other CTE options for students.

The Fort Wayne Career Academy functions as a regional career center for FWCS and its member school districts. Students from FWCS's five high schools receive priority placement for CTE programming. The remaining spots are allocated among the other school districts and private/parochial schools in Allen County.

However, the restricted availability of seats for students from different districts hinders their participation at the Fort Wayne Career Academy. Table 8 below shows the breakdown of available seats for the 2023-2024 school year.

Bishop Dwenger High School has collaborated with the Fort Wayne Career Academy to provide training opportunities. However, over the past five years, Bishop Dwenger's student interest has tripled (partially in response to the Graduation Pathways) and the number of available seats at the Fort Wayne Career Academy remained the same. To meet student demand and provide career training opportunities, Bishop Dwenger and Bishop Luers are collaborating and conducting a feasibility study to establish a career center for their students. This center aims to offer five to seven programs aligned with the interests of local businesses and state graduation pathways.²⁴

More school districts are likely to create in-house training opportunities due to limited availability at the Fort Wayne Career Academy. For example, Carroll High School, where less than 10% of seats are allocated for the Fort Wayne Career Academy, has expanded in-house opportunities. In the academic year 2021-22, the enrollment reached 1,300 students, and in the subsequent academic year 2022-23, it increased to 1,850 students.

"The Career Center says they don't have enough seats, that just doesn't happen based on tuition that they have to pay for those students. So, they're looking at expanding their own CTE programming within their schools, and I think you're going to see that a lot more."

24 - <https://todayscatholic.org/diocese-explores-creating-career-technical-academy/>

TABLE 8: ENROLLMENT COUNT OF STUDENTS FROM MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICTS AT FORT WAYNE CAREER ACADEMY, 2023-24

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	% OF TOTAL CAREER ACADEMY ENROLLMENT	% OF TOTAL DISTRICT HS STUDENTS ENROLLED AT CAREER ACADEMY
Fort Wayne Community Schools	713	76%	8.5%
East Allen County Schools	63	7%	1.4%
Northwest Allen County Schools	54	6%	2.1%
Southwest Allen County Schools	49	5%	1.9%
Private High Schools	46	5%	1.9%
Other (Home School, INCC)	9	1%	-
TOTAL	934	-	-

Marketing and awareness initiatives related to CTE need to be expanded to include educators, employers, and the broader community.

There are many great initiatives to raise student awareness and understanding of the value and opportunities available through CTE.

For students to better understand career pathways and the value of CTE, multiple initiatives offer many hands-on opportunities to learn about careers in manufacturing. However, there is great value and opportunity for impact by expanding awareness to educators, employers, and the community.

For employers to better understand workforce needs, the Northeast Indiana Healthcare Consortium focuses on promoting awareness of healthcare careers and improving education and training opportunities. The consortium has received positive feedback from healthcare employers and education/training providers. Professionals in other industries recognize the value of the consortium model and are interested in replicating this opportunity in other industries.

For educators to better understand career pathways, the MadeByMe Coalition's Educator Externship initiative pairs Allen County teachers with local employers and spends up to a week on-site, learning about careers in those industries. The teachers are paid for their

time and earn credits for their license renewal. At the end of the externship, they take what they have learned in their experience and incorporate it into the curriculum or in their conversations with students and other teachers. Teachers express positive experiences and enthusiasm to integrate gained knowledge into classrooms, but the initiative's expansion is hindered by a shortage of willing employers to host educators. Although approximately 20-30 teachers currently participate, there is an expected interest from around 100 educators eager to join the program.

Local and national economic development leaders see the Educator Externship initiative as a strategy to address this gap, expand the program, and continue to emphasize the need for employer involvement and increased collaboration to maximize its impact.

The Educator Externship motivates teachers and industry professionals to consider roles as CTE instructors. Increasing teachers' understanding and awareness prompts them to add CTE specialties to their licenses, providing new opportunities for involvement in CTE instruction. Simultaneously, it attracts the interest of industry professionals who may be intrigued by teaching CTE courses.

Challenges Facing CTE Programs

Awarding a significant number of college credits through dual credit CTE classes reveals a disconnect between the perceived value of these credits and the actual needs of local employers, who prioritize industry-recognized credentials.

In Allen County, Indiana, the focus of CTE courses on college credit accumulation, particularly through dual credit classes, reveals a complex scenario. During the 2022-2023 school year, high school students in the county earned a notable 12,787 college credits from their CTE dual credit classes. Interestingly, about half of these credits (6,634) were earned in courses designated as “high value” by the State of Indiana, aligning with high-demand and high-wage jobs in the state. Most of these college credits were obtained through Ivy Tech Community College, with a smaller number from Vincennes University. Educators and administrators often cite this ability to award college credits as a hallmark of the quality of their CTE programming, with one guidance counselor highlighting a strong partnership with Ivy Tech in developing a curriculum that ensures current relevance and rigor for students.

FWCS, for instance, regularly hosts events aimed at helping students and parents navigate the postsecondary system, including understanding how to utilize their college credits after high school graduation. Most CTE students interviewed in the study were earning, or had already earned, multiple college credits, viewing them as a way to save time and money in college. However, their understanding of the transferability of these credits was based on assumption rather than confirmed information from postsecondary institutions.

“My credits can transfer to 83 colleges or something like that. They can transfer to a lot of them. But then, also, my certifications are more of just a step in the door to something to be able to, the best way it’s been described, to get past HR. So, if I didn’t have a master’s degree or something like that, they’ll look at that and they can see it and be like, ‘oh, they actually know their stuff.’”

This belief is likely linked to the Indiana Core Transfer Library (CTL) and the Indiana College Core, with the former being a list of pre-approved courses for transfer between participating post-secondary institutions in Indiana. The CTL primarily includes articulation agreements for core academic classes, with many of these classes only accepted as “general elective credit” at other higher education institutions²⁵. This limitation means that most CTE college credits

earned via dual credit are not covered by the CTL. For the Indiana College Core, while it offers a block of 30 credit hours of general education coursework guaranteed to transfer, it is not guaranteed to be a one-to-one transfer the way the high school students understand it.²⁶ Instead, higher education institutions will often require additional coursework, specific to certain degree programs, to be completed, and will accept the Indiana College Core credits as general electives. Also, like the CTL, the Indiana College Core focuses specifically on general education classes and does not include CTE courses.

“It’s pretty awesome to be able to get out of high school and have a certificate for criminal justice that I would have to get in college if it wasn’t for [the career academy].”

Upon further investigation, it becomes evident that the value of these college credits might not be as substantial as students and parents believe. CTE students interviewed for this study who had already been accepted into colleges or universities found that their CTE dual credits would not transfer to their degree programs or would only count as elective credits. For instance, one student in the Health Science pathway discovered that her high school credits would not apply to her Nursing degree program due to the perceived lack of rigor and detail in her high school classes.

Further complicating this scenario, interviews with local employers revealed that dual credits earned in school often do not translate into the skills they seek in new hires. Employers tend to value industry-recognized credentials over college credits, as credentials provide a clearer indication of specific skills and mastery. This preference underscores a disconnect between the emphasis placed by schools on earning college credits in CTE classes and the actual needs of the local job market.

Allen County schools seem to prioritize college credits in CTE classes over industry-recognized credentials, which may not align with immediate employment opportunities post-high school. This approach suggests a potential misalignment between the objectives of CTE programs and the actual requirements of the local labor market, especially for those students looking to enter employment directly after graduation.

25 - <https://www.pfw.edu/offices/registrar-office/transfer-credit/core-transfer-library>

26 - <https://transferin.net/ways-to-earn-credit/statewide-transfer-general-education-core-stgec/>

The recent legislative change requiring a letter of intent to enlist in the military for using the ASVAB as a graduation pathway has created challenges for Allen County high schools, leading them to seek alternative options like CTE programs to fulfill graduation requirements.

Beginning with the Class of 2023, and with the ability for students from the classes of 2019-2022 to “opt in,” Indiana high school students are required to fulfill at least one pathway in three distinct areas: earning a high school diploma, demonstrating employability skills, and exhibiting postsecondary-ready competencies. Previously, one pathway for fulfilling the third requirement involved taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and achieving a minimum score on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) for military placement. In 2021, 14.9% of Allen County graduates used the ASVAB as their pathway for Box 3, as indicated in Table 9.

However, the introduction of HEA 1635, mandating the submission of a military enlistment intent letter for ASVAB to be used as a graduation pathway, may reduce the number of students selecting this option. This legislative change poses a challenge for many Allen County high schools, pushing them to seek an alternative Box 3 pathway, often looking towards CTE programs. This shift could strain existing CTE programs and inadvertently lead to students enrolling in CTE courses not aligned with their interests, simply to satisfy graduation requirements.

Concordia Lutheran High School, whose distinguished Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program has been “recognized as one of the best in the nation,”²⁷ faces a particular challenge. JROTC, a significant character development and citizenship program established by Congress in 1964, does not mandate military enlistment for its participants²⁸. However, many schools, including Concordia, have historically incorporated the ASVAB as part of their JROTC program, using student scores to meet the Box 3 graduation requirement. With the legislative update, this pathway is no longer viable. An administrator from Concordia Lutheran High School expressed concern about this change, stating, “This change to the ASVAB means we have 15-30 students who started their junior year believing they have met Box 3 due to their ASVAB score, and now suddenly, they have to find a new pathway. Now we are all scrambling to get them into something, and it is so much harder for us because we don’t have the ability to offer multiple CTE courses like other high schools.”



27 - <https://www.chscadets.com/apps/pages/JROTC>

28 - <https://www.usarmyjrotc.com/army-junior-rotc-program-overview/>

TABLE 9: GRADUATION PATHWAY BOX 3 BREAKDOWN, CLASS OF 2021²⁹

	GQE	Honors Diploma	ACT	SAT	ASVAB	Industry Certification	CTE Concentrator	AP/IB/ Dual Credit	Locally Created Pathway	Waiver	TOTALS
ALLEN COUNTY TOTAL	1,775	103	0	16	540	17	948	170	35	10	3,614
East Allen County Schools	410	37	0	0	120	5	103	14	34	0	723
East Allen University	67	0	0	0	1	0	0	10	0	0	78
Heritage Jr/Sr High School	44	13	0	0	20	1	32	1	19	0	130
Leo Jr / Sr High School	158	5	0	0	41	0	8	1	1	0	214
New Haven High School	82	9	0	0	32	1	57	2	11	0	194
Woodlan Jr/Sr High School	59	10	0	0	26	3	6	0	3	0	107
Fort Wayne Community Schools	595	64	0	13	255	12	738	53	1	10	1,741
North Side High School	97	10	0	4	48	7	129	14	0	0	309
Northrop High School	180	3	0	6	117	0	146	2	1	9	464
R Nelson Snider High School	171	23	0	2	63	4	154	3	0	1	421
South Side High School	52	0	0	1	8	0	203	9	0	0	273
Wayne High School	95	28	0	0	19	1	106	25	0	0	274
Northwest Allen County Schools	468	2	0	1	63	0	70	4	0	0	608
Carroll High School	468	2	0	1	63	0	70	4	0	0	608
Southwest Allen County Schools	302	0	0	2	102	0	37	99	0	0	542
Homestead High School	302	0	0	2	102	0	37	99	0	0	542

29 - Is a military exam a loophole in Indiana's high school graduation rules? WFYI.

<https://www.wfyi.org/news/articles/asvab-military-exam-indiana-high-school-graduation-pathways>

The rigid scheduling and sequencing of AP classes in Allen County high schools, particularly the sophomore year exclusivity of APUSH, limits students' ability to concurrently enroll in CTE courses.

The course sequencing and scheduling of Advanced Placement (AP) classes in Allen County high schools present a significant hurdle for students who wish to explore CTE courses. A key issue is the sequencing of certain AP courses, such as AP United States History (APUSH), which is typically only available during a student's sophomore year. This rigid scheduling often forces students to delay their engagement with CTE programs until later in their high school careers, limiting their exposure and experience in these valuable vocational courses.

"Precision machining is a two-year course, but I'm a senior so I'm only going to get the first year because there was no room to fit the Career Center into my schedule last year."

Further complicating this issue is the overall scheduling within and across schools in the county. Students who are academically inclined or aiming for college credit accumulation through AP courses often find their schedules densely packed with these classes. A high school student articulated this dilemma, saying,

"Last year my schedule was full. I think out of my seven classes, five or six of them were APs. So there was no time to fit the Career Center into the schedule. So I [had to] wait a year."

This statement underscores the challenge faced by students in balancing their desire for advanced academic courses with the opportunities provided by CTE classes.

The inter-school scheduling also poses a challenge, particularly for students who wish to attend CTE classes offered at a career center, such as the Fort Wayne Career Academy. The logistical difficulties of traveling between schools, coupled with the time constraints imposed by a heavy AP course load, further reduce the feasibility of participating in CTE programs. As a result, students interested in both advanced academic pursuits and technical education are often compelled to make a choice between the two, rather than having the opportunity to benefit from a comprehensive educational experience that includes both.



Recommendations

Prioritize certification attainment in addition to dual credits.

Currently, many high schools prioritize offering dual credits over industry-recognized certifications. The perception among students and parents is that dual credits are the best way to jumpstart a student's higher education and career goals after high school. However, it's important to note that while dual credits may transfer to in-state institutions, they may not necessarily align with the student's intended degree path. This circumstance may result in students retaking college classes because the dual credits they earned in high school do not count toward their major. Promoting certification attainment encourages students to gain hands-on experience, providing them with practical skills that are often more valued in the workplace compared to dual credit.

Increase enrollment capacity for CTE students outside of the FWCS system.

A significant number of students throughout Allen County are capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the Fort Wayne Career Academy (FWCA), with 76% of them currently enrolled in FWCS. This underscores the demand for CTE opportunities among students from various school districts. Challenges like cost, proximity, and transportation can impede access for some students. However, there are several strategies to enhance opportunities. Recent collaborative efforts with the Amp Lab have resulted in expansions of 80 additional seats specifically designated for non-FWCS students.

The Grow Allen initiative emerges as a key player in addressing the challenges outlined in the report. With its county-wide reach, this initiative is well-positioned to tackle issues such as cost, proximity, and transportation. The comprehensive framework encourages collaboration and streamlines processes, ultimately contributing to a more effective and accessible CTE for all students across Allen County.



Provide students with career coaching to aid them in selecting a pathway that matches their goals and interests, preparing them for enrollment, employment, or enlistment.

Career coaches are helpful before students choose a pathway by raising awareness about available career and CTE pathways, options, potential wages, and industry demand. Working with a career coach, students can get a thorough, in-depth understanding of CTE pathways leading to a local, high-demand, and high-paying position. By providing insights into the real-world applications and success stories within these fields, career coaches broaden students' awareness and interest, encouraging them to consider valuable career paths.

During a student's enrollment, career coaches play a crucial role in guiding the next steps after completion, including additional training and career options. Career coaches' support focuses on broadening students' awareness of alternative pathways, emphasizing that college is just one option and not the only route to securing a high-paying job.

Career coaches are instrumental in assisting students who have finished a CTE pathway with lower wages and lower demand, especially in navigating competitive job markets. They guide students to consider a broader range of opportunities beyond their immediate program focus by identifying industries that align with their skills and experience, improving employability.

Industry professionals can also act as career coaches, bringing their own experiences alongside the guidance provided by school career coaches. Engaging working professionals as career coaches offers students interested in a particular industry valuable mentorship, rendering career exploration more practical and relatable. This approach not only enhances students' understanding of various industries but also enables them to start building their own professional network, creating connections that can be beneficial for their future careers.

Actively involve employers by introducing a variety of career-connected learning opportunities.

A toolkit or infrastructure offering various options with flexible time commitments will assist in organizing these career-connected learning opportunities. By leveraging a network of local employers, industry professionals can engage in activities that help students make informed decisions.

Career-connected learning activities are crafted as an ongoing developmental journey, encompassing a variety of experiences to assist students in exploration, active involvement, and hands-on experience in their chosen career paths. Discovery-oriented activities may involve guest speakers from the business or industry, participation in employment and career fairs, and engaging in formal mentorship with industry professionals. Engaging in career-connected learning can further include on-site experiences like tours, job shadows, and participation in case study competitions. For students who have explored and engaged in these activities, there are potential opportunities for them to enhance their skillset through paid experiential learning, either in the form of an internship or apprenticeship.



BEST PRACTICE SHOWCASE:

Partnerships between area high schools and Plumbers and Steamfitters, and HVAC Service Technicians of Local 166³⁰

The Plumbers, Steamfitters, and HVAC Service Technicians of Local 166 demonstrates how integrating employers and career and technical education programs is mutually beneficial, and it also strengthens the community. The Local 166 has used the welding pilot program with FWCS to create additional work-based programs for high school students. Now they offer three separate programs for students including welding, industrial maintenance, and an internship program.

Although it launched in the 2021-2022 school year, the partnership with FWCS has significantly enhanced the welding program. Previously, the FWCS welding program was hindered by limited space, which restricted the number of students. Working with Local 166 has resolved the district's space constraints by offering 40 spots for the program. Since interest has grown, Local 166 is doubling its capacity to 80 FWCS students to use their training facility and equipment. Moreover, Local 166 is providing welding instructors from their membership to teach the students. This has leveraged the union's specialized expertise and resources, ensuring that students receive the highest caliber industry-standard training.

SACS and NACS has partnered with Local 166 at the start of the 2023-24 school year to establish the Next Level Program for building and facilities maintenance. Local 166 teaches students both plumbing and HVAC skills enabling them to earn their CFC Universal Certification. In year one of the program, students complete all three courses for the Building and Facilities Maintenance Pathway. Carroll and Homestead high schools each provided 10 students, and Local 166's Business Manager Kent Prosser plans to double capacity to 40 students for next school year. Additionally, students who complete the program and join the apprenticeship program advance to second-year wages upon graduation.

The third program that Local 166 provides for young adults is an internship program for students who have completed the CTE program or SEAL education experience and have obtained their OSHA 10 certification. Interns work three to four hours a day with a Local 166 member contractor in the field for their WBL experience. Up to 20 high schoolers gain experience in the field and learn what it takes to be successful in a work setting. Fewer students drop out of the apprentice program because of the internship.

"Starting these programs with the high schools was a challenge because of the initial resources required, but we're all better for it now," said Kent Prosser, business manager, Plumbers, Steamfitters, and HVAC Service Technicians of Local 166. "It required a culture change internally—and that's not easy. Now I have members asking why we didn't do this years ago. They see firsthand how the kids are engaged and it helps with retention."

This is the type of feedback Carroll High School administrators have heard about their new partnership with Local 166. Below is an excerpt from a CHS parent to the Local 166 instructor.

"I, for one, truly hope this program is successful so it can help other kids like my son find something that they like and take with them for many years in their future. So, keep doing what you're doing!"

30 - <http://www.ualocal166.org/>

Bring the Youth Apprenticeship Model to Allen County.

Implementing a youth apprenticeship program in Allen County, taking cues from the northeast Indiana FAME and Marion County's Modern Apprenticeship Program (MAP), is a significant step toward enhancing educational and career opportunities for high school students.

The Modern Apprenticeship (MAP) program³¹, a collaborative effort by EmployIndy and Ascend Indiana, offers a comprehensive apprenticeship for high school students in Indianapolis, focusing on high-demand industries. Starting in their junior year, students engage in a two- to three-year program that encompasses paid work experience, along with earning high school and college credits, and gaining professional credentials. The fields covered, such as IT, healthcare, and manufacturing, are carefully chosen to align with current market demands, ensuring that the skills students acquire are relevant and valuable. This program is designed to bridge the equity gap in career readiness, particularly for students from diverse backgrounds, providing them with a unique blend of real-world skills that are essential in the post-COVID economic landscape.

Similarly, the NE INFAME³² model offers a similar work-based learning program, integrating hands-on training with classroom education. Spanning five semesters, this program allows students to earn wages while simultaneously working towards their diploma and college credits. It focuses on fostering industry-specific skills, professional behaviors, and competencies in advanced manufacturing, thus preparing students for successful careers in this field.

The impact of these models is evident in the experiences shared by students who have participated. For instance, a high school student involved in the NE INFAME program recounted the immense opportunities and personal growth he experienced.

I actually recently joined the NE INFAME program, which has given me a ton of opportunities after I graduate. I'll be working with a company for three days a week, and then spending the other two days at Ivy Tech. So I'll be getting paid while I'm still learning, and I won't have any student loans.

It's kind of opened my eyes a bit more because not too long ago I didn't feel confident in what I wanted to do after high school. But now with NE INFAME I've gained these opportunities and I know that I possess skills that people, that companies, are looking for. I feel confident in my chances out in the real world now.

This real-life application of skills and the exposure to the working world illustrate the effectiveness of youth apprenticeships in equipping students with the competencies that employers seek.

The Youth Apprenticeship Accelerator program³³ supported by Ascend Indiana, with funding from the Walton Family Foundation and PAYA, is a crucial resource for expanding such apprenticeship models. By applying for this funding, Allen County can develop and enhance apprenticeship programs, tailoring them to the specific needs of the local workforce. This strategic move supports not only the growth and development of individual students but also contributes to the wider economic development of the region.

Adopting a youth apprenticeship model in Allen County is thus more than an educational initiative; it is a strategic investment in the future workforce. Such a program provides equitable pathways to education and employment for students, especially those from diverse economic backgrounds. It is pivotal for developing a skilled, confident workforce that is well-equipped to meet the challenges and demands of the modern economy. This approach promises significant benefits for students, employers, and the wider community, making it an essential component of Allen County's educational and economic strategy.

31 - <https://employindy.org/employindy-and-ascend-indiana-launch-modern-apprenticeship-program-for-high-school-students-in-high-demand-fields/>

32 - <https://neinfame.com/>

33 - <https://techpoint.org/digital-innovation/ascend-indiana-receives-2-45-million-in-grants-to-advance-youth-apprenticeships-statewide/>

Equip students with future-ready skills to meet the evolving demands of the county's innovative sectors.

In a region with large manufacturing and healthcare sectors, there is a surge in innovation and advancements. To remain competitive in this evolving landscape, most individuals will need to learn new skills and enhance existing competencies in an increasingly technological environment. Future-ready skills help students stay relevant amidst changing job market trends and technological progress. It involves obtaining a combination of technical expertise, adaptability, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities to prepare individuals for success in industries that evolve in real-time. One way in which Allen County is already preparing students for this is through the adaptation of the Schools of Success model.

FWCS is transitioning to the Schools of Success model³⁴, a progressive approach that redefines high school education to better prepare students for the demands of the future workforce. This model, developed in partnership with Ford Next Generation Learning (Ford NGL), revolves around creating smaller, focused learning communities within high schools. Each of these communities is centered around specific career themes such as health sciences, engineering, manufacturing, and business technology. This structure allows students to engage deeply in areas that align with their interests and the needs of the regional workforce.

A key aspect of the Schools of Success model is its emphasis on problem-based learning (PBL). This approach moves away from traditional rote learning, instead immersing students in real-world problems and projects that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork. By working on actual challenges faced in the industries they are studying, students develop practical skills and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. This hands-on experience is crucial in developing "future-ready" skills that are essential in today's dynamic work environment.

In addition, the model fosters direct interactions with employers and industry professionals. These collaborations can take various forms, from mentorship and job shadowing opportunities to internships and workplace simulations. Such interactions provide valuable insights into the workplace, helping students connect their academic learning with real-world applications. This not only enhances their educational experience but also prepares them for seamless transitions into post-secondary education or the workforce.

The Schools of Success model represents a significant shift in high school education, focusing on equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to thrive in the modern world. By integrating problem-based learning and industry engagement, FWCS is ensuring that its students are not just academically proficient, but truly future-ready.



34 - <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1702397433/fwcsk12inus/zcarpu05nckseh2rsmq/MasterPlan-FWCS-FordNGL-Updated23-12-12.pdf>

BEST PRACTICE SHOWCASE:

Junior Achievement 3DE

The Junior Achievement 3DE model in Allen County³⁵, particularly within FWCS, represents a transformative approach to education, perfectly aligning with the Schools of Success initiative in local high schools. This innovative program re-engineers the learning experience, making it deeply connected to the real world beyond the classroom.

At the heart of 3DE are small cohort learning groups, where teachers and students are grouped together to build a sense of camaraderie and trust. This structure is crucial in creating a supportive learning environment, allowing for more personalized and engaging educational experiences. The coursework in 3DE is supported by an interdisciplinary team of teachers, enhancing the learning process through a diverse range of perspectives and expertise.

The curriculum in 3DE is built around real-world business case challenges, sourced from regional and national companies. These cases make learning authentic and relevant, as students apply their core academic skills like math and English to solve real-time business problems. This approach not only connects students with local business professionals but also makes the lessons more memorable and engaging.

Collaboration is a key component of the 3DE model. It encourages students to work together in small groups, facilitating discussions and debates that mimic real-world scenarios. This method not only enhances their social and emotional skills but also prepares them for the collaborative nature of modern workplaces.

The program focuses on developing critical “future-ready” skills through its interdisciplinary curriculum. By centering the learning around case challenges, 3DE effectively doubles the learning opportunities compared to traditional classrooms. It helps students develop valuable 21st-century skills in the following competencies: creativity and innovation, critical and analytical thinking, cultural agility, engaging communication, effective collaboration, and self-direction. Students actively put these skills into place as they create and deliver compelling presentations using multiple mediums. Business professionals are already taking note of these demonstrated skills and sharing that the level of presentations they have witnessed from 3DE freshman and sophomores is at or above the quality they would expect from junior and senior university students.

The impact of the 3DE program is evident in its impressive statistics, including a significant increase in graduation rates, a decrease in cases of chronic absenteeism, and a high stability rate of the student body. These numbers underscore the program’s effectiveness in engaging and retaining students.

Business partnerships form the core of the 3DE model. After each case challenge is officially launched by the 3DE Director of Case Experience, students learn about the business, the competency the case is anchored in, and the case challenge question. Business partners are then invited into the classroom to coach students in a small group setting empowering them to share their progress on the case challenge, affirming their successes, and challenging them to produce an even better solution for their final presentation. As the projects progress, these business professionals—who are often senior leaders of the company—return to judge the top four case challenge solutions, thereby continuing to foster real-world connections with the next generation of talent.

The Junior Achievement 3DE program in Allen County, through its innovative approach and collaboration with local businesses, is setting a new standard in education. It equips students with “future-proof” skills, making them ready for the challenges of tomorrow’s workforce and transforming the way education is delivered in FWCS high schools.

35 - <https://northernindiana.ja.org/programs/3de>

Appendix A: CTE Educator Licensing

CAREER SPECIALIST PERMIT: renewable two-year permit that allows an individual to teach a specific content area at the secondary level as long as the person has met the requirements under one of the options noted below as authorized by 511 IAC 16-4-6 and IC 20-28-5-21:

OPTION 1

Bachelor's Degree: A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in a secondary content area with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Praxis Exam: Successful completion of the Praxis content licensure exam. This exam assesses knowledge and competency in the chosen content area.

Occupational Work Experience: A minimum of 4,000 hours of verified non-teaching occupational work experience within the last five years. This work experience should be relevant to the specific content area requested on the permit.

OPTION 2

Bachelor's Degree: A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in a secondary content area with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Occupational Work Experience: Having 5,000 hours of non-teaching occupational work experience within the last seven years, which must be verified, and relevant to the requested content area.

OPTION 3

Examination: Pass the Praxis content licensure exam for that specific subject area.

Occupational Work Experience: Having 5,000 hours of non-teaching occupational work experience within the last seven years, which must be verified, and relevant to the requested content area.

- After receiving the initial permit, the holder must complete a pedagogy component for classroom use. It is mandatory for the first permit renewal, while subsequent renewals require a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) documenting 40 hours/points of completed professional development

Unlicensed vocational instructor* (can be referred to as 50% rule, only 50% of teachers can be an unlicensed vocational path). A school corporation, school, or secondary school vocational program may hire an instructor without a license for up to 50% of the CTE courses offered, provided the instructor meets a combination of requirements including hours of work experience, occupational licensure, education.

WORKPLACE SPECIALIST I: INITIAL allows individuals with occupational work experience in a specific vocational area to be qualified to teach in that specific vocational area in a career center, high school or within the Department of Corrections.

ELIGIBILITY

1. The initial license is valid for 2 years, renewable for 1 year upon director's request. After completing the Workplace Specialist I training and passing all three TABE exams, teachers can convert to a Workplace Specialist II License. TABE requirements can also be fulfilled through specific university courses or PPST scores.
2. To qualify for the Workplace Specialist I License, applicants must have a High School Diploma, be at least 21 years old, and be employed in a specific vocational area.
3. They need to meet one of the following occupational experience criteria:
 - a. 5,000 hours (about 2.5 years of experience) in the last five years.
 - b. 4,000 hours (about 2 years) in the past 10 years and demonstration of occupational competency test.
 - c. 4,000 hours (about 2 years) in the past 10 years and evidence of occupational licensure or occupational proficiency based on approved regional, state, or national board training and evaluation.
 - d. 4,000 hours (about 2 years) in the past 10 years and completion of an accredited 2-year or higher degree in the specific certification area.
 - e. 4,000 hours (about 2 years) in the past 10 years and completion of an apprenticeship or internship program. Required documents for the application include a CPR card, work experience verification, and proof of suicide prevention training.
4. Applying for Initial Workplace Specialist I License
5. Workplace Specialist I Training
6. Mentors and Director Information

ADJUNCT PERMIT: (HEA 1251; PL 168-2022)

1. The law requires adjunct teachers to have at least four years of experience in the subject they want to teach.
2. They must also be mentored by another teacher.

