

**Feedback on the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education’s Building Block #7  
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The Revised Draft of the report on Building Block #7 – Career and Technical Education presents a more positive view of the work that Maryland has been engaged in for over 25 years to provide high-quality CTE to Maryland’s students. There are some items that still require clarification:

	<b>Information in the Report</b>	<b>MSDE’s Feedback</b>
1.	Maryland does require CTE programs to lead to either an industry-recognized credential or college credit. However, NCEE points out this standard is less rigorous than top performing systems...The standard is a <i>certificate</i> ...	Most employers <i>only</i> recognize credentials that are meaningful to work in an industry, not just any <i>certificate</i> . What is the difference? Maryland (MD) CTE programs are fully aligned with industry-recognized credentials that add value to students’ ability to land well-paying positions (where available and appropriate).
2.	Currently only 21% of high school students are enrolled in CTE programs in MD.	In 2016, total CTE enrollment was 97,858 students, nearly 39% of all high school students were enrolled (not 21%). This may have been confused with the percent of 2016 graduates who completed CTE which was 23%.
3.	The success of CTE programs must be judged based on receipt of an industry certificate or license, or college credit that is aligned with a career pathway, and not on completing a sequence.	Secondary CTE programs are not only <del>measured</del> by the number of students who complete them. They must meet the federal Perkins Core Indicators of Performance (students’ academic attainment in reading/language arts, academic attainment in math, technical skill attainment (TSA), school completion, student graduation rates, placement, non-traditional participation, and non-traditional completion). Failure to meet these results in an improvement plan. Also, the state measures dual completion – the percent of students meeting CTE completion and USM credit entrance requirements – up from 14% in 1992 to 58% in 2016. All local school systems go through an extensive monitoring process every five years that includes a self-assessment; on-site visit by a representative team from MHEC, Commerce, GWDB, MSDE and DLLR; and a comprehensive report is provided to each site with commendations, findings, and recommendations that inform the next CTE local application for funding (also sent to secondary and postsecondary administrators, colleagues, and superintendents). TSA, completion of CTE and youth apprenticeships are now in ESSA accountability.
4.	The Commission recommends that a high-level group of stakeholders be appointed as an implementation and monitoring group to develop high-performing CTE programs...Partner with Pathways to Prosperity and Jobs for the Future	MD is a leading state in implementing rigorous career pathways...it is surprising to see a specific program (such as Pathways to Prosperity) recommended for consideration when MD has been used as a model by other states. For example, Delaware’s (DE’s) CTE Director worked at MSDE prior to going to DE and took with him many ideas to implement high-quality CTE in Delaware - a state that is involved in Pathways to Prosperity. MD has a long history of implementing high-quality CTE pathways and pruning out those that are not aligned to workforce and economic development needs. MD CTE is continuously engaged with leaders in business, industry, two-and four-year colleges, unions, open shops, chambers, state and local government, and non-profit organizations. The recommendations lag behind actual longstanding practice in Maryland.

	Information in the Report	MSDE's Feedback
5.	Engagement with the business community and higher education...	Every local school system and community college is required to have a joint Local Advisory Council (LAC) in state statute. This is monitored and followed-up on annually in the CTE local plan application. Program advisory committees are required for every CTE program as well. Two- and four-year college partners are included.
6.	Evaluation beyond completing a sequence of courses...	See the item in block # 3 page 1. Secondary CTE programs are not only measured by the number of students who complete them, but also by the metrics listed there.
7.	CTE programs should have regular data collection and public dissemination of the data	See <a href="http://mdctedata.org">mdctedata.org</a> -- the widely disseminated dashboards provide very detailed information about CTE at the state and local levels as required by the federal Perkins Act.
8.	Partnerships with community colleges...	Every local school system partners with their respective community college where CTE programs are offered.
9.	Align CTE programs with economic goals and workforce needs of the state and regions within the state.	MSDE regularly consults with the Governors Workforce Development Board, MHEC, Commerce, DLLR, and employers to align programs with workforce and economic development needs. Representatives from these agencies serve on the CTE monitoring teams and review new program proposals to ensure alignment with labor market needs.
10.	Inventory current CTE programs	This is something that is done annually with the submission of the local Perkins plan. Programs with low enrollment and/or low completion are flagged and more carefully reviewed to determine whether to continue them.
11.	Development of a plan for additional CTE programs	This is a good idea – funding for the Project Lead The Way Biomedical Sciences program enabled MD to expand enrollment and completion in high quality CTE. Expansion of CTE programs requires funding, facilities, teachers, equipment, consumables, and other resources.
12.	Develop policies to solve the shortage of CTE teachers	This is being addressed through a partnership between the Division of Educator Effectiveness and the Division of Career and College Readiness which is responsible for CTE.

The Commission's recommendations are aligned with impressions of "old" vocational education. Maryland has moved beyond the old style vocational education to offer contemporary, high-quality CTE programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and early college credit. The system does need to continuously improve by increasing the number of programs leading to transcripted college credit and more industry-recognized credentials. Equity in and access to high-quality CTE programs are important to the future of CTE in MD if the state is to remain competitive. It also requires funding to incentivize local school systems and community colleges to develop programs that enable more students to have access to high-quality CTE programs that are emerging in today's economy including apprenticeships.

There is also a strong need for early career development from kindergarten to adulthood. Students in other countries have greater engagement and knowledge about the career options available to them prior to high school. The United States places an over-emphasis on college, which is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Many students graduate from high school without a career interest in mind. College is a very expensive form of career exploration. There is no doubt that we need to do more to expand and enhance CTE in MD, but the Commission's recommendations must address the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs of schools and students. Maryland has work to do, especially to ensure that ALL students graduate college and career ready, not just the CTE students.