



Career and Technical Education

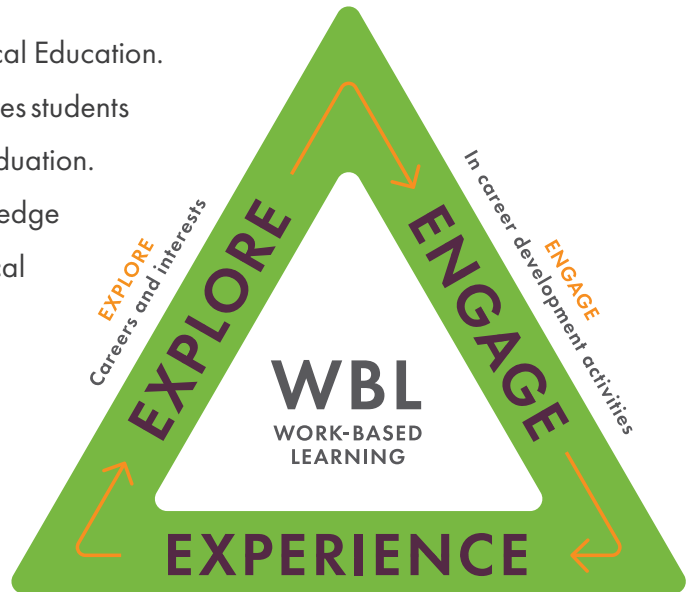
**Classroom** to **CAREER**

# What is CTE?

CTE stands for Career and Technical Education.

It's hands-on education that prepares students for college and careers after graduation.

It combines academic knowledge with technical skills and practical experiences. And it's fun! Getting a sense of potential careers now can save you time and money later.



**EXPERIENCE**

Firsthand learning through business and industry placement



More than **26,000** South Dakota high school students participate in CTE classes.

# Why do it?

Students who take at least two CTE classes experience all kinds of benefits. They have improved graduation rates; they develop valuable workforce skills; they earn industry credentials; and have a strong track record of going on to postsecondary education and training after high school. In other words, it's a stepping stone to what's next in your life!





**92%** of CTE students are employed, in college, in the military, or otherwise productively engaged within 3-6 months after high school



**95%** of CTE students graduated on time, compared with 84% of their peers (SY 2022-23)



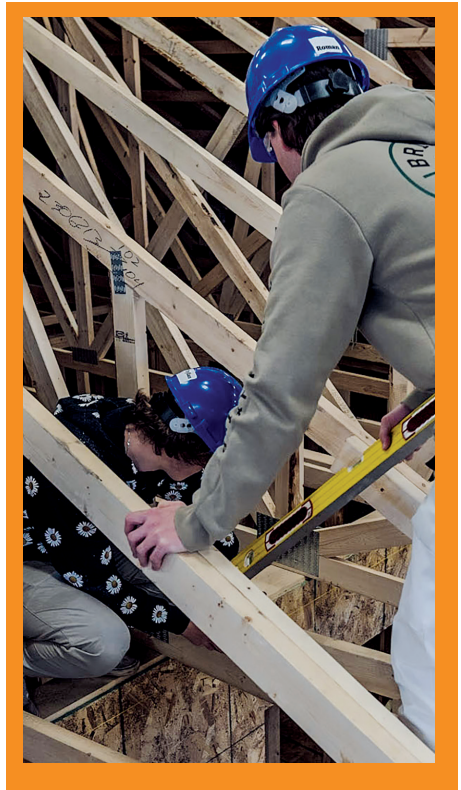
# What are my options?

In today's world, career opportunities are endless, which may feel a bit overwhelming. CTE helps by focusing these opportunities into 16 different areas called "career clusters" that lead to a variety of careers. Be sure to take some time in high school to explore options available to you. You might be able to rule out a few choices, or you might find the career that fits your interests perfectly!

**Career  
Clusters:**

**16**

**Help you make sense of your choices**



# What could your future hold?



## Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Agronomist

Agribusiness Manager

Landscape Architect



## Architecture & Construction

Architect

Engineer

Electrician



## Arts/AV Communications

Content Creator

Graphic Designer

Media Production



## Business

Management Analyst

Human Resources

Supply Chain Manager



## Education & Training

Speech-Language Pathologist

School Counselor

Classroom Teacher



## Finance

Personal Financial Advisor

Accountant

Securities and Investments Advisor



## Government & Public Administration

City Manager

Political Science Professor

Emergency Management Director



## Health Science

Physical Therapist

Nutritionist

Nurse Practitioner



## Hospitality & Tourism

Event Planner

Chef

Human Resources Manager



## Human Services

Substance Abuse Counselor

Social Worker

Interpreter or Translator



## Information Technology

Digital Forensic Examiner

Software Developer

Cyber Security Analyst



## Law, Public Safety & Security

Paralegal

Emergency and Fire Management

Criminal Justice Instructor



## Manufacturing

Precision Machinist

Welder

Engineering Technician



## Marketing

Market Research Analysts

Marketing Specialist

Merchandise



## STEM

Robotic Controls Technician

Research Scientist

Environmental Engineer



## Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Service Technician

Pilot

Air Traffic Controller

# How do CTSOs help?

Joining a CTSO – a Career and Technical Student Organization – is a great way to discover more about career paths you're interested in. It provides experiences to develop your leadership and communication skills. It also looks good on a resume. CTSOs offer competitive events where you can showcase your skills and talents and meet students with similar interests. It may even land you a trip to a national convention, held in cities across the U.S. If this sounds interesting to you, check out the CTSOs that have chapters here in South Dakota.

**“The Lesson Plan competition taught me about classroom management, engagement, and other skills I plan to implement when I have my own classroom.”**

- Katelyn Christopherson, Harrisburg High School,  
President Educators Rising







“HOSA provides me the opportunity to get hands-on and apply my knowledge.”

- Mazzi Moore,  
Brandon Valley High School,  
2025 Cohort 20 JKCF  
Young Scholar



# What is work-based learning?

Work-based learning is an important part of CTE. It connects students to authentic workplace experiences. South Dakota recognizes five work-based learning courses called “capstone experiences.” Each is designed to build your knowledge base, skills, confidence, and connections within your area of interest.



## Entrepreneurship Experience

- Investigate ideas for business to provide a product or service
- Spend time with business/industry mentor to learn about operating a business
- Develop and present a comprehensive business plan



## Service Learning Experience

- Collaborate with community/industry partners to plan or support a service learning project
- Present experience through presentation or professional portfolio



## Senior Experience

- Create a research component related to chosen senior experience topic
- Incorporate an "experience" with the help of a business/industry mentor
- Create and present experience with a professional portfolio



## Youth Internship

- Participate in a hands-on internship experience with a community partner
- Create a professional portfolio documenting and reflecting on the experience
- Develop a postsecondary personal learning plan based on the experience



## Youth Apprenticeship

- Participate in a hands-on youth apprenticeship experience with a partner
- Create a professional portfolio documenting and reflecting on the experience
- Develop a postsecondary personal learning plan based on the experience



# When can I start?

Want to get a jump on your career while still in high school? One way to do that is to earn an industry-specific credential. Having a credential shows employers that you're serious about a career path. It can increase your marketability and job prospects, too.

**Approved  
Credentials:**

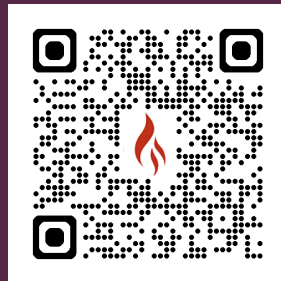
CNA • CDL • EMT • ServSafe

**50**

What's next? Visit [sdmylife.com](https://sdmylife.com)



Check out how CTE students are doing in your school:





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