Programmatic Accreditation Guidelines for Career and Technical Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Code of Virginia § 22.1-227.01. Career and technical education defined.

As used in this article, "career and technical education" means an organized education program offering a sequence of courses that (i) may incorporate field, laboratory, and classroom instruction; (ii) emphasize career and technical occupational experiences; (iii) are designed to prepare individuals for further education and gainful employment; and **(iv) are aligned with state or national program certification and accreditation standards, if such standards exist for the sequence of courses.** However, clause (iv) shall not apply to any program offered by industry in cooperation with a local school board.

The following guidance outlines programmatic accreditation standards for career and technical education (CTE) programs. Clearly defined and uniform standards provide a strong foundation for CTE programs that prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand careers. The goal of these standards is to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations with a focus on continuous program improvement and student achievement.

II. PROGRAMMATIC ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

STANDARD ONE – PROGRAM PLANNING

Program planning standards provides guidance for planning, implementing, and monitoring of CTE programs.

Standard		Description
1.1	**Advisory Committee** 8 VAC 20-120-50	Each local education agency or region shall establish a general career and technical education advisory committee to provide recommendations to the local educational agency (or board) on current job needs and the relevancy of career and technical education programs offered and to assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the local plan and application. 1. Committees shall be composed of members of the public, including students, teachers, parents, and representatives from business, industry, and labor, with appropriate representation of both sexes and racial and ethnic groups found in the school, community, or region served by the committee. 2. The committee shall meet at regular intervals during the year to assist in the planning, implementing, and assessing of career and technical education programs.
1.2	**New Course/Program Application** 8 VAC 20-120-110	The need for new career and technical preparation programs shall be based on student interests and labor market needs. This should be a survey of students in grades six-11 and administered within the prior 12-month period of the new course/program application submission. School divisions can request VDOE approval of new CTE programs and/or courses at any time of the year, but they must be approved prior to including any budget items in the Career and Technical Education Local Plan and Budget Application.

1.3	**Approved Sequence** *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:4.D.5	D. In establishing graduation requirements, the Board shall: 5. Require students to complete at least one course in fine or performing arts or career and technical education, one course in United States and Virginia history, and two sequential elective courses chosen from a concentration of courses selected from a variety of options that may be planned to ensure the completion of a focused sequence of elective courses that provides a foundation for further education or training or preparation for employment.
1.4	**Licenses and Endorsements** *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:2.B	B. School boards shall employ licensed instructional personnel qualified in the relevant subject areas.
1.5	**Recruitment and Retention** Public Law 115-224, Perkins V Section 133(b)(8)	(b) CONTENTS.—The eligible agency shall determine the requirements for local applications, except that each local application shall contain— (8) a description of how the eligible recipient will coordinate with the eligible agency and institutions of higher education to support the recruitment, preparation, retention, and training, including professional development, of teachers, faculty, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals who meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements (including any requirements met through alternative routes to certification), including individuals from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession.
1.6	**Financial Resources** 8 VAC 20-120-30.2(c,e)	Financial assistance shall be provided to support the operation, improvement, and expansion of career and technical education. 2. Financial assistance provided through categorical entitlements shall be used to support the following: c. Equipment included on the Recommended Equipment Approved for Career and Technical Education Programs lists by the Department of

		Education or local option approved by the Department of Education; e. Funding for industry credentials appearing on the Virginia Board of Education approved credentialing list.
1.7	**Expansion and Modernization** Public Law 115-224, Perkins V Section 135(b)(5)(D)	"(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR USES OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and that— (5) plan and carry out elements that support the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study and that result in increasing student achievement of the local levels of performance established under section 113, which may include— (D) appropriate equipment, technology, and instructional materials (including support for library resources) aligned with business and industry needs, including machinery, testing equipment, tools, implements, hardware and software, and other new and emerging instructional materials.
1.8	**Maximum Enrollment** 8 VACS 20-120-150.1	Enrollments in career and technical education courses shall not exceed the number of individual workstations. 1. Career and technical education laboratory classes that use equipment that has been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor for hazardous occupations shall be limited to a maximum of 20 students per laboratory. The career and technical education courses that have this restriction are published annually by the Virginia Department of Education. 2. Career and technical education courses designed specifically and approved for students who are disadvantaged shall be limited to an average of 15 students per

		instructor per class period with no class being more than 18. 3. Career and technical education courses designed specifically and approved for students with disabilities shall be limited to an average of 10 students per instructor per class period with no class being more than 12 or up to an average of 12 students per class period with no class being more than 15 where an instructional aide is provided.
1.9	**Access to CTE Programs** 8 VAC 20-120-100	Career and technical education programs administered by local education agencies receiving federal or state education funds shall be made equally available and accessible to all persons and specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, political affiliation, or veteran status, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities.
1.10	**Professional Development** Public Law 115-224, Perkins V Section 134(b)(2)(A)	(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR USES OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and that— (2) provide professional development for teachers, faculty, school leaders, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, career guidance and academic counselors, or paraprofessionals, which may include— (A) professional development on supporting individualized academic and career and technical education instructional approaches, including the integration of academic and career and technical education standards and curricula.

STANDARD TWO – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The instructor plans course instruction using the approved state-established, industry-validated course competencies, ensures the program's career and technical student organization (CTSO) is an integral and active part of the career and technical education program, ensures students have access to industry recognized credentials (IRCs), and ensures students are college and career ready.

Standard		Description
2.1	**State-Established, Industry-Validated Course Competencies** 8 VAC 20-120-120.A	A. Career and technical education programs shall be competency based and meet the following criteria: 1. Career and technical education programs are aligned with states' career clusters and career pathways that allow for utilization with academic and career plans; 2. State-established, industry-validated competencies are identified and stated; 3. Competencies are specified to students prior to instruction; 4. Measures for successful performance of individual competencies are identified, stated, and used to evaluate achievement of competencies; 5. A system exists for rating and documenting the competency performance of each student; and 6. Competencies shall address all aspects of an industry and workplace readiness skills. All career and technical education course competencies are located on the CTE Resource Center website.

2.2	**Career and Technical Student Organization Integration** 8 VAC 20-120-160	Career and technical student organizations enhance CTE through the co-curricular network of programs, business and community partnerships, and leadership development activities at the local, state, and national levels. A. All career and technical education students shall be provided opportunities to participate in instructional activities of the local organization. B. A career and technical education student organization shall be an integral and active part of each secondary career and technical program (grades 9, 10, 11, 12) offered. C. Each middle school career and technical education program (grades 6, 7, 8) offered shall include co-curricular instructional activities related to the respective career and technical education student organization. D. Where dues are collected for membership in such organizations, payment of such dues shall not determine a student's participation in instructional activities of the local organization.
2.3	**College and Career Readiness** 8 VAC 20-131-140-C.1	A. Each middle and secondary school shall provide for the early identification and enrollment of students in a program with a range of educational and academic experiences related to college and career readiness in and outside the classroom, including an emphasis on experiences that will motivate disadvantaged and minority students to prepare for a career or postsecondary education. C. Beginning with the 2018–2019 academic year: 1. Each elementary, middle, and secondary school shall provide for the identification by all students of personal interests and abilities to support planning for postsecondary opportunities and career preparation. Such support shall include provision of information concerning exploration of career cluster areas in elementary schools and course

		information and planning for college preparation programs, opportunities for educational and academic experiences in and outside the classroom, including internships and work-based learning, and the multiple pathways to college and career readiness in middle and high school. 2. … In middle school, students are to complete a locally selected career interest inventory and select a career pathway. To support development of the [Academic and Career Plan], students shall complete a career investigations course selected from the career and technical education state-approved list, or a school division-provided alternative means of delivering the career investigations course content, provided that the alternative is equivalent in content and academic rigor. The course, or its alternative, shall address, at a minimum, planning for academic courses, work-based learning opportunities, completion of industry certifications, possible independent projects, and postsecondary education. … 5. Wherever possible, students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit (dual enrollment), under the following conditions: a. Written approval of the high school principal prior to participation in dual enrollment must be obtained; b. The college must accept the student for admission to the course; c. The course must be given by the college for degree credits (no remedial courses will be accepted); and d. Students participating in courses offered by an institution of higher education shall be permitted to exceed a full course load in order to

		participate in courses that lead to a degree, certificate, or credential at such institution.
2.4	**Postsecondary Education and Training** Public Law 115-224, Perkins V Section 135(b)(5)(A)(C)	(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR USES OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and that— (5) plan and carry out elements that support the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study and that result in increasing student achievement of the local levels of performance established under section 113, which may include— (A) a curriculum aligned with the requirements for a program of study; … (C) where appropriate, expanding opportunities for CTE concentrators to participate in accelerated learning programs (as described in section 4104(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7114(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV)), including dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high schools, and the development or implementation of articulation agreements as part of a career and technical education program of study.
2.5	**Industry Credentialing, Certification, and Licensure** 8 VAC 20-120-120.D	(1) Career and technical education programs must provide industry credentialing, certification, and licensure as approved by the Board of Education to meet requirements for verified credit.

STANDARD THREE – EQUIPMENT

Equipment is aligned with business and industry needs and is maintained, replaced, and inventoried in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Standard		Description
3.1	**Equipment Inventory and Disposal** 8 VAC 20-120-80	Local education agencies shall maintain a current inventory of all equipment items purchased in whole or in part with federal or state funds. Equipment purchased with state funds must: 1. Be acquired in accordance with state procurement laws and regulations; 2. Include local funding that would provide maintenance of effort; and 3. Be itemized on the Recommended Equipment Approved for Career and Technical Education Programs list provided by the Department of Education or local option approved by the Department of Education. Equipment purchased with combined state and federal funds must be used in accordance with provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and acquired and disposed of in accordance with federal Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and appropriate state procurement laws and regulations.
3.2	**Equipment Aligned with Business and Industry Needs** Public Law 115-224, Perkins V Section 135(b)(5)(D)	(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR USES OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and that— (5) plan and carry out elements that support the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study and that result in increasing student achievement of the local levels of performance established under section 113, which may include— (D) appropriate equipment, technology, and instructional materials (including support for library

		resources) aligned with business and industry needs, including machinery, testing equipment, tools, implements, hardware and software, and other new and emerging instructional materials.

STANDARD FOUR – HEALTH AND SAFETY

CTE courses meet standards that are applicable to the operation of the program and comply with federal and state laws and regulations related to health and safety.

Standard		Description
4.1	**Health and Safety Standards** 8 VAC 20-170.B	B. Each career and technical education program shall comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations related to health and safety. The Safety Best Practice Guide for CTE is a collection of best practice resources used to assist school divisions in the development of a local school safety plan.
4.2	**Eye Protection** *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-275	Every student and teacher in any school or institution of higher education shall be required to wear industrial quality eye protective devices while participating in any of the following courses or laboratories: 1. Career and technical education shops or laboratories involving experience with: a. Hot molten metals, b. Milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid materials, c. Heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials, d. Gas or electric arc welding, e. Repair of any vehicle, or f. Caustic or explosive materials; 2. Chemical or combined chemical-physical laboratories involving caustic or explosive chemicals or hot liquids or solids.
	Student Safety 8 VAC 20-120-170.A	A. Each career and technical education program shall include health and safety standards, including protective eye devices, that are applicable to the operation of that program, that shall be made an integral part of program instruction.