

Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS)

At a Glance:

Executive Director: Dr. Ellen Solek
Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Justin Lowe
Established - 2022
Statutory authority - Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-95
Central office – 39 Woodland St., Hartford, CT
Number of employees – 1,767
Recurring operating expenses -- \$ 189,628,826.00

Organizational Structure

The Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) is governed by a board that consists of eleven members: (1) Four executives of Connecticut-based employers who are nominated by the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission established pursuant to section 31-3h, and appointed by the Governor, (2) five members appointed by the State Board of Education, (3) the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, and (4) the Labor Commissioner. The Governor shall appoint the chairperson. The chairperson of the CTECS board shall serve as a nonvoting ex-officio member of the State Board of Education.

The Executive Director is the agency head responsible for the system's operation, administration and financial accountability. The Superintendent reports to the Executive Director and remains responsible for the operation and administration of the system's schools and all other educational matters.

The Executive Director and Superintendent oversee CTECS administration, Legal, Labor Relations, Affirmative Action, Personnel, Communications, Pupil Services, Fiscal, Curriculum and Instruction, and School Development and Accountability departments. Information Technology Services are provided by the Bureau of Information Technology Services, and Human Resources are provided by the Department of Administrative Services.

CTECS consists of 17 high schools, one technical education center, and two postgraduate schools for aviation maintenance technicians.

Mission

We envision CTECS as the primary pipeline for Connecticut's skilled labor workforce. Through exemplary trade and academic programming, CTECS prepares trade-bound students to meet the skilled workforce needs in Connecticut.

Statutory Responsibility

Under Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-95, CTECS is a public, state-wide system of technical education and career schools that offer full-time comprehensive secondary education, as well as part-time and evening, programs in vocational, technical, technological, and postsecondary education and training. The beneficiaries of CTECS are the approximately 11,500 technical high school students and their parents and guardians as well as the approximate 3,000 adult learners who attend part-time and evening apprenticeship and extension programs.

Public Service

CTECS provides a unique and rigorous learning environment that: (1) ensures student academic success and trade/technology mastery; (2) prepares students for postsecondary education, including apprenticeships, and immediate productive employment; and (3) responds to employers' and industries' current and emerging global workforce needs and expectations through business/school partnerships.

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CTECS operations are guided by four goals set forth in the Strategic Operating Plan. These goals areas encompass School Environment and Safety; Student Recruitment and Access; Trade and Academic Programming; and Talent Management. These goals along with several other benchmarks are used to measure the effectiveness of CTECS programming. Additional benchmarks include state mandated assessments, work-based learning (WBL) participation and industry-recognized credentials earned.

WBL is offered as a way for students in grades 11 and 12 to gain real-world experience, work in teams, solve problems, and meet employers' expectations. Through partnerships with local companies, students work on real projects, gaining hands-on career development experience.

Unique to CTECS is the Student Workforce – a business run by students and faculty providing students with real projects for real customers here in Connecticut. A wide range of services are offered to the public at a fraction of the market price. The work helps prepare students for the transition from high school to the workforce.

Industry input is vital to providing quality and relevant Career and Technical Education programs that prepare students to enter the workforce. All trade areas hold program advisory committee meetings with local business and industry partners. Employers collaborate with educators to ensure CTECS curriculum, facilities, and credentials align with the latest industry trends and needs. Participation also allow employers to identify potential interns, pre-apprentices, or future employees who have been trained according to industry standards.

To provide the public with convenient access to information about CTECS programming and ease of communication, CTECS maintains a website for each of its 20 locations and central office. The website contains directory information, program information, news, policies and a contact form. Additionally, CTECS utilizes a school-to-home communication system to regularly update stakeholders. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn) is also utilized as a communication tool.

Improvements/Achievements for fiscal year 2022-2023

- Successfully transitioned to an independent state agency per Public Act 17-237 § 16.
- Staffed a fiscal administrative office, which was critical for CTECS to function effectively as an independent agency.
- More than doubled the capacity of the internet bandwidth at each school.
- Implemented Pixelot, a live video streaming service for sporting events. Parents can now watch their children's events in person or remotely.
- Implemented a district-wide state-of-the-art HVAC system which allows all schools' HVAC systems to be monitored and controlled remotely. Thus, saving costs for overtime and also allowing for immediate notifications of emergencies such as flooding conditions or overheating.
- Expanded grade 9-12 trade programs in response to state employer needs: Masonry (Waterbury), Architecture (Hartford), Criminal Justice and Protective Services (Hartford and Windham), Auto Collision and Repair (Danbury).
- Expanded evening adult education apprenticeship offerings to include Barbering at multiple locations.
- 16 out of 17 high schools achieved recognition as a High Reliability (HRS) Level 1 certified
- Awarded green energy grant funding to expand our student transportation options to include the purchase and acquisition of seven million dollars of electric buses and charging stations
- 1268 students participated in WBL, a 16.5% increase over 2021-22
- 284 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy
- A total of 17,627 industry-recognized credentials earned by CTECS students, a 32% increase over 2021-22

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) is committed to a policy of affirmative action/equal opportunity employment for all qualified persons. CTECS does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

The Affirmative Action Office, under the direction of the Executive Director, is responsible for ensuring the agency's compliance with a wide variety of federal and state laws and department policies relative to affirmative action and equal opportunity employment. This includes the investigation and resolution of discrimination complaints, as well as determining and documenting reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

During the reporting period, the Department hired 167 employees: 64 White males, 66 White females, 5 Black males, 7 Black females, 7 Hispanic males, 16 Hispanic females, 1 AAIANHNPI female and 1 (2 or more races) female. There were no goal candidates established during the previous reporting period as CTECS was a newly created agency as of 7/1/2022.