



Career and Technical Education

CTE DIRECTIONS

Career and Technical Education (CTE) News and Information

April 2026

Career and Technical Education provides all students access to high-quality, rigorous career-focused programs that result in attainment of credentials with labor market value.

Utah Durable Skills

Utah CTE wants to ensure that students are not only technically proficient but also possess the invaluable durable skills that will set them apart from their competition in the workforce. This month we highlight the skill of professionalism.

Professionalism is defined as how a person behaves and interacts with others to build trust and respect in personal and professional settings. In a CTE setting, this goes beyond just "acting right"—it is the consistent practice of reliability, work ethic, and high-quality communication that transforms a student into a career-ready individual. Key components of professionalism include integrity, self-discipline, dependability, self-motivation, accountability, introspective, and punctuality.



Why Professionalism Matters in CTE

As our students step into internships, apprenticeships, and entry-level roles, their technical skills get them the interview, but their professionalism keeps them the job. Fostering these habits ensures they can:

- **Build a Reliable Reputation:** Consistency in attendance and meeting deadlines creates trust with employers and clients.
- **Master Professional Communication:** Effectively navigating emails, workplace hierarchies, and client interactions sets them apart from their peers.
- **Adapt to Industry Standards:** Understanding that different environments (a medical office vs. a construction site) require specific behavioral norms and safety mindsets.
- **Self-Regulate:** Taking the initiative to manage their own time and quality of work without constant supervision.

Practical Ideas for Teaching Professionalism

Here are a few ways to weave professionalism into your daily classroom or lab routines:

- **The "Clock-In" System:** Replace a traditional roll call with a professional "clock-in" station. Students must check in by a specific time, mirroring industry standards for punctuality. If they are "late to the job site," require a professional email or verbal explanation to the "supervisor" (you) explaining the delay.
- **Dress for Success Simulations:** Dedicate specific days (e.g., "Professional Thursdays") where students dress in industry-appropriate attire. Whether it's scrubs for Health Science or business casual for Marketing, it helps students associate their appearance with their professional identity.
- **Industry-Standard Peer Reviews:** Instead of only the teacher grading work, have students perform "Quality Assurance" checks on each other's projects using an industry rubric. This teaches them how to give and receive constructive, professional feedback without taking it personally.
- **The "Clean-Floor" Policy:** Implement a "5-Minute Professional Reset" at the end of every period. Students must leave their workspace better than they found it. This reinforces the idea that maintaining tools and environments is a non-negotiable professional responsibility.
- **Mock Professional Emails:** When a student has a question about an assignment or needs an extension, require them to submit the request via a formal email with a subject line, professional greeting, and clear "ask."

Advice to Students

Utah high school seniors were asked, “What advice would you offer to future students about taking CTE courses during high school? Taigon gives this advice.

Taigon: Future Welder



“Take advantage of the free and low-cost training opportunity that the CTE courses provide. It is so much more affordable than postsecondary programs, while still providing useful training and experience. CTE courses are a great way to get a head start on your pathway without taking on debt or large financial investments early on in life.

“Make sure you choose courses that align with your career goals. If you’re interested in welding, take a welding class. If you’re still unsure of your career goals, then take multiple CTE courses so that you can gain experience in multiple fields and figure out what you enjoy.

“Take CTE classes seriously and earn as many certifications as you can. Use your time in CTE courses to develop a strong work ethic. Become dependable and take pride in your work. Certain certifications can give you an advantage when applying for college programs or even jobs. These classes emphasize real-world skills, so take the chance to practice, learn, and participate in as many as you can.”

Adeline: CTE and Life After High School

“CTE has helped me in more ways than I can express with words. I have learned to be confident in my skills and abilities. I have also learned how to manage my time better when working on a project. Taking different CTE courses during my time in high school has broadened my horizons by allowing me to get hands-on experience in subjects or hobbies that interest me.

“My CTE classes have been my most favorite out of all the classes I have taken throughout high school. I am working on becoming a CTE teacher. My CTE teachers have made a huge impact on me in the way they built and maintained a relationship with me and my fellow students. If there is one thing I would wish for every student, I would wish that they would find a CTE class and teacher that resonates with them in the way that I have.”



@UtahCTE Social Media Highlights

- Congratulations to the nine CTE administrators who received an award at the Utah ACTE Conference. All nine advance to represent Utah at the ACTE Region V Conference <https://tinyurl.com/3wcahfv8>.
- Ogden SD junior high and high school students learned about Utah’s growing aerospace and defense industry at a career exploration event. Students learned about the future careers with industry partners <https://tinyurl.com/3mdhtpyp>.
- It’s not too early to begin planning a summer camp experience. To find a camp near you check out the list of the Utah STEM Action Center summer camps <https://tinyurl.com/3n3uykxc>.
- In celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States, the Utah STEM Action Center and UMAKE invites you to design a 3D printable coin representing one of Utah’s 29 counties. From kindergarten to adults, this contest is open to all Utah residents. Learn about the contest at <https://stem.utah.gov/coin-contest/>. Submission deadline is April 15, 2026.

Calendar:

April 2: [Utah State Board of Education Meeting](#) – 250 East 500 South – Salt Lake City, UT

April 9: [Utah State Charter School Board Meeting](#) – 10008 Creek Run Way – Sandy, UT

[Utah CTE Calendar](#) | [ACTE Calendar](#)

Utah CTE classes are open to all qualified students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

Utah State Board of Education | Career and Technical Education
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