

Here's a comprehensive rundown of the major national frameworks, standards, and credentialing systems across the WBL, CCR, and CTE landscape. I've organized them by focus area so you can see how they layer together.

CTE Program & Pathway Standards

Advance CTE — National Career Clusters Framework (modernized 2024): Currently there are 14 Career Clusters, including three Cross-Cutting Clusters, representing 72 Sub-Clusters, underpinned by six purpose-driven Cluster Groupings and 12 Career Ready Practices embedded across all careers. [Career Clusters](#) This is the backbone most states use for organizing CTE programs. The 2024 modernization recentered it around industry structure rather than purely education taxonomy. Documentation at careertech.org/career-clusters.

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC): For the first time in the history of CTE, states throughout the nation have a common benchmark for what students should know and be able to do after completing a program of study. [CTE TAC](#) A state-led initiative with 42 states participating. Includes content-specific standards for each Career Cluster plus the 12 Career Ready Practices. PDF available at nyctecenter.org/planning/curriculum-resources.

ACTE Quality CTE Program of Study Framework: Beta Version 4.0 was pilot tested in 2018, and data was correlated with program-level Perkins performance data showing a significant positive relationship between scores on the self-evaluation rubric and Perkins accountability indicators. [ACTE Online](#) Over 90 criteria across 12 elements. Used widely for Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments. Details at acteonline.org/professional-development/high-quality-cte-tools.

Perkins V Core Indicators of Performance: The federal accountability backbone. States report on academic proficiency, graduation rate, postsecondary placement, and nontraditional concentration, plus at least one program quality indicator (recognized credential attainment, postsecondary credits via dual enrollment, or WBL participation). Full indicator detail at cte.ed.gov/accountability/core-indicators.

Career Readiness & Employability

U.S. DOE/OCTAE Employability Skills Framework: In 2025, OCTAE launched the Employability Skills Framework 2.0 project to modernize its widely-used Employability Skills Framework (2018). [Ed](#) Organizes skills into Applied Knowledge, Critical Thinking,

Interpersonal Skills/Personal Qualities, and Workplace Skills. The 2.0 update is in progress. At cte.ed.gov/initiatives/employability-skills-framework.

NACE Career Readiness Competencies: NACE launched its Career Readiness Initiative in 2015 to address a fundamental need for new college graduates: a shared understanding of what is needed to launch and develop a successful career. [NACE](https://naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined) Eight competencies (Communication, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Technology, Leadership, Professionalism, Career & Self-Development, Equity & Inclusion). Primarily postsecondary-focused but increasingly referenced by K-12. At naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined.

ACT WorkKeys / National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC): A nationally recognized, portable, evidence-based credential that measures and certifies essential foundational work skills needed for success in jobs across industries and occupations. [ACT](https://act.org) Three assessments (Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, Workplace Documents), four certificate levels (Bronze through Platinum). Many states embed NCRC into CTE graduation or accountability. At [act.org WorkKeys](https://act.org/WorkKeys).

School Counseling & Career Development

ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success: Describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development, based on a survey of research and best practices from a wide array of educational standards. [American School Counselor Association](https://www.schoolcounselor.org) The successor to ASCA National Standards. Organized into Mindset Standards and Behavior Standards (Learning Strategies, Self-Management Skills, Social Skills). Free download at schoolcounselor.org.

National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) — 2024 update: The three domains are: (1) Social Emotional Learning, (2) Academic & Lifelong Learning, (3) Career Development. [NCDA](https://ncda.org) Maintained by NCDA with 11 goals and indicators organized by Bloom's Taxonomy learning stages (Knowledge Acquisition, Application, Reflection). Applicable K-12 through adult. At [ncda.org NCDG](https://ncda.org/NCDG).

Social-Emotional Learning

CASEL Framework (SEL Competencies): Five core competencies — Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making. CASEL maintains a state resource center with frameworks and

competencies across grades or grade bands with developmental benchmarks or indicators. [CASEL](#) Multiple states have aligned their own CCR standards to CASEL. At [casel.org](#).

College & Career Readiness (Broader)

AVID College and Career Readiness Framework: Three student Essential Skills — Student Agency, Rigorous Opportunity Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge — plus four educator action areas. At [avid.org/framework](#).

OCTAE Programs of Study Framework: Under Perkins V, local education agencies and postsecondary institutions should offer programs of study that incorporate challenging academic standards, address both academic and technical knowledge including employability skills, and culminate in a recognized postsecondary credential. [Ed](#) Self-assessment tool available at [cte.ed.gov/initiatives/programs-of-study](#).

Work-Based Learning Specific

U.S. DOE WBL Toolkit: Provides state and local program administrators with information regarding key components of WBL — alignment of classroom and workplace learning, application of academic/technical/employability skills in a work setting, and support from classroom or workplace mentors. [Ed](#) At [cte.ed.gov/wbltoolkit](#).

CAWBL Work-Based Learning Numbering System (WBLNS): Global indexing framework for contribution-based learning and recognition. Still in early build/deposit phase. At [cawbl.ca](#).

Digital Literacy / Technology

ISTE Standards for Students: Seven roles-based standards (Empowered Learner, Digital Citizen, Knowledge Constructor, Innovative Designer, Computational Thinker, Creative Communicator, Global Collaborator). Referenced by states building CCR standards that include digital literacy. At [iste.org/standards](#).

From a Jobready360 positioning perspective, the most operationally relevant ones for your state-by-state compliance work are the **Advance CTE Career Clusters + CCTC, Perkins V indicators**, the **ACTE Quality Framework**, and **ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors** —

those are what districts and state agencies are actively reporting against or aligning to. The others (NACE, NCDG, CASEL, ISTE) are more commonly cited as aspirational alignment targets in RFP responses and product marketing.