

Guidance Impacting Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) and the Senior Year Plus Concurrent Enrollment Program

Introduction

The Iowa Department of Education has released guidance pertaining to the implementation, expectations and requirements of career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) at both the secondary and postsecondary level.

“All secondary CTE programs will be required to offer a recognized CTSO by the start of the academic year 2024-25, with the program's CTSO meeting both the state and national requirements and having the appropriate number of dues paid members by the CTSO's affiliation deadline ([Secondary CTSO Guidance](#)).”

“Postsecondary CTE programs that award a two-year associate degree will be required to offer all appropriate and recognized CTSOs by the start of the academic year 2024-25, with the program's CTSO meeting both the state and national requirements and having the appropriate number of dues paid members by the CTSO's affiliation deadline ([Postsecondary CTSO Guidance](#)).”

Concurrent Enrollment

The Department offers the following guidance to school districts and community colleges regarding CTSOs when postsecondary courses are offered through the Senior Year Plus concurrent enrollment program, also known as district-to-community college sharing; as well as those postsecondary courses contracted and offered through career academies.

A CTSO is an integral element of a CTE program and all students shall be provided an opportunity to participate in leadership development activities. CTSOs help students develop leadership, goal-setting, problem-solving, decision-making and communication skills through active participation in CTSO related events. CTSOs are considered "co-curricular" organizations and are directly linked to career education coursework through a comprehensive high school, career academy or community college with an organized chapter of the related CTSO.

A CTSO is an integral part of the instructional program and should be offered where the instruction takes place. Therefore, the Department requires school districts and postsecondary institutions to support high school students enrolled in contracted postsecondary courses with the opportunity to be actively engaged in intra-curricular CTSO opportunities in the location in which the course is offered regardless of who is providing instruction (secondary teacher certified to teach the postsecondary course(s) or a community college faculty/adjunct providing instruction). However, it should be noted that students who participate in a CTSO in their school district are not also required to concurrently participate in a postsecondary CTSO.

There are various ways school districts and community colleges can partner to support and implement this requirement, given the local circumstances of the partnering institutions. Provided the agreed upon arrangement fits within the bylaws of the CTSOs, the Department encourages these opportunities to be explored to the added benefit of supporting high school students at both the secondary and postsecondary level where available and appropriate.

Common Questions

If a CTE program is primarily taught at the school district, and is comprised of both secondary only credit courses and contracted postsecondary/concurrent enrollment courses, which CTSO chapter should the high school students participate – the high school chapter or the community college chapter?

High school students concurrently enrolled would be eligible to participate in either the secondary or postsecondary CTSO chapter. However, the Department encourages high school students to actively participate in the CTSO chapter offered at the secondary/high school level under the direction of the secondary instructor. Please note, it would still be the expectation that CTSO curriculum and experiences be incorporated into the contracted postsecondary/concurrent enrollment courses, regardless of where the student accesses the chapter.

Example: Community College Beta is the supporting institution for concurrent enrollment applied sciences courses taught by local secondary instructors in secondary schools. While the college supports the secondary programs in curricular integration, the secondary program manages all aspects of chapter management including membership, transportation, and supervision. Community College Beta agrees to help, as needed, to ensure the CTSO chapters are integrated into the secondary program. Students enrolled are members of their local high school chapter of SkillsUSA and not part of the Community College Beta chapter.

If the coursework comprising a school district's CTE program is fully offered and taught by the community college, does a district need to establish a secondary CTSO chapter at the high school?

This would be a local decision determined between the partnering school district and community college to develop a plan for coordination, supervision and funding. A CTSO is an integral part of the instructional program and should be offered where the instruction takes place. Per CTSO guidance released addressing a postsecondary institutions CTE programs, a community college may operate the CTSO two different ways (by location/campus or by community college) so long as the opportunity to be involved is made available to all students regardless of their instruction location. Coordination, supervision and funding is a local control decision and should be arranged between the high school and community college.

Example: Community College Alpha teaches health science at several different secondary schools across the area. Community College Alpha integrates HOSA programming into the coursework for all students and manages all aspects of the HOSA chapter. Students in the health science programs are members of the Community College Alpha chapter of HOSA. When it comes time for travel to conferences and competitive events, the college manages the collection of fees, arranges travels and supervision, and supports the students in preparation.

Are community colleges required to integrate CTSO curriculum, activities and experiences into contracted postsecondary concurrent enrollment courses for high school students.

By academic year 2024-2025, it will be required that all postsecondary CTE programs that award a two-year degree have made available CTSO opportunities for students enrolled through any postsecondary course (leading to a two-year degree), including those postsecondary courses contracted through the concurrent enrollment program. A CTSO is a part of the classroom, with many CTSO activities and programs being able to be used during regular instruction time to enrich (not replace or reduce) the curriculum. Community colleges

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are responsible for the curricular decisions of contracted postsecondary courses offered through the Senior Year Plus/Concurrent Enrollment program (281 22.4(1)(e)).

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