

# Career & Technical Education in Secondary Schools

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Career & Technical Education (CTE) License?

A CTE license is a Minnesota teaching license in which the teacher has learned the foundational skills of career and technical education as well as the content and technical skills required for their curriculum. Technically, there is no specific statutory or rule language that refers to a license as a “CTE license” however, there is language that indicates “appropriately licensed CTE teacher,” which is generally the same.

### Is “vocationally certified” or “CTE certified” the same?

In current statute and rule, there is no reference to vocational certification or CTE certification. Vocational licenses have not been issued since 1999, although those with the old vocational licenses are still able to renew them. Those licenses were very specific to a skillset and aligned to a skilled trade. Minnesota only issues licenses and endorsements to licenses, not certifications. These terms often refer to licenses that are no longer available. To avoid confusion, these terms should not be used.

### What is the difference between CTE and vocational or “voc-ed?”

At a very superficial level, CTE & “voc-ed” look like they are the same thing, but philosophically they are fundamentally different. Career and technical education provide students with experiences from career exploration & career development all the way to occupation-specific technical skills leading to careers that are high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand. CTE programs align secondary, postsecondary, and business & industry to create multiple opportunities in a career pathway. The philosophy of vocational education was to provide those very specific technical skills tracking towards a specific job right out of high school. References to vocational or “voc-ed” are antiquated and conjure up an image that is not reflective of the vast array of today’s highly technical careers.

### What is CTE Program Approval?

CTE Program approval is a process for which local CTE programs are approved by the Minnesota Department of Education. The basic standards for CTE program approval are defined in [Minnesota Administrative Rule 3505.1100](#) and [Minnesota Administrative Rule 3505.2550](#). Program approval is incumbent on the district having an appropriately licensed CTE teacher. Districts with approved programs are eligible for Career & Technical Revenue and access to Perkins V federal dollars for those approved programs.

### What is Career & Technical Revenue?

Career & Technical Revenue is authorized by [Minnesota Statute 124D.4531](#) and provides districts that have *CTE program approval* the ability to capture revenue equal to 35 percent of approved expenditures. CTE Revenue is the combined total of career and technical levy (local) and career and technical aid (state).

## What are Perkins dollars and how are they different from other revenue sources?

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Technical Education Act was first authorized by the federal government in 1984 and has been reauthorized three times since, most recently in 2018 as the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act*, most widely known as Perkins V. The purpose of the federal law is to develop academic, technical, and employability skills of secondary and postsecondary students who enroll in CTE programs. Like all federal education dollars, Perkins dollars are supplemental dollars and are not allowed to supplant state and local responsibility. In Minnesota, Perkins dollars flow to the 26 Perkins Consortia to meet the goals of the Act. Minnesota's consortium model requires at least one school district and one postsecondary institution that offers technical programs to partner. Each consortium in Minnesota apply for Perkins dollars for each program year and approved CTE programs within the consortium membership have access to the supplemental funding based on the consortium's plan.

## What licenses and programs are considered CTE licenses?

The table below indicates the most commonly used license function codes for CTE programs. There are also less common function codes for most programs. To see the entire list, check with your CTE Director or Perkins Consortium Coordinator, or review MDE Table C, which can be found here:

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/cte/progApp/>.

CTE Program Area	License Function Codes
Agriculture	010000 or 010100
Business Education	140050 or 140100
Health Occupations	300300
Family & Consumer Sciences	090100
Trade & Industry – Communication Technology Careers	300000
Trade & Industry – Construction Careers	300100
Trade & Industry – Manufacturing Careers	300200
Trade & Industry – Transportation Careers	300700
Work Based Learning	Must have teaching license with grade 9-12 scope PLUS 160000

## What about Tech Ed?

Tech Ed, Technology Education (function code 100100), or Industrial Arts (function code 100000) are ***NOT*** CTE licenses and therefore are not eligible for CTE Program approval, CTE Revenue or access to Perkins dollars. Tech Ed and Industrial Arts are licenses that certainly allow those license holders to teach courses that look and sound like CTE, but the license misses a key component; the foundational knowledge around career and technical education.