

Application Guide

Credit to Careers: An Initiative to Expand High-Quality CTE Dual Enrollment

Thank you for your interest in the College in High School Alliance's [Credit to Careers Initiative RFP](#). This Application Guide is a supplement to the RFP and provides additional information about the project and the opportunity it presents for seven states to work over 2.5 years to build the systems to expand participation and completion in CTE dual enrollment.

Interested Applicants Webinar: We will be hosting a webinar for interested applicants to learn more about the project and answer questions on **Wednesday, November 4, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET**. [Click here to register.](#)

Don't see the answer to your question here or want to ask a question before/after the interested applicants webinar? Reach out to Alex Perry, Coordinator of the College in High School Alliance at alex.perry@flpadvisors.com.

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Context and Definitions

1. What is the College in High School Alliance?

The [College in High School Alliance](#) (CHSA) is a collaborative partnership between [Achieving the Dream](#), [Advance CTE](#), [Bard College](#), [Foresight Law + Policy](#), [Jobs for the Future](#), the [Middle College National Consortium](#), and the [National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships](#).

Working together under the banner of CHSA, these organizations have dedicated staff, capacity, and resources towards their shared mission of working with policymakers, programs, and other stakeholders to advance dual enrollment policy focused on a statewide vision, strategic access, and intentional experiences.

Since its launch nearly ten years ago, CHSA has provided significant direct technical assistance support to states. Through two technical assistance cohorts – the first from 2021–2023 [partnering with six states](#) and the 2024–2026 [Next Phase of Dual Enrollment Policy cohort](#) partnering with seven states – and directly partnering with states, CHSA has worked to advance dual enrollment policy in 19 states. This includes supporting states in a number of significant achievements, including setting statewide vision and goals, securing new dual enrollment funding, creating new statewide dual enrollment policies, securing resources and new policy to ease instructor credentialing challenges, and helping state policymakers support their practitioners.

For the Credit to Careers Initiative, the CHSA team also includes [Education Analytics](#), which will be supporting states in assessing and improving their CTE and dual enrollment data systems.

2. What is dual enrollment?

Dual Enrollment in this context applies to any opportunity for K-12 students to enroll in college courses that lead to transcribed credits and involve partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education in some form. These programs go by many names, but are typically referred to as dual enrollment, dual credit, concurrent enrollment, or early college high school. Included in our understanding of this term are also programs with a career and technical education focus, such as P-TECH.

3. What is CTE dual enrollment, and what is included?

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Enrollment is dual enrollment in which a high school student earns postsecondary credit for career and technical education coursework that is part of a defined program of study aligned to a credential of value. The course carries credit at both the high school and the postsecondary institution, counts toward a certificate, associate degree, or other postsecondary credential in a technical field (or toward an industry-recognized credential embedded in one), and is taught to the same standards, learning outcomes, and technical competencies as the equivalent postsecondary CTE course offered to non-high school students.

For purposes of this RFP, CTE dual enrollment does not include articulated credit, meaning arrangements in which a student completes a high school course and becomes eligible to receive college credit only upon later enrolling at a partner postsecondary institution and satisfying additional conditions. Because articulated credit is not transcribed by the postsecondary institution at the time the course is completed and is not earned through enrollment in a postsecondary course, it is treated as distinct from CTE dual enrollment for all purposes under this solicitation. States that utilize articulated credit are welcome to apply for this opportunity, but the focus of this project will be on expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment.

4. What do you mean by “high-quality CTE dual enrollment”?

High-quality CTE dual enrollment is a deliberately designed, state-supported experience that, in its ideal

state, is defined by the following elements:

- **Intentional sequencing within a career pathway.** Students earn postsecondary credit that is sequenced within a pathway, so that CTE dual enrollment advances a student along a pathway rather than checking an advanced coursework box in high school.
- **Credit that transfers and applies.** The credit earned transfers and applies toward fulfilling requirements for a degree or credential with labor market value, positioning students to complete that credential and find well-paying jobs in the state's priority Career Clusters and in-demand occupations.
- **Rigorous, career-connected instruction.** Courses combine rigorous academic content with industry-aligned learning, building both the technical and durable skills students need to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce.
- **Formal K–12/postsecondary partnership.** Programs are delivered through structured and well-designed partnerships between school districts and postsecondary institutions.
- **Advising and student supports.** Students receive advising that connects their CTE dual enrollment coursework to their postsecondary and career goals and supports them through the transition to the credential-granting institution.
- **Strategic, targeted access.** Participation grows deliberately, concentrated in programs of study aligned to the state's priority Career Clusters and/or occupations, and reaches the students with the most to gain, such as first-generation college-goers, students from low-income families, and rural students, who have had the fewest opportunities to earn college credit in those fields.
- **A shared state vision, backed by data and funding.** The program is governed by a coherent state vision, with disaggregated data and sustainable funding structures needed to verify it is working and for whom.

It is important to note that these are the conditions that we want to work with states to build, not the conditions that states must have in place before considering applying for this opportunity. Through this project, you will have the opportunity to operationalize this definition in your specific state context – what does this mean to you? What is your state's biggest priority to work on to create the conditions for high-quality CTE dual enrollment? What does that look like? What metrics are most valuable to help you achieve your priorities?

5. Our state uses a statewide articulated credit model for our CTE courses. Is that considered dual enrollment for the purposes of this project? Are we still eligible to apply if we use this model?

For purposes of this RFP, CTE dual enrollment does not include articulated credit, meaning arrangements in which a student completes a high school course and becomes eligible to receive college credit only upon later enrolling at a partner postsecondary institution and satisfying additional conditions. Because articulated credit is not transcribed by the postsecondary institution at the time the course is completed and is not earned through enrollment in a postsecondary course, it is treated as distinct from CTE dual enrollment for all purposes under this solicitation. States that utilize articulated credit are welcome to apply for this opportunity, but the focus of this project will be on expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment.

6. What do you mean by “priority Career Clusters and occupations”? Why is that relevant to this project?

Career Clusters are the organizing structure for CTE programs nationwide. Advance CTE's [National Career Clusters® Framework](#) groups the world of work into 14 Career Clusters and 72 Sub-Clusters, linking what students learn to the industries and occupations where they will use it. "Priority" Career Clusters and occupations are those your state has already identified as central to its economic future, often through its workforce board, Perkins state plan, or governor's office.

If your state hasn't formally identified priority Career Clusters or occupations, you can still apply. Select the ones that make the most sense for this project and explain your choice in your application, drawing on evidence such as employment projections, wages, employer demand, or regional economic development priorities.

They matter because the purpose of CTE dual enrollment is not just to help students earn college credit, but to help them build momentum toward credentials and careers with real opportunity in the state where they live. Anchoring the work in priority Career Clusters keeps expansion strategic: it focuses limited resources where student ambition and state need meet, so that the credit students earn today leads to a good job tomorrow, and the state's investment strengthens its own economy.

7. How do you define “policy”? What counts as “policy actions” for the purposes of this project and our CTE dual enrollment strategies?

For the purposes of this project, “policy” is broadly defined as any action taken by a state agency to support the expansion of high-quality CTE dual enrollment participation and completion. The strategies that states develop as part of this project may include more traditional policy measures such as the need for specific legislation or regulations, but also may include a broad array of actions such as engaging with the field through convenings or developing tools and resources for use by the field. For more information on what constitutes policy action for the purposes of this project, please see pages 4-5 of [How States and Systems Can Support Practitioner Efforts to Strengthen Dual Enrollment](#) published by CHSA and the Community College Research Center.

Is My State the Right Fit for This Project?

8. My state doesn't use the term “dual enrollment,” or that term has a specific context different from what you mean. Can we still apply?

Yes. We use “dual enrollment” as a standard national term to describe the act of a high school student taking a college course as part of a partnership between a high school and an institution of higher education (see the full definition above), but we recognize that states use different terms to describe this. Whichever term you use, you are eligible to apply, and if selected, your coaching team will use your state's recognized terms in its work.

9. Are you looking for a specific kind of state?

No. If you feel like your state could benefit from participating in this project and can put forward a strong application, we would be excited to work with you and consider your application. We are not adding additional prioritization for states by size, location, political landscape, governance structures, etc., though we may consider balance in some of these factors across the final selection of states to participate in the cohort to be able to demonstrate that this work can happen in all different kinds of states.

For the qualities we believe successful applicants will bring, and how we will assess them, see “[What are the selection criteria?](#)” below.

10. We think we’re more advanced in our CTE dual enrollment policy systems than most states already. Is there an opportunity for us here?

Yes. Our goals for this project (see below) are designed to apply flexibly across many different state contexts. CHSA is not trying to fit states into a certain box or prescribe a specific set of action steps beyond the broad arc of the project's phases: understanding the opportunities and challenges in your current CTE dual enrollment ecosystem, creating a strategy that advances that ecosystem and increases participation and completion in high-quality CTE dual enrollment, and implementing that strategy.

Your coaching team will meet your state where it is, help you move your ecosystem forward, and tailor its work to your priorities and to what you learn about your ecosystem's opportunities and challenges. Policymakers in states at the forefront of college and career readiness and dual enrollment policy have consistently told us they still have more work to do to build the best, most intentional, most accessible system possible. We believe this project is an opportunity to do exactly that.

If you're already seen as a national leader in dual enrollment or CTE, we'd encourage you to use this project to become the national exemplar for CTE dual enrollment specifically. Our expert coaches would be excited to work with you on where to push next in CTE dual enrollment policy innovation.

11. We feel intimidated by how far away our state is from operationalizing the definition of “high-quality CTE dual enrollment” and worry that means we are too far behind to take advantage of this opportunity. What do you think?

Please don't let that stop you from applying. The definition of high-quality CTE dual enrollment describes where this project aims to take states, not where they need to be when they apply, and no state has every element fully in place today.

What matters most is that your state is ready to take on the work. That means having the support of your leadership, the right people assembled from across the relevant agencies, and a real commitment to expanding participation and completion in high-quality CTE dual enrollment.

The same is true for data. You'll need enough data to establish a credible baseline, along with a willingness to strengthen your data systems to track the priorities you set during the project. But we're not looking for any particular level of data sophistication, and we may seek a cohort that reflects a range of data-system maturity levels.

If that sounds like your state, we'd be very excited to work with you. Some of the biggest gains in this kind of work come from states that are early in their journey.

12. Our state has previously participated in a technical assistance cohort organized by the College in High School Alliance or worked with you directly on a project. Are we eligible to apply?

Yes. This opportunity is open to all states, and each application will be reviewed and assessed on the merits of the proposed approach to the Credit to Careers Initiative.

13. Can our state submit more than one application?

No. Only one application per state will be accepted. If a state is developing multiple applications that splits the governance functions across multiple different teams, this signals to us that the state does not have the level of coordination in place between state agencies to be a good fit for this opportunity.

The Project

14. How is the project structured? What are the deliverables that will be produced from this project?

The initiative runs from January 2027 through July 2029 and moves through three phases, each anchored by cohort convenings and supported throughout by the state's CHSA coaching team. States will undertake a design sprint in 2027 to map their CTE dual enrollment ecosystems and develop their CTE dual enrollment strategies, to allow implementation to begin in 2028 through the summer of 2029.

- **Phase 1: Map the CTE Dual Enrollment Ecosystem (January–July 2027).** With their coaching team and Education Analytics, states develop a CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map: a deep, contextual picture of how CTE dual enrollment currently functions in the state, focused on the state's priority Career Clusters and/or occupations. This includes assessing existing CTE and dual enrollment data, mapping how federal (Perkins, ESSA) and state policy and funding are and could be used to strengthen CTE dual enrollment, how the state's CTE dual enrollment ecosystem is aligned or misaligned with the state's general dual enrollment policy ecosystem, and identifying challenges and gaps through stakeholder surveys, focus groups, and direct engagement with students.
- **Phase 2: Develop a CTE Dual Enrollment Strategy (August 2027–December 2027).** Using the Asset Map, states develop and publish a strategy to expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment. The strategy applies the high-quality definition to the state's context; sets 3-, 5-, and 10-year participation & completion targets aligned to the state's broader attainment priorities; lays out a data strategy for collecting and publicly reporting participation and outcomes (to the extent there are identified gaps); and identifies the policy, funding, and programmatic supports needed to close the gaps identified in the Asset Map, tested against the priority Career Clusters.
- **Phase 3: Implement the Strategy (January 2028–July 2029).** States begin implementing priority actions from their strategy, such as state guidance and toolkits, policy or regulatory changes, funding deployment, data system enhancements, or cross-agency agreements, with continued coaching and access to the Implementation Fund. States also develop a sustainability plan with the staffing and resources needed to carry the work forward beyond the end of the project period.

15. What are the goals? What outcomes are we collectively seeking?

States will work towards achieving the following outcomes by the end of the project period (summer 2029) with CHSA's support:

- Complete their CTE dual enrollment strategy and implement priority actions identified in their plan.
 - **Why?** There are lots of structured projects that end with the creation of a strategy, but implementation of that strategy then falls after the project period and can often fall by

the wayside or lose momentum. As a result, we want to partner with states from strategy through implementation. Your strategy will likely include action items that will take longer than 18 months to implement, but we believe that by supporting you through the first stages of implementation it will make the strategy more robust and lead to real changes for students.

- Increase the number of students enrolled in high-quality, intentional CTE dual enrollment coursework by 25% as a leading indicator for downstream success in increasing CTE dual enrollment completion.
 - **Why?** We believe that this project should be anchored around taking actions and making policy changes that ultimately directly benefit students through increasing availability of high-quality CTE dual enrollment. We chose a participation goal for the project as a leading indicator for longer term goals like completion outcomes that will be part of your strategy, but that you likely won't be in a position to assess the effectiveness of until after the end of the project. Having a defined measure of success for the project at the student level will focus the strategy development on ensuring the conditions for student benefit. See below for a greater discussion on the participation targets and outcomes.
- Increase student enrollment in high-quality CTE dual enrollment courses for one or more priority student groups.
 - **Why?** States need to be considering strategic access questions around high-quality CTE dual enrollment, and removing barriers to participation and success for any student who could benefit. By retaining a focus during the project on ensuring priority student groups (as defined by the state) have the ability to access these opportunities, states can support their long-term economic and workforce needs.
- Establish and operationalize infrastructure to track the long-term outcomes aligned to their strategy and goals.
 - **Why?** A strategy is only successful if we can measure its outcomes, and the participation outcome for the project period is just the first stage in assessing the strategy's overall effectiveness. States will likely want to track more than just high-quality CTE dual enrollment participation to include completion, postsecondary outcomes, and workforce outcomes aligned to the vision for their strategy. Taking this opportunity to build the appropriate infrastructure to do so will yield long term returns for policymakers in being able to adjust or re-align priorities in the future based on the findings, and for the field to engage and make changes to practice depending on what the data tells them.
- Embed a focus on high-quality CTE dual enrollment expansion in strategic plans, state guidance, budgets, and/or staffing structures.
 - **Why?** The strategies developed as part of this project to expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment will likely include work that will take longer than the full project period. We want to work with you as part of this project to ensure that the work persists beyond the end of the project period to implement the strategy you develop with fidelity, and so will be working with you to ensure the strategy has a plan for sustainable implementation beyond the summer of 2029.
- Expand funding through available public and private means to support their CTE dual enrollment strategy.
 - **Why?** States are likely to find that resources will be necessary beyond the funds included in the Implementation Fund to fully advance their strategy. CHSA will work with states to identify potential sources of funding, both public and private, to accomplish this.

These are an ambitious set of outcomes, but we are excited to partner with you to make them a reality.

16. Given the participation targets and expected project outcomes, how should we understand the balance between increasing CTE dual enrollment participation and ensuring that growth is focused on high-quality, coherent experiences for students? How will the project guard against participation growth becoming the primary measure of success at the expense of the broader goals?

This is an important question, because while the project includes a participation target and an expectation that states will set participation goals for 3- 5- and 10-years after their CTE dual enrollment strategy is completed, just looking at participation numbers alone in aggregate obscures the full scope of what it means to successfully expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment.

For the purpose of the project and assessing the success of our joint work together, an increase in participation is a reasonable metric for the period of the project. However, for thinking about the strategy as a whole (which will likely extend beyond the time horizon of the project), it is essential that states think more expansively beyond participation.

We believe that states should also be setting outcome or completion targets alongside the participation goals to ensure the system is properly aligned on the importance of not just getting a student into the course but ensuring they have a successful and meaningful experience when they get there, and are excited about progressing towards a degree or credential in that field and into employment. And the state's CTE and dual enrollment data systems should ultimately collect more data than just participation for these same reasons.

It is also important to note that the participation targets are in "high-quality CTE dual enrollment," and not just "CTE dual enrollment" generally. As part of developing their strategy, states will need to define for themselves what the definition of high-quality CTE dual enrollment provided above means in their own state's context, the kind of experiences the state wants more students to have access to, and then measure that specifically. That may mean the state's existing CTE dual enrollment offerings, but the state might also decide that new offerings are needed to ensure students are having truly meaningful experiences and that they are excited to continue on a specific pathway, completing that pathway, and securing employment.

Ultimately, whatever your state team decides serves your state's and students' interests best is what we will support you in implementing.

17. To what extent can we, as a state, customize our approach and strategy as part of this project to fit our needs?

CHSA's philosophy in offering states the opportunity to receive technical assistance is that we want to meet you where you are, grapple with the realities of your state's system as you find them, and support you in developing realistic solutions that will work for your state and your students. We think the light structure for the project outlined in the RFP and this Application Guide will help you navigate the process of developing and implementing a strategy to expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment, but ultimately the specifics of exactly what your mapping process entails, what you choose to focus on in your strategy, and what you want to prioritize implementing are yours to decide.

We are not trying to force any state to fit into the mold of another state (unless that's what you want!),

nor grapple with issues that haven't manifested as challenges in your state's context. We want to support you and add capacity to help you go further, but ultimately across the three phases of the project the specifics are yours to define and shape to your specific state context. In working with us, we want to support your state's needs and as added members of your team.

18. Tell me more about the Implementation Fund. How is that structured, and how will we access the \$150,000 in funding available? What can we use it for?

Each state in the cohort will have access to approximately \$150,000 to support the implementation of their strategy. The funds become available once the strategy has been completed and CHSA has reviewed and approved a proposed budget for how the funds will be spent. We are not asking as part of the application about how you think you might use the implementation funds, nor what you may budget, because we think those decisions are best made once you have mapped your CTE dual enrollment ecosystem and are developing your strategy. States may also select not to use their Implementation Fund dollars if they do not have appropriate uses for it aligned to their strategy, in which case funding available for other states to use would increase.

Funds can be used to support:

- Additional support from your coaching team or another CHSA partner organization for additional consulting support for your state to complete one or more of the deliverables included in your strategy.
- Additional support from Education Analytics to work with you directly to make the changes to your education and workforce data systems that you have outlined in your strategy.
- Retaining outside consultants of your choosing, subject to CHSA approval, to support you with implementation of your strategy.
- Paying for statewide convenings, technology solutions, or other purposes that are reasonable to advance your strategy (subject to review and approval).
- Other uses of funds suggested by the state as part of its CTE dual enrollment strategy and approved by CHSA.

Where appropriate, and recognizing the administrative challenges for all parties of providing funds directly to state agencies that will then likely get subgranted or subcontracted again, CHSA may directly contract with the selected partners to more quickly supply the state with the outlined work and deliverables in their strategy. The state may also wish to identify a fiscal sponsor in the state who can be responsible for disbursement of funds related to strategy implementation. Additional direction on accessing implementation funds will be provided to the selected state cohort as they are developing their strategies in the second half of 2027.

19. What will the convenings look like? What will they be used for? Will they be in person or virtual?

The seven states will come together regularly, in person and virtually, to learn from one another, test emerging ideas with peers, and mark key milestones in their work.

In person: In-person convenings will begin in spring 2027 with a convening focused on sharing early findings and working through challenges midway through the ecosystem mapping process. In the fall of 2027, a strategy convening will give teams dedicated time to workshop their draft strategies,

problem-solve shared challenges with other states, and work side by side with their coaches. The project closes with an in-person convening in summer 2029 to celebrate progress and capture what states have learned. Travel costs are covered for state team members.

Virtually: States will present their Asset Maps to one another in a series of virtual sessions in July 2027, and their strategies in January 2028. Periodic learning sessions will cover the topics states identify as most useful, often featuring practitioners from other states who have done the work.

In 2028: Additional in-person convenings during implementation are tentative, depending on available funding and a clear strategic reason to bring teams together.

The State Team

20. Who should be the lead applicant?

Given the highly diffuse nature of CTE and dual enrollment governance across the states, we defer to your best judgment about who should be the lead applicant for this initiative. The lead applicant should be the agency and individual who balances having most authority over dual enrollment and/or CTE policy in the state, capacity to invest in this initiative to ensure its success, and who has the most support from senior leadership to take the lead.

Generally, this means the lead applicant could be:

- State education agency
- Career and technical education agency
- Higher education governance agency
- Two- or four-year system of higher education
- Governor's office
- Another governmental actor who in your state holds governance authority over dual enrollment and/or CTE policy

It may also be the case that the perfect individual in your state who *should* be the lead applicant does not have the capacity to fully execute the project. In this scenario, we would consider applications that balance the participation of that individual on the working team with another agency or individual taking the lead applicant role who has more capacity to spare to dedicate towards the project. But we would want to see in your application that the key decisionmakers and implementers are included in the state team to ensure that you are in a position to move forward on the decisions you make as part of this project.

Importantly, regardless of which part of your governance system for dual enrollment and CTE policy takes the lead, all the relevant parts of your dual enrollment and CTE policy governance system should be represented on your team. See below for more information.

21. Should I just pass this to my CTE Director and expect them to be the lead on this project?

Not necessarily. Given that governance of CTE and dual enrollment is shared across multiple agencies in almost every state, we encourage you to think deeply about which entity would be the most appropriate lead applicant for this opportunity given where you think the opportunities and challenges are located in expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment. That may be your state's CTE director, and we certainly

think they need to play a role on the working and/or leadership team, but the lead applicant with the most capacity and most agency to effect policy and programmatic change to expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment in the state may be another actor in your governance system, such as your dual enrollment staff, or other personnel tasked with college and career readiness work from one of your agencies. We defer to you as the experts on your state, its CTE and dual enrollment ecosystems, and its governance structure to build the best team to achieve the objectives of this initiative. We want to understand and feel confident that you have built a strong team with the most appropriate lead applicant for your state, and that may or may not be the state CTE director.

22. What do you mean by wanting the project to include a “working team” and a “leadership team”?

We ask each state to build two teams because expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment takes both sustained day-to-day work and the authority to act on it.

Your working team does the work of the project. Led by your lead point of contact, it brings together the people who share governance of CTE and dual enrollment in your state, along with others who have an important role in developing and carrying out your strategy. The working team meets monthly with your coaching team, participates in cohort convenings, and builds your Asset Map and strategy.

Your leadership team makes sure that work leads to real change. It is made up of senior agency leaders who can approve policy changes, direct budget and staff, and remove barriers to implementation. The leadership team meets periodically with the working team to review progress, provide direction, and use its authority to move your strategy from planning to action.

In our experience, strategies stall when either piece is missing. A strong working team without engaged leaders can produce a plan that never gets implemented, and committed leaders without a working team rarely have the capacity to move it forward.

23. What should the composition of the working team be?

Given the outline of this initiative, we anticipate that your state’s working team should comprise at minimum:

- K–12 dual enrollment governance lead (state education agency)
- Higher education dual enrollment governance lead (two-year system)
- Higher education dual enrollment governance lead (four-year system, if applicable)
- State CTE Director
- CTE and/or dual enrollment data lead

Though, as previously mentioned, we ultimately defer to you as a state and your specific governance model for dual enrollment and CTE to assemble the working team that reflects the full scope of governance for CTE and dual enrollment policy.

In addition, states may wish to supplement additional members of the working team who can contribute significantly to this initiative but do not necessarily reflect the roles already described. This could include:

- State P-20W data lead
- Business and industry representative(s) from priority Career Clusters
- Governor's office education or workforce policy advisor
- Workforce development agency representative
- Practitioner representatives from institutions of higher education or school districts
- Representatives from intermediary organizations or state policy non-profits who are engaged in college and career readiness work

We will be assessing the assembled state teams during the selection phase for the completeness of the working team and ensuring it represents all appropriate elements of the state's governance structure for CTE and dual enrollment policy, the strategic inclusion of additional voices that can significantly contribute towards advancing this project forward, balanced against the working team becoming so large in the process as to make it difficult to function. To ensure coherence, we encourage you to keep the working team to fewer than 10 individuals.

24. What should the composition of the leadership team be?

Your leadership team should include the senior leaders whose authority you will need to turn your state's strategy into action: the people who can approve policy changes, direct budget and staff, and remove barriers when the work stalls. Depending on your state's governance structure, this might include your chief state school officer or a deputy, a higher education commissioner or community college system leader or deputy, the head of your CTE agency or deputy, and a governor's education or workforce policy advisor.

These leaders won't carry the day-to-day work, which is the working team's role, but they will meet periodically to review progress, provide direction, and use their authority to move the strategy from planning to implementation.

In your application, tell us who is on your leadership team and why, given how CTE and dual enrollment are governed in your state, they are the right group to make your strategy happen.

25. Our state is anticipating having a leadership transition in 2027 or later in the project period. Can we still apply if we are not sure that the leadership team will remain stable throughout the project period?

Yes, states that are expecting to undergo a leadership transition in 2027 or at any point during the project period are welcome to apply. CHSA would like to understand as part of your application how you would ensure continuity of the project during such a transition, which members of the leadership team may be replaced, and your perspective on whether successor leadership would be inclined to support the project in the same way. CHSA has previously selected for its state technical assistance cohorts states that have elected new Governors in the middle of the project, and believe that continuity of the work can be maintained even if some personnel switch out with the right approach and strategy.

26. What kind of expectations do you have for the capacity of the working team and leadership team?

For the working team, this 2.5-year project will involve:

- Monthly 1-hour calls with the state's CHSA coaching team (at minimum, more as needed)

depending on the work) to discuss the work and next steps. The CHSA coaching team is also available to support the state in advancing its work and completing its deliverables at the direction of the state.

- Working with the Education Analytics team in the first 12-18 months of the project to assess the state's CTE and dual enrollment data systems and plan improvements to ensure high-quality CTE dual enrollment participation and success can be appropriately measured.
- Participating in periodic virtual learning sessions to advance the work as a collaborative of states.
- Participating in three 1-2 day in-person convenings – two in 2027 and one in 2029. Travel and attendance expenses will be covered for team members. Additional convenings may be added in 2028 if project funds allow and it is strategic to bring the state teams together in person.
- Convening and engaging stakeholders, other relevant partners, and learners directly through surveys, focus groups, or a similar mechanism, to inform the state's CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map.
- Developing and publishing a strategy to expand high-quality CTE dual enrollment in the state, to include a plan for how to collect, track, and report data on CTE dual enrollment participation.
- Developing a sustainability plan for the strategy, to include appropriate staffing and funding, to ensure its implementation continues beyond the end of the project period.
- Working among the state team and with the state's CHSA coaching team to implement the strategy.
- Quantifying CTE dual enrollment participation data beginning with a 2025–26 baseline, so that progress toward the state's targets can be tracked across the cohort, with progress towards disaggregation and collection of additional identified metrics that align with the state's priorities as part of the project.

For the leadership team, this project will involve:

- Periodically meeting to review the work and progress of the working team and provide appropriate feedback and guidance on a cadence appropriate to the project.
- Actively using their formal authority to move the work from planning to action, including championing the strategy within their agencies, removing barriers to implementation, and making the policy, budget, and staffing decisions needed to put it into practice.

We don't give an hours estimate for this project, because the honest answer is that it depends on the choices you make. A state that leans on its coaching team to lead stakeholder interviews will spend its time differently from one that runs them in-house, and a strategy focused on new guidance asks different things of a team than one pursuing legislation. What we can tell you is the shape of the work: it is most intensive during 2027, particularly as you engage stakeholders and draft your strategy, and settles into a steadier rhythm during implementation. Your lead point of contact should expect this to be a meaningful part of their role, and should have their leadership's support to treat it that way. Your coaching team will help you plan the work so it fits the capacity you have.

Your Coaching Team

27. Who will lead my coaching team?

You will be assigned a coaching team from one of four CHSA partner organizations: Achieving the Dream, Advance CTE, Jobs for the Future (JFF), and the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). Your coaching team will be assigned based on fit, aligned to your priorities for the work that you outline in your application, or where it makes sense to strategically build on existing work happening

with that organization in your state.

Your team will be composed of a lead coach who will serve as your primary point of contact for day-to-day needs. They will be supplemented by additional subject matter experts from that organization, who are also experts in CTE and/or dual enrollment policy and selected for their ability to help you advance this work. In addition, participating in your coaching team will be Alex Perry, Coordinator of CHSA and representatives from Education Analytics who will be taking leadership on the assessment of your CTE and dual enrollment data systems and helping you identify any improvements that you might wish to make. More information on Education Analytics' role is included below.

28. What will the coaches do?

Your coaching team is designed to serve as an extension of your working team. In addition to helping you think through how to structure your CTE dual enrollment asset mapping and engagement with stakeholders, and how to prioritize and develop your CTE dual enrollment strategy, your coaching team is added capacity to help you advance this work in your state. Working with your coaching team, you'll identify the ways they can supplement and support you in completing the work; perhaps it would be helpful for your coaching team to take the lead on conducting interviews with stakeholders, perhaps you need assistance with synthesizing findings from a survey or analysis that you have conducted, perhaps you want to know how other states are addressing particular challenges and who is doing it well. Your coaching team will be standing ready to support you through the project, and if you choose, you can also use your implementation funds to purchase additional capacity from your coaching team during the implementation phase if you would like them to take the lead on particularly intensive action items.

Your coaching team can take on a lot, but the work belongs to your state. Your lead point of contact and working team set the direction, make the decisions, keep the work moving between calls, and bring the right people in your state to the table. Your coaches add expertise and capacity to that effort, but they can't lead it for you. In our experience, the strategies that last are the ones a state has driven itself. This initiative is yours to lead, and your coaching team is ready to support you, roll up their sleeves, and dive into the work alongside you.

29. What role is Education Analytics playing in the project? How will they interface with the coaching team?

The Education Analytics team will engage with the working team, and particularly the data lead on the working team as well as other relevant data contacts, to help you conduct a data ecosystem asset map, gap analysis, and implementation roadmap. They will remain in regular communication with the rest of your coaching team, and also engage with you specifically on this strand of work. For more information on the Education Analytics role, see the Data & Measurement section below.

Phase 1: The CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map

30. What is the CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map we will be creating?

The CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map is the foundation for everything else your state will do in this project. It is a deep, contextual picture of how CTE dual enrollment currently works in your state, focused on your priority Career Clusters and/or occupations: what is in place, what is working, where the gaps are, and why.

We call it an asset map deliberately. Every state is starting with real strengths, whether that is strong partnerships in a particular region, a funding stream that could be better used, or a program that is already getting results for students. Your strategy should build on these strengths. Your Asset Map will typically bring together:

- An assessment of your CTE and dual enrollment policies and practices with the support of your coaching team and CTE & dual enrollment data with the support of Education Analytics
- How federal (Perkins V, ESSA) and state policy and funding are, and could be, used to support CTE dual enrollment
- How your CTE dual enrollment ecosystem aligns, or does not, with your state's broader dual enrollment policies
- Who the key players are across the state
- The challenges and opportunities identified by the people closest to the work, including students

Your Asset Map will be complete in the summer of 2027, and you will share it with the other states in the cohort at a virtual convening before moving into developing your strategy.

31. How will we create the CTE Dual Enrollment Asset Map?

We think of the process as working in widening circles. You will start with what your working team already knows, move out into the field to fill in the gaps and test your assumptions, and then bring everything back together.

The project begins in early 2027 with a planning session with your coaching team to map out your process: what you will look at, how you will gather input, and how it fits with your data work with Education Analytics. Your working team will then develop an initial picture using the knowledge and data you already have, including existing sources such as your Perkins comprehensive local needs assessments.

Next, you will go out into the field. We will not prescribe how you do this. A statewide survey, focus groups, student roundtables, a standing advisory group, or some combination could all work, and your coaching team can share options and take on some of the work themselves. What we do ask is that you hear from K–12, higher education, employers in your priority Career Clusters, and learners directly.

During this process, the cohort will come together in person in spring 2027 to share early findings, work through challenges with peers and coaches, and sharpen the questions that will guide the rest of your mapping. You will then finish your engagement, pull everything together into a coherent picture of where your state is starting from, and share it with the cohort in a series of virtual presentations in summer 2027, as well as with stakeholders in your state.

32. We are also interested in looking at dual enrollment with a general education focus alongside CTE dual enrollment in our asset mapping process. Is that acceptable?

Yes. There is a lot of overlap between general education and CTE dual enrollment. Many students on CTE pathways also take dual enrollment courses in subjects like English and math, the same partnerships and policies often govern both, and you may find that understanding your CTE dual enrollment ecosystem requires a closer look at your general education dual enrollment ecosystem too. The Asset Map already asks you to look at how the two align.

That said, this project is focused on CTE dual enrollment, and that is where your coaching team's support, your strategy, and the project's outcomes will be centered. We see any insights you gain about general education dual enrollment as a valuable added benefit rather than the core focus. Your coaching team can help you decide how far to take this, so it strengthens your CTE dual enrollment work without stretching your team too thin during this busy period.

33. If we have recently done some of these activities and feel like we have a handle on the ecosystem, can we “skip ahead”?

Yes. We do not want you to repeat work you have already done. If you have recently mapped parts of your ecosystem, that work should feed directly into your Asset Map. Your coaching team will help you take stock of what you already have and focus your time where it adds the most value.

We also encourage you to see this as a chance to go further. If your earlier work did not include hearing directly from students, for instance, this is a great opportunity to do that now. And unless your previous work looked at CTE dual enrollment specifically, there is likely part of the story still to be told: how CTE and dual enrollment connect in your state, where students are earning postsecondary credit within your priority Career Clusters, and where they are not. A strong head start means you can spend Phase 1 digging into the questions that will matter most for your strategy, rather than starting from the beginning.

34. Who is this for? Is this an exercise for us to get to know our ecosystem or for you to build a profile of seven states?

It's for you, to help you benefit the students and workforce development needs of your state. The Asset Map is designed first and foremost to give your working team a shared, evidence-based understanding of where your state is starting from. In many states, it will be the first time the people responsible for CTE and dual enrollment have built that picture together. It is the foundation for your strategy, and the questions it surfaces will shape what you prioritize in Phase 2.

That said, there is value in sharing it too. When you present your Asset Map to the other states in summer 2027, you'll see how your peers are approaching similar challenges, and they'll learn from you. CHSA will also use what we see across the cohort to shape the learning sessions and the fall strategy convening around the issues states are actually facing, and the cohort's collective work will inform the national framework and white paper that will come out of this initiative. But we aren't asking you to fit your Asset Map into a template so we can compare states. Its format and focus are yours to shape.

Phase 2: The CTE Dual Enrollment Strategy

35. What is the CTE Dual Enrollment Strategy? What are you asking us to produce?

Your CTE Dual Enrollment Strategy is your state's plan for expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment: where you want to go, how you'll get there, and how you'll know it's working. Building on what you learned in your Asset Map, it sets out your priorities, your targets, and the policy, funding, and programmatic actions you'll take to reach them.

Most importantly, it's your strategy. We'll ask every state's strategy to cover a few core elements (see below), but what you prioritize, how ambitious you want to be, and what it looks like on the page are

your decisions. Our role is to help you make those decisions well by bringing ideas from other states, pressure-testing your thinking, and adding capacity to help you get it written.

Your strategy also shouldn't stand apart from the work your state is already doing. The strongest strategies will connect directly to the priorities you named in your application, whether that's your Perkins state plan, a postsecondary attainment goal, a workforce development plan, or a governor's initiative, and show how expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment helps advance them. Some states may choose to produce a standalone document; others may find it makes more sense to build the strategy into a plan that already exists. Either approach can work, and your coaching team will help you decide which serves your state best.

Strategy development runs from the summer of 2027 to the end of 2027. Your coaching team will join your working team in your state for a working day over the summer to identify initial priorities, you'll bring a draft to the in-person strategy convening in the fall to workshop with peers, and you'll finalize it by the end of the year before sharing it with the cohort in January 2028.

36. How do the participation and completion targets work?

In your application, we'll ask you to propose preliminary 3-, 5-, and 10-year targets for growing participation in high-quality CTE dual enrollment. We ask for these upfront because they help us understand your state's ambition for this work. We know they'll be best estimates, since you won't yet have mapped your ecosystem or decided what high-quality CTE dual enrollment means in your state. That's expected.

We won't ask you to set completion targets in your application. Completion depends on how you define high quality, which pathways you prioritize, and what your data can track, so those decisions are best made during strategy development, once you have the full picture from your Asset Map.

During Phase 2, you'll revisit your participation targets and set completion targets alongside them as part of your strategy. What they measure and how ambitious they are is up to you. We'll encourage you to pair participation targets with completion targets, so the goal isn't only getting students into courses but making sure they succeed and keep moving along their pathway. (See "[Given the participation targets and expected project outcomes...](#)" above for more on how we think about that balance.) Beyond that, you may choose to set targets for specific Career Clusters, for priority student groups, or for longer-term outcomes like credential attainment or employment.

We'd also encourage you to connect your targets to goals your state has already set. If your state has a postsecondary attainment goal or a workforce target, your CTE dual enrollment targets can show exactly how this work contributes to it. That strengthens the case for your strategy and helps it outlast changes in leadership.

The project outcome of a 25% increase in high-quality CTE dual enrollment by summer 2029 is how we'll measure the success of our work together during the project period. Your state's own targets are yours, and they'll guide your work long after the project ends.

37. What should our CTE dual enrollment strategy include?

Every state's strategy will look different, but we will ask each to cover a few core elements:

- Your definition of high-quality CTE dual enrollment. Using CHSA's definition as a starting point, you will decide what high quality means in your state's context, which elements matter most to you, and how you will know when you have achieved them.
- Participation and completion targets. Your final 3-, 5-, and 10-year targets (see above).
- A data strategy. How you will collect, track, and report on CTE dual enrollment participation and outcomes, building on the data assessment you completed with Education Analytics in Phase 1.
- Policy, funding, and programmatic actions. What needs to change to close the gaps your Asset Map identified, tested against your priority Career Clusters. Remember that we define policy broadly. Legislation and regulation are options, but so are guidance, tools, funding decisions, and engagement with the field.
- A plan for your Implementation Fund. How you'll use your approximately \$150,000 to advance the strategy.

Beyond those elements, the content is yours to decide. If your Asset Map shows that advising is the biggest barrier in your state, your strategy might focus there. If it's instructor credentialing, transfer and applicability, or funding, the strategy will reflect that. We won't ask you to tackle issues that aren't real challenges in your state.

We'd especially encourage you to look for places where your strategy can bring together work already underway. Many states have multiple initiatives touching CTE and dual enrollment, from Perkins reserve projects to work-based learning initiatives to governors' workforce priorities. Your strategy can make high-quality CTE dual enrollment the thread that connects them, rather than another initiative competing for attention.

38. Is your expectation that the strategy is published?

Yes. Publishing your strategy signals your state's commitment, helps practitioners, partners, and employers understand where the state is heading and how they can contribute, and creates the kind of public accountability that helps work continue through leadership changes. It also adds to the national picture: your strategy may become the model that other states look to.

How and where you publish it is up to you. It could be a standalone report, a section of an existing state plan, a page on your agency's website, or something else that fits how your state shares its priorities. We know publishing often requires agency or leadership approval, so your coaching team will help you plan for that from the start so it doesn't slow down your move into implementation. CHSA will also be glad to help share and celebrate your strategy nationally.

Publishing your strategy also doesn't mean every detail is fixed. Strategies evolve as implementation teaches you what works, and we expect yours will too.

Phase 3: Implementing the CTE Dual Enrollment Strategy

39. What does implementation look like?

Phase 3 runs from January 2028 through July 2029. It's where your strategy starts making a real difference for students. After you share your strategy with the cohort in January 2028, you'll begin putting its priority actions into practice, with continued support from your coaching team and access to your Implementation Fund.

What you implement, and in what order, is up to you. Your strategy will likely include actions that take longer than 18 months to complete, so a big part of the early work will be deciding where to start. Some states will begin with actions they can move quickly, such as new state guidance, a toolkit for practitioners, or a cross-agency agreement. Others will begin laying the groundwork for longer-term changes, such as a funding proposal, a regulatory change, or improvements to their data systems. Most will do some of both. Your coaching team will help you sequence the work realistically around your state's legislative sessions, budget cycles, and approval processes.

We'd also encourage you to look for existing vehicles that can carry your strategy forward. A Perkins state plan revision, an upcoming budget request, a governor's workforce initiative, or an existing grant program may all be natural places to act on your strategy's priorities, so the work becomes part of how your state already operates rather than something extra.

Implementation is often where momentum in projects like this fades, as attention shifts and capacity gets stretched. That's why the project continues through this phase, and why we'll stay alongside you as you move from plan to action.

40. How will our coaching team support us during this phase?

Your coaching team will stay with you through implementation, continuing your monthly calls (or more often, if that's helpful) and adapting their support to the priorities you've chosen. During this phase, that might mean helping you draft guidance or toolkits, preparing materials for legislators or your state board, connecting you with states that have implemented similar policies, facilitating conversations with stakeholders, or helping you troubleshoot when something stalls.

If there are particularly intensive pieces of work where you'd like more hands-on help, you can also use your Implementation Fund to bring in additional capacity from your coaching team, another CHSA partner organization, Education Analytics, or outside consultants of your choosing. (See "[Tell me more about the Implementation Fund](#)" above for more detail.)

As in every phase, you're in the driver's seat. Your coaching team is there to add capacity and expertise to your work, not to set your agenda.

41. Can we start implementing before 2028 if we already know some of what we need to do?

Yes. If your state sees an opportunity to start implementation earlier, whether that's a change you already know you need, a legislative session or budget cycle that won't wait, or a quick win that builds momentum, we will support you in taking it. Your coaching team can help you act on it in 2027 while the rest of your asset mapping and strategy development continues.

Starting early doesn't mean skipping the earlier phases. Your Asset Map and strategy will still be the foundation for the rest of your work, and what you learn from acting early can make both stronger. Early actions also give you a head start on the project's goal of growing participation in high-quality CTE dual enrollment by summer 2029.

One thing to keep in mind: the Implementation Fund becomes available only once your whole strategy is

complete, so any work you begin in 2027 will need to draw on your own resources and your coaching team's support until then.

42. What will cross-state collaboration look like when our strategies will all look different?

Even though every state's strategy will be different, states usually find they're working through more of the same challenges than they expected. You may be working on advising while another state focuses on funding, but you'll likely run into similar questions about engaging institutions, getting buy-in across agencies, or measuring what's working, and the state that's already worked through one of those may have just what you need.

During implementation, our virtual learning sessions will be planned around what states are actually working on. If several states are tackling the same issue, we'll bring them together to work through it, and bring in practitioners and states outside the cohort who have done similar work. As noted above, additional in-person convenings in 2028 are tentative, but if they go ahead, their focus will be shaped by the strategies you develop. The cohort will come back together in person in summer 2029 to share what you've accomplished and capture lessons for other states.

You'll also share common goals with the rest of the cohort: growing participation in high-quality CTE dual enrollment, building the data infrastructure to track outcomes, and setting your work up to last. Those shared goals give the cohort a common language, even when your paths look very different.

43. What is the sustainability plan for this project?

Your strategy will almost certainly include work that extends beyond summer 2029. During Phase 3, you will develop a sustainability plan that sets out how your state will keep that work moving after the project ends.

What goes into it is up to you, but we expect most plans to cover who will be responsible for the work going forward, where it will be funded from, and how it will be embedded in the way your state already operates. That could include building it into agency strategic plans, state guidance, budgets, staffing structures, or cross-agency agreements, and continuing to collect and report the data you have built the infrastructure to track. It might also identify additional public or private funding sources to support the work, and CHSA will help you find them.

The most durable strategies are the ones that become part of a state's broader priorities rather than sitting alongside them. If your CTE dual enrollment strategy is already connected to your attainment goals, workforce plans, and Perkins state plan, your sustainability plan will be much easier to write, because the work will already have a home.

You'll finalize your sustainability plan before the project closes in summer 2029. As part of CHSA's national network, you'll also continue to have access to resources, peer states, and opportunities to share your work long after the project ends.

Data & Measurement

44. How sophisticated do our data systems need to be to participate in this project?

You do not need to have a sophisticated or fully integrated data system to be a strong applicant. We do

need participating states to have enough information to establish a credible starting point for CTE dual enrollment participation and a realistic path toward measuring progress over time.

States will come into this project with very different data environments. Some may already connect K–12, postsecondary, and workforce data through a longitudinal data system. Some may have regularly updating operational data systems at one or more of those levels. Others may rely on periodic data collections, data exchanges between agencies, or more manual processes. We are interested in understanding where you are starting, not grading you against a particular technical model.

What matters most is that the right people are willing to engage honestly in the work, that the state can establish a reasonable baseline, and that there is a willingness to address important data infrastructure gaps identified through the project. There is no required technical architecture, interoperability standard, or software platform for participation.

45. What will the data work with Education Analytics actually involve?

Education Analytics will work alongside your state team and coaching team on a dedicated data strand during the first part of the project. The goal is to help you understand how well your current data ecosystem supports the CTE dual enrollment priorities you are developing and where targeted improvements could make the biggest difference.

During Phase 1, this will include looking at the data and systems you already have; how information moves among K–12, postsecondary, workforce, and other relevant partners; who owns and governs that information; important definitions and business processes; and what users are currently able to see and do with the data. Together, we will identify strengths as well as gaps.

During strategy development, Education Analytics will help you translate those findings into practical priorities and an implementation roadmap. In some cases, the best next step may involve making better use of data you already collect. In others, it may involve improving definitions, governance, reporting, data exchange, or infrastructure over a longer period. The intent is to develop a strategy that fits your state rather than prescribe a one-size-fits-all solution.

46. Why are you asking us about the users of our data and the decisions they need to make?

We do not think improving a data system should be an end in itself. The most useful data investments start with understanding who needs information and what they are trying to accomplish.

For one state, the highest-priority need may be helping counselors understand whether a student is making progress toward a postsecondary credential. For another, it might be helping policymakers understand where CTE dual enrollment opportunities exist, whether students in priority populations have equitable access, or whether credits earned actually advance students along a pathway. Other priorities might include coordinating across institutions, improving programs, making funding decisions, or understanding longer-term postsecondary and workforce outcomes.

We will ask states to identify the users and decisions that matter most in their context. Those priorities will help guide the data assessment and keep recommendations focused on capabilities that will actually be used.

47. What kinds of data will we be looking at?

The starting point is the information needed to understand CTE dual enrollment participation: which students are participating, which courses they are taking, where those courses fit within CTE programs of study, and what happens to students over time.

But participation data alone may not tell the whole story. Depending on your state's priorities, the work may also look at information describing courses, programs of study, pathway and credential requirements, course equivalencies or transferability, credentials earned, student outcomes, and connections to postsecondary or workforce information.

Not every state will have all of these data available or organized in the same way, and we do not expect that they will. Part of the work is figuring out what exists today, what can be connected or used more effectively, and what gaps are worth addressing given the strategy your state wants to pursue.

48. What if our CTE and dual enrollment data are spread across different agencies or systems, or some of our processes are still manual?

That is common and does not by itself make a state a poor fit for the project. In fact, understanding where information lives, how it moves, where handoffs are difficult, and where manual work creates burden is an important part of the data assessment.

We will want to understand your current environment honestly: which agencies and systems hold the relevant information, how frequently data are exchanged, how students and programs are matched across systems, and where there are known quality, completeness, timeliness, or governance challenges. The goal will then be to distinguish between improvements that can be made relatively quickly using existing systems and processes and changes that may require longer-term investments. States are not expected to solve every data-system issue during this project.

49. Are you expecting states to adopt a particular data standard, architecture, or platform?

No. We are interested in helping states build data capabilities that are useful, sustainable, and appropriate to their own environments.

As part of the work, Education Analytics may help your state consider options for making data exchange more consistent, automated, or interoperable, including existing standards or approaches that have worked elsewhere. But those are tools and options, not project requirements.

50. Will every state be expected to track the same measures? How will measurement work across the cohort?

There will be some common measurement across the cohort, but we do not expect every state's measurement strategy to look identical.

All states will establish a baseline for CTE dual enrollment participation and track progress toward the project's shared participation goals. Education Analytics and CHSA will also work with the cohort to develop a common measurement framework, including shared definitions where they are useful and feasible.

At the same time, each state's strategy will likely identify additional measures that matter in its context. Depending on your priorities and what your data can support, those might include completion, credit accumulation, progress along a pathway, credential attainment, postsecondary enrollment or completion, employment outcomes, or outcomes for specific student populations.

We also recognize that some of the measures a state ultimately wants may not be available immediately. Part of the work will be identifying reasonable interim or proxy measures while longer-term data capabilities are developed. The goal is meaningful consistency where it helps the cohort learn together, without forcing every state into measures that do not fit its strategy or data environment.

51. Will our state need to provide student-level data to Education Analytics or CHSA?

No. We do not currently anticipate that Education Analytics will need to receive or maintain personally identifiable student-level data in order to complete the data assessment and strategy work.

Much of the work can be accomplished through conversations with state data staff, documentation and data dictionaries, system demonstrations, descriptions of data flows and business processes, existing reports, and aggregated or de-identified information.

States will, however, need to be able to produce the measures needed to establish the project's baseline and report progress over time at an aggregated, non-identifiable level.

Application Process and Selection

52. What are the application form questions?

The full set of application questions is below, so your team can draft responses together before entering them in the online form. Because the application asks about governance, policy, data, and capacity across several agencies, we encourage you to share these questions with your full working team early and divide up the drafting.

The application has the following sections:

- **Section A. Applicant Information**
 1. State
 2. Lead applicant agency or office
 3. Lead point of contact: name, title, agency, email, phone. This person will manage the state's participation in the initiative.
- **Section B. State Team**
 4. Provide the name, title, and agency/organization of each member of your working team. Briefly describe each member's role, including the lead applicant's authority, in governing or delivering CTE and/or dual enrollment. Explain why, together, this team is the right group to develop and implement your state's CTE dual enrollment strategy. For more information on recommended participation in the working team, see [“What should the composition of the working team be?”](#) above. (Response limit is 3,500 characters, approximately 500 words.)
 5. Provide the name, title, and agency/organization of each member of your leadership team. Describe the authority each member holds over policy, funding, or staffing decisions relevant to CTE dual enrollment, and explain how, given your state's

governance structure, this team will use that authority to move your strategy from planning to implementation. For more information on recommended participation in the leadership team, see [“What should the composition of the leadership team be?”](#) above. (Response limit is 3,500 characters, approximately 500 words.)

- **Section C. Vision and Alignment with Statewide Priorities**

6. Describe how this project would connect to your state's broader education and workforce agenda. Identify the existing statewide initiatives, plans, or goals it would advance (for example, workforce development plans, postsecondary attainment goals, Perkins state plans, K–12 priorities, college and career readiness frameworks, or gubernatorial initiatives), and explain how expanding high-quality CTE dual enrollment might contribute to them. Then describe how CTE dual enrollment currently fits alongside your state's other college and career readiness experiences (such as work-based learning, career exploration coursework, industry-recognized credentials, and general education dual enrollment), and the extent to which these experiences operate as a coherent system today. (Response limit is 3,500 characters, approximately 500 words.)
7. Describe your state's vision for this project. If the initiative succeeds, what will be different about CTE dual enrollment in your state in three years, and for which students? (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)
8. Identify the biggest barriers your state would need to overcome to achieve this project's outcomes, including a 25% increase in participation in high-quality CTE dual enrollment by summer 2029, across your priority Career Clusters and priority student groups. For each, briefly explain why you believe it stands in the way. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

- **Section D. Priority Career Clusters and/or Occupations**

9. Identify the Career Clusters and/or occupations (with SOC or NAICS codes where possible) that will be the focus of your state's work in this initiative. Indicate where each has already been designated a priority by the state and by whom (for example, the workforce board, the governor's office, or the Perkins state plan). If no Career Clusters and/or occupations have previously been identified by your state as a priority, make selections for the purpose of this project and provide a relevant justification. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

- **Section E. Current Policy Landscape**

10. Briefly describe how your state structures CTE dual enrollment. In your response, specifically address: which state agencies are responsible for CTE and dual enrollment policy and governance, how CTE dual enrollment is funded, how the state ensures credits transfer and apply, and whether CTE dual enrollment is reflected in state accountability or graduation requirements. (Response limit is 3,500 characters, approximately 500 words.)
11. Describe a recent policy, funding, or program change affecting dual enrollment, CTE, or college and career readiness that your state has enacted or implemented in the past three years that demonstrates your state's capacity for the kind of policy changes that you envision you might need to make as part of this project. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)
12. Thinking about the kinds of changes your state might pursue through this project, describe the approval processes they would likely need to go through. Which changes could your agencies make administratively, and which would require approval from a state board, a governing body, or the legislature? Where approvals are needed, roughly

how long do they typically take, and how would your leadership team help move them forward? (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

- **Section F. Data Capacity**

13. Can your state currently identify, at the student level, which students are enrolled in CTE dual enrollment courses (as distinct from academic dual enrollment and from non-dual-enrollment CTE)? Describe how this is sourced (e.g., annual or periodic file-based data collection, standardized API based data collection via Ed-Fi, other) and captured, which agency holds the data, and any known gaps. To the extent it adds additional context, please also describe your CTE and dual enrollment data systems generally. (Response limit is 3,500 characters, approximately 500 words.)
14. To what extent does the state maintain structured data describing programs of study (e.g., degrees, CTE pathways), K-12 courses, postsecondary courses, course equivalencies/transferability (between K-12 and post-secondary, across post-secondary public institutions), credentials, and pathway requirements? Can those data be linked to student course-taking records? Please briefly describe which data enhancements would be most helpful for your state. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)
15. Who are the priority users of CTE dual enrollment data in your state, and what decisions or workflows should better data support? Examples might include student advising, pathway progress monitoring, institutional coordination, program improvement, funding decisions, or statewide outcome monitoring. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

- **Section G. Participation Targets**

16. Provide preliminary targets for the number of students participating in high-quality CTE dual enrollment at 3, 5, and 10 years, alongside your current baseline (to the extent known). What outcome measures beyond participation are you interested in exploring pairing with these targets (for example, credential attainment, postsecondary enrollment in an aligned program, or employment in the priority industry), and can the state currently measure them? For more information about the participation targets and why they matter for this project, see "[How do the participation and completion targets work?](#)" above. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

- **Section H. Capacity and Sustainability**

17. Describe the staff capacity the lead applicant and team members will commit to the initiative, including who will lead the asset mapping and strategy development work during 2027. Name any additional capacity (for example, an intermediary partner, contracted support, or a fellow) the state plans to bring in. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)
18. Does your state anticipate a leadership transition in early 2027 or during the project period (for example, a new governor, chief state school officer, higher education executive, or State CTE Director)? If so, describe your plan for sustaining the work and engaging incoming leadership. If not, describe how the work is insulated from turnover in any single role. (Response limit is 2,100 characters, approximately 300 words.)

To submit your application, [the application form can be located here](#).

53. How will states be selected?

Selection happens in two stages.

First, a selection team drawn from CHSA and its partner organizations will review every application against the selection criteria below. We will notify finalists on **Monday, December 21, 2026**.

Second, finalists will be invited to a virtual interview with the selection team during the week of **January 4, 2027** (see “[What will the finalist interview cover?](#)” below). The interview builds on your application and is our chance to hear directly from your team and your leadership.

In making final selections, we will consider each state’s application and interview together. We may also consider balance across the cohort, such as geography, governance structure, and data-system maturity, so that the cohort shows this work can succeed in many different kinds of states. We will notify all finalists of our decisions on **Tuesday, January 19, 2027**, and a public announcement of the selected states will follow.

54. What are the selection criteria?

We believe successful applicants will be those who:

- **Show how expanding CTE dual enrollment advances the state’s existing education and workforce agenda.** Strong applications connect this work to priorities the state has already set, and point to recent policy, funding, or program changes that show the state can turn a strategy into action. (Application Questions 6, 7, 10, 11, and 12)
- **Bring a cross-agency team with the authority to act.** Strong applications include the people who share governance of CTE and dual enrollment, and a leadership team whose members can approve policy changes, direct budget and staff, and remove barriers. (Application Questions 4 and 5)
- **Anchor the work in priority Career Clusters and/or occupations.** Strong applications choose priorities the state has already identified, or explain clearly why they chose them if the state hasn’t, and show how they connect to the state’s broader goals. (Application Question 9)
- **Have data infrastructure to see their starting point and measure growth.** Strong applications give an honest picture of what the state’s data can and can’t do today and a realistic path to improving it. We are not looking for any particular level of sophistication. (Application Questions 13–15)
- **Set ambitious, credible participation targets and a plan to sustain the work.** Strong applications propose targets the state can explain, and show the staff capacity and leadership continuity needed to keep the work moving. (Application Questions 8 and 16–18)

We value candor. An application that names real barriers and gaps, and shows how the state plans to address them, will be stronger than one that presents a state as having everything in place.

55. What are the key dates for the application and selection process?

- Interested Applicants Webinar: Wednesday November 4, 2026, 2:00 PM Eastern. [Click here to register.](#)
- Application deadline: Friday, December 4, 2026, by 11:59 PM Pacific. [Click here to submit your application.](#)
- Finalists notified: Monday, December 21, 2026

- Finalist interviews: Week of January 4, 2027
- Selected states notified: Tuesday, January 19, 2027
- Public announcement: Following notification of selected states

Because finalists will be notified just before the holidays, we encourage you to tentatively hold time during the week of January 4 for your lead point of contact and at least one member of your leadership team when you submit your application.

56. What will the finalist interview cover? Who should attend?

Finalists will be notified on Monday, December 21, 2026, and invited to a virtual interview with the selection team during the week of January 4, 2027. Interviews will last approximately 60 minutes.

Your lead point of contact should attend, along with at least one member of your leadership team. You're welcome to bring other members of your working team as well, especially those who will play a central role in the project. We don't ask for letters of commitment with your application. Instead, the interview is our chance to hear directly from you and your leaders about how you see this work and the role they'll play in moving it forward.

The conversation will build on your application. We'll want to hear more about your vision for CTE dual enrollment in your state, how your working and leadership teams will work together, and how you'd approach the challenges you identified. There's no presentation to prepare, and we aren't looking for polished answers. We're looking for a candid conversation that helps us understand your state and how we can best support you.

The interview is also an opportunity for you to ask us questions, so you can be confident this project is the right fit for your state.

Still Have Questions?

57. I still have questions. Who do I contact?

For any and all additional questions, please contact Alex Perry, Coordinator of the College in High School Alliance at alex.perry@flpadvisors.com or (202) 431-7221. All questions and queries are very welcome.