



Understanding Career and Technical Education

The Top 3 Things You Need to Know

1 What is Career and Technical Education (CTE)?

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a broad term that offers students organized educational activities providing both academic content and technical skills in current or emerging professions, while building pathways connecting to education and the workforce

2 Is CTE the same thing as vocational education?

Yes and no. CTE includes what is traditionally thought of as vocational education, but it also includes many other areas as well. For much of the 20th century, vocational education centered around skilled trades such as carpentry and plumbing, as well as career training programs in fields like cosmetology.

However, as technological advances gave rise to new careers, vocational education evolved to meet the changing needs of the labor market. Recognizing this, federal legislation in 2006 started using the term “career and technical education” instead of “vocational education.”

3 Is CTE only for students who aren't college-bound?

No. Many college students and college-bound high school students take CTE courses to develop technical skills and gain hands-on experience to prepare for their future careers.

Students today don't need to choose between college or CTE: they can do both. East Texas offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to “stack” credentials toward degrees in a variety of fields. “Stackable” credentials are degrees or certificates that can be used on their own in the workplace or provide credit for further education.



If you have any questions about the East Texas Tri-Agency Initiative or want to get involved, contact:

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