

Oklahoma

Analyzing the learner continuum in Oklahoma

Governor Stitt and his Workforce and Economic Development Council have put a stake in the ground around making Oklahoma a top 10 state for workforce development. Innovative policies and programs are supporting this goal, such as the Oklahoma Promise supporting postsecondary tuition for learners from low-income backgrounds and removing legal barriers for employers to participate in work-based learning. Many outstanding questions, however, remain with a need to strengthen data collection and analysis in making programmatic decisions and ensuring alignment to high-skill, high-wage, high-demand programs and credentials.



STRENGTHS

- Oklahoma's partnership with Express Employment Professionals removing legal barriers for work-based learning.
- Oklahoma's CareerTech CTE grants supporting districts in upgrading equipment and training teachers to better align to industry expectations.
- Oklahoma's last dollar (Oklahoma Promise) and last mile program supporting learners financially to seek and earn a postsecondary credential.

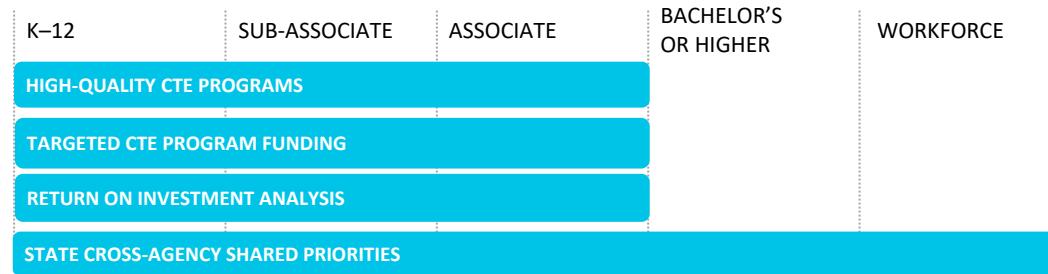
OPPORTUNITIES

- Conduct a full return on investment analysis of K-12 and postsecondary CTE program offerings for alignment, quality and access.
- Implement an outcomes-based funding for CareerTech and 2-year postsecondary including items such as job placement and wage earnings
- Establish a cross-agency initiative to identify, promote and incentivize high-value stackable credentials from K-12 through postsecondary.



LEARNER PATHWAYS

Ensure vertical alignment to workforce needs, robust funding, collaboration across agencies and equitable access for all students.



HIGH-QUALITY CTE PROGRAMS

Align all CTE programs with high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations that reflect the state's economic and workforce priorities. Ensure that these programs feature the academic and technical skills and knowledge learners will need to be successful.



TARGETED CTE PROGRAM FUNDING

Dedicate state funding for CTE programs—but only if they are aligned to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations. Target specific funds for pathway completion and demonstrated learner outcomes.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

Conduct a biennial return on investment (ROI) analysis of CTE programs to assess whether all learners have access to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage pathways. Collect school- and student-level data to evaluate outcomes of CTE programs against established shared metrics for quality and equity.



STATE CROSS-AGENCY SHARED PRIORITIES

Establish shared priorities and collective accountability across state agencies and education systems for learner pathway development, supports and success. Ensure that business and industry have a seat at the table and can lead discussions related to demand and training requirements.





KEY POLICY

High-Quality CTE Programs



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) provides oversight for the state's CTE programs including 29 CareerTech centers, K-12 districts, skills centers and adult basic education service providers. The agency is governed by the State Board of Career and Technology Education and works closely with the State Department of Education and the State Regents for Higher Education. Career Tech centers provide services for secondary and postsecondary students. CTE in K-12 districts is focused on career awareness, exploration, and work-based learning.

Oklahoma's CTE programs of study and courses are developed at the local level and approved by ODCTE to qualify for state/federal funding. There do not appear to be statewide programs of study or course standards. The state's Perkins V plan refers to a program approval process and rubric; however, it is unclear whether or how this process includes clear criteria and definitions to ensure local program alignment with high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations. Further, it is unclear whether this process includes an evaluation of whether the program includes the knowledge, skills and rigor needed for success in the aligned occupations.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider conducting a thorough return on investment analysis of its existing K-12 and postsecondary CTE programs to (a) ensure that all promoted programs align with state workforce and economic demands and projections in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations; (b) determine where there are program gap opportunities in both access and attainment for historically underserved learners; and (c) ascertain program quality and rigor aligned to the academic and technical knowledge and skills needed in H3 occupations. The state can develop and implement a plan to phase out all misaligned or low-quality programs and phase in revised or new high-quality programs of study fully reflective of the state's priorities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Delaware – [Career and Technical Education Programs](#)
- Tennessee – [Career and Technical Education Programs](#)
- Texas – [Program of Study Initiative](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Perkins V Plan](#)
- [CareerTech](#)
- [Oklahoma Works](#)

POLICIES

- [Title 780, Chapter 15, Subchapter 3 Technology Centers Education](#)
- [Title 780:10-7-1 - ODCTE Administrative Rules](#)





KEY POLICY

Targeted CTE Program Funding



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

For 2021-22, CareerTech Centers were eligible to apply for \$150,000 one-time grants for an individual district and \$250,000 for a Statewide Initiative Grant involving multiple districts for upgrading or startup of programs. The funds can be used for the implementation and/or upgrading instructional and training technology to 1) innovative hardware and software, 2) curriculum materials, 3) machinery and equipment, and 4) instructor training. K-12 districts were eligible to apply for \$15,000 to use on approved CTE programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma's funding to provide resources on equipment and training materials is a great first step. Oklahoma can also consider incentive funds for students who complete a high-quality, aligned program of study or obtain aligned industry credentials. Oklahoma can also adjust its state funding mechanisms to prioritize state funding for CTE programs aligned with high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Indiana – [Funding Methodology](#)
- Ohio – [Innovative Workforce Incentive Program](#)
- Texas – [House Bill 3](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma CareerTech Funding and Grants](#)
- [TC Lottery Grants](#)

POLICIES

- N/A





KEY POLICY

Return on Investment Analysis



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

No formal legislation that governs an audit for quality and equity could be identified.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can conduct a thorough audit to (1) to see where high-quality aligned programs are being offered and where access gaps exist and (2) understand student participation and completion data by student groups to determine potential access and opportunity gaps. ExcelinEd's [Auditing a State Career and Technical Education Program for Quality](#) playbook provides a roadmap for developing and implementing an audit.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Return on Investment Reports](#)
- Florida – [Executive Order 19-31](#) and [House Bill 7071](#)

(NOTE: While promising, both could be strengthened by more focused analyses on equity and quality of offerings.)

RESOURCES

- N/A

POLICIES

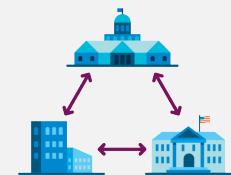
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KEY POLICY

State Cross-Agency Shared Priorities



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

In 2019, Governor Stitt established the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED), a cross-sector group comprised of K-12, postsecondary, workforce development, commerce, business/industry and employment security commission. The GCWED functions as the state's workforce investment board. The GCWED has set for four objectives 1) expand Oklahoma's workforce to satisfy industry and economic development, 2) upskill Oklahoma's workforce, 3) offer workforce solutions to Oklahoma's businesses, 4) build Oklahoma's workforce system capacity. For each of these four objectives the council has set strategies, defined success, established leads and set milestones.

The Oklahoma Workforce Commission was established through the passage of SB621 in 2023. The Commission will be comprised of nine appointed members, all of whom are private-sector business leaders. The Commission has multiple responsibilities including the administration of the Workforce Coordination Revolving Fund, making contracts and agreements for state workforce development efforts, overseeing and directing the administration of the GCWED, collecting workforce data, creating and maintaining a public dashboard with data and reports related to workforce development efforts, and making recommendations to the legislature for improving workforce programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

The GCWED a great step in developing and implementing state cross-agency shared priorities. The GCWED can consider its role in strengthening and streamlining across postsecondary institutions. In the GCWED strategic plan the college, CareerTech, and postsecondary are each only mentioned one time.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Delaware – [Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education \(DACCCTE\)](#)
- Indiana – [Governor's Workforce Cabinet](#)
- Washington – [Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board](#)

RESOURCES

- [OKWorks: Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development](#)

POLICIES

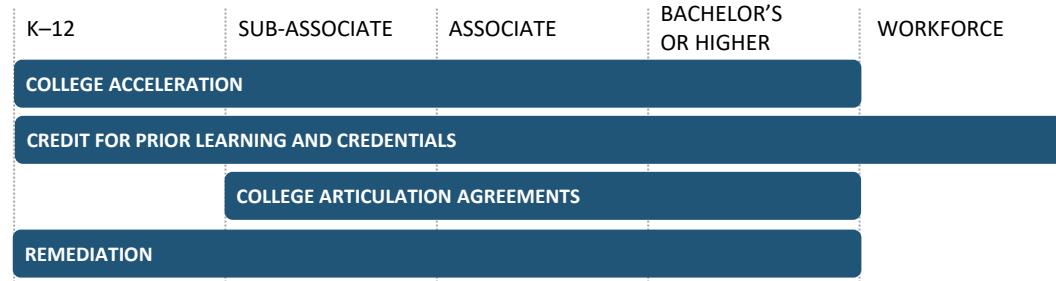
- [§74.70.5003.10.d](#) Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development
- [SB 621](#) Oklahoma Workforce Transformation Act





POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Streamline postsecondary learning and empower high school students to earn credit to reduce the time required to earn postsecondary degrees.



COLLEGE ACCELERATION

Provide and incentivize a range of options for learners to earn college credit while in high school. Ensure that all learners have access and financial support to accelerate their journey to a postsecondary credential.



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDENTIALS

Implement a consistent state policy for awarding postsecondary program or elective credit for prior learning, work experience and earned industry credentials.



COLLEGE ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

Establish statewide articulation agreements to ensure college credits earned in K-12 or at one institution transfer and count toward a degree at another. Minimize or eliminate credit loss and misalignment for transitioning learners.



REMEDIATION

Replace outdated developmental and remedial education with college credit bearing options paired with intensive supports. Adopt co-requisite remediation programs or offer remediation to learners before they graduate high school.





POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

College Acceleration



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The state offers multiple types of college acceleration options and policies to support student success, including Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB), and Dual (Concurrent) Enrollment courses. Oklahoma's accountability system includes a postsecondary opportunity indicator, which measures the percent of high school juniors and seniors who earn a D or higher in at least one of four approved options: college-prep (AP/IB) coursework, work-based internships, dual (concurrent) enrollment and CTE certificate programs.

Additionally, Oklahoma students can earn up to 27 college credit hours at no cost through concurrent enrollment tuition waivers (up to 18 credits in 12th grade and 9 credits in 11th grade, if they meet ACT/SAT/GPA eligibility requirements). Students are required to pay for course fees, books, and supplies. High schools are required to award academic credit for any concurrently enrolled higher education courses that are correlated with the academic credit awarded by the institution of higher education.

Oklahoma also allocates funding to reduce Advanced Placement exam fees for students from low-income families or who take more than one AP exam per year. Further, Oklahoma statute outlines an Advanced Placement Incentive program, but no current information could be located on the Department of Education's website about the status of AP Incentive funding and implementation. Oklahoma has developed OKCollegeStart.org which houses information on college and career planning, including information on concurrent enrollment. All students are required to complete an Individual and Career Academic Plan (ICAP), which was recently expanded to include information on 2 and 4-year colleges, apprenticeships, military, and CTE programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can continue to strengthen its data collection and reporting of outcomes for all its college acceleration options disaggregated by demographics such as race, socioeconomic status, language, disability and region. This can help target any issues of student access and equity that may exist across the state.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – [High School Acceleration Programs](#) and [Statewide Agreements on Credit](#)
- Idaho – [Advanced Opportunities Funding](#)
- Louisiana – [TOPS-Tech Early Start Program](#)
- North Carolina – [Automatic Enrollment](#)

RESOURCES

- [OKDE Advanced Placement](#)
- [Postsecondary Opportunities Guide](#)
- [OKCollegeStart.org](#)
- [AP Exam Fees](#)

POLICIES

- [§70-628.13](#) Concurrent Enrollment
- [S.B. 1196](#) Concurrent Enrollment
- [§70-1210.703](#). Financial Incentives Awarded to Schools (Advanced Placement)
- [§70-1210.704](#). Access to Advanced Placement Courses





POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Oklahoma



OKLAHOMA

KEY POLICY

Credit for Prior Learning and Credentials



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma has folded credit for prior learning into the state's Complete College America Initiative, a postsecondary attainment goal. The state established ShowWhatYouKnow.org, a site that helps Oklahomans understand how college credits can be obtained for knowledge gained through work and life experiences, non-degree-granting institutions, industry credentials, college acceleration courses, and military training. The military training however, links to an external site that offers credit recommendations—leaving individual students and Oklahoma's institutions responsible for figuring out whether and how specific military experiences translate into postsecondary credit.

Policies to award credit for prior learning vary across Oklahoma's postsecondary institutions. For example, Oklahoma University awards prior learning assessment credits for AP, CLEP, department examinations, IB, excelsior, military credit, and noncollegiate learning. Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology uses a portfolio review process to award credit for industry certifications and licenses, military training, and industry experience. Oklahoma City Community College has three prior learning assessment programs for engineering technology, medical assistant, and surgical technology.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider establishing policies that standardize the awarding of college credit for prior learning and earned credentials across all postsecondary systems and institutions. These policies would help to accelerate student attainment of a postsecondary credential. Standardizing the awarding of military training could be a great place to start.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Prior Learning Assessment Credit Policy](#)
- Kentucky – [Prior Learning Initiative](#)
- Ohio – [Military Strategic Implementation Team](#)

RESOURCES

- [ShowWhatYouKnowOK.org](#)
- [OU Prior Learning Assessment Credits](#)
- [OSU Institute of Technology Prior Learning](#)
- [OCCC Prior Learning](#)

POLICIES

- N/A





POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

College Articulation Agreements



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

For high school articulation, the ShowWhatYouKnow.org website provides information on which public postsecondary institutions award credit for Advanced Placement courses. All public institutions provide credit but the accepted score varies by institution. Concurrent enrollment credits earned are accepted at public postsecondary institutions as transfer credits.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education manages the state's course equivalency tables, which learners can use to determine whether and how credits will be accepted at various postsecondary institutions. Oklahoma does have guaranteed transfer admission if certain GPA and credit requirements are met.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider standardizing the credits awarded and course equivalencies for Advanced Placement exam scores, as well as expanding ShowWhatYouKnow.org to include standardized information about how other types of college acceleration courses (IB, concurrent enrollment, etc.) articulate to postsecondary institutions, majors and programs. Oklahoma can also consider developing guaranteed transfer pathways to help reduce the potential for lost or stranded credits. Guaranteed Transfer Pathways identify a set of courses that 1) culminate in an associate degree and 2) are certified to count toward a bachelor's degree if a learner transfers to a 4-year institution.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – [Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements](#)
- Indiana – [Core Transfer Library](#)
- Kentucky – [Transfer Articulation Agreements](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Course Transfer](#)
- [Transfer Admission Standards](#)
- [ShowWhatYouKnow Advanced Standing Scores](#)

POLICIES

- [§ 3206.1.](#) Uniform Course Numbering System to be Established
- [§ 3206.2.](#) Designation of Course Numbers





POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Remediation



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Remedial courses vary across postsecondary institution in Oklahoma. For example, Oklahoma State University has developed a MOU with Stillwater Community College to offer remedial courses. The courses, however, are not credit bearing. The Complete College America initiative states that institutions are working on co-requisite remediation options but did not identify which institutions.

In 2018 the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the State Regents for Higher Education implemented a fourth-year elective math remediation course, College Career Math Ready, which has supported in increasing ACT scores, and reducing remediation.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider expanding co-requisite remediation across all postsecondary institutions and to pilot co-requisite remediation with concurrent enrollment high school opportunities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Georgia – [Complete College Georgia](#)
- North Carolina – [Multiple Measures of Placement Policy](#)
- Tennessee – [Co-Requisite Remediation](#) and [Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support](#) (SAILS)

RESOURCES

- [OSU Remedial Courses](#)
- [Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education High School Preparation Reports](#)
- [Complete College America](#)
- [College Career Math Ready](#)

POLICIES

- N/A

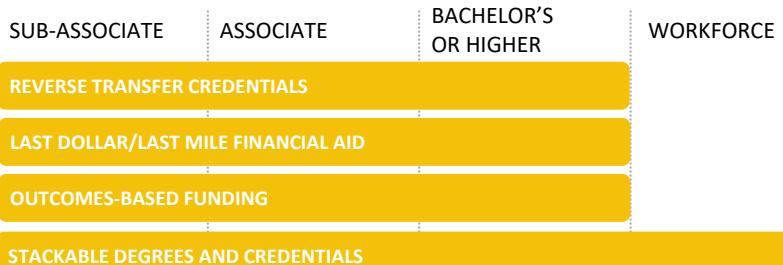




POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Reduce barriers—such as funding, lack of alignment and missed opportunities—to help more students attain postsecondary credentials.

K-12



REVERSE TRANSFER CREDENTIALS

Establish a statewide policy to allow students to earn an associate degree while continuing to work toward a bachelor's degree. Ensure two-year and four-year college credits can be combined toward the credential.



LAST DOLLAR/LAST MILE FINANCIAL AID

Provide dedicated state financial aid to qualifying learners that fills in gaps in federal assistance (last dollar) and promotes attainment for learners just shy of completing a degree (last mile).



OUTCOMES-BASED FUNDING

Transition postsecondary funding models from those based on learner enrollment to ones based on learner outcomes. Dedicate more funding to programs and institutions that show demonstrated success in meeting success metrics such as job placement and long-term wage earnings.



STACKABLE DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS

Define and promote a combination of industry and academic credentials that reflect articulated pathways to advanced learning and employment. Ensure that postsecondary credential programs are widely accessible to all learners and reflect value in the labor market.



POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Reverse Transfer Credentials



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Reverse Transfer is part of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Complete College America initiative, but reverse transfer is not in official statute or policy. The specific process is up to individual institutions to determine how to review transcripts and reach out to individuals or if students must self-request a transcript review.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider implementing a statewide policy on reverse transfer. The policy could include an “opt-in” system for transfer student’s transcripts to be reviewed each semester to identify when they have received enough credits for an associate degree and a process to contact individuals who are no longer enrolled but have enough credits to earn a degree.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Reverse Transfer Process](#)
- Florida – [Reverse Transfer Statewide Articulation Agreements](#)
- Texas – [Reverse Transfer Process](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma State Regents or Higher Education Complete College America](#)
- [OCCC Reverse Transfer](#)

POLICIES

- N/A





POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Last Dollar/Last Mile Financial Aid



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma Promise (formerly the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program) offers qualified Oklahoma students the opportunity to earn a scholarship for postsecondary tuition. This is a limited last dollar scholarship in that eligible students must come from low-income families (less than \$60,000/year) and must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5, in addition to meeting other academic, administrative and conduct requirements. In 2021, Senate Bill 639 added a requirement for the OSRHE to survey Oklahoma Promise students who do not complete their degree to determine the reasons for withdrawal.

While the state does not have a last mile scholarship, Reach Higher, Oklahoma's Degree Credential Program, includes two mechanisms to support degree completion. The Direct Complete option is designed to help adults who have earned some college credit complete an associate or bachelor's degree linked to a critical occupation as designated by Oklahoma Works' 100 Critical occupations list. The program is funded through a public, private partnership and is advertised as being "minimal" personal cost to the learner. The FlexFinish option features flexibly designed courses and curricula for learners with some credit to earn an AA/AS in enterprise development, a BS in organizational leadership, or other degrees endorsed by the FlexFinish program.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can leverage the results of the newly required Oklahoma Promise survey to determine what additional supports or changes are necessary to support student postsecondary completion rates for individuals in the program. Oklahoma can consider allocating funding to support student credential attainment by 1) expanding eligibility for Oklahoma Promise to include more learners and 2) funding Direct Complete program so that it functions as a last mile scholarship, waiving all tuition and mandatory fees for learners.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – [Last Mile College Completion Program](#)
- Rhode Island – [Rhode Island Promise](#)
- Tennessee – [Tennessee Promise](#) and [Tennessee Reconnect](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Promise](#)
- [19-20 Year End Report](#)
- [ReachHigherOK](#)

POLICIES

- §70-2602 [Creation of Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program](#)
- [Senate Bill 639](#)





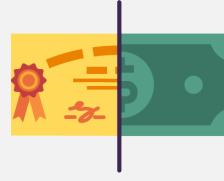
POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Outcomes-Based Funding



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma does not currently have an outcomes-based funding policy. However, in 2012 the State Regents adopted a performance-based funding formula. The performance factors are :

- a campus degree completion plan that adheres to CCA goals
- retention rates
- Pell Grant retention rates
- 24-credit-hour completion rate
- graduation rate
- CCA degree target achievement
- number of certificates/degrees conferred
- program accreditation

Additional information on the performance-based funding formula could not be found online, so status of implementation and effectiveness are unknown. Specifically, it is unclear what proportion of funding is determined by performance-based measures or whether all public postsecondary institutions (such as CareerTech Centers) are funded based on performance.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Student success and course completion outcomes can go beyond typical metrics such as retention and graduation rates to include others such as job placement, long-term wage earnings and success of underrepresented student populations. Oklahoma can consider weighted, [outcomes-based](#) funding aligned across all postsecondary institutions to support desired outcomes for historically underserved learners.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Missouri – [Performance Funding](#)
- Tennessee – [Outcomes-Based Funding Formula](#)
- Texas – [State Technical College Funding Model](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education](#)

POLICIES

- N/A





POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Stackable Degrees and Credentials



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

No legislation on stackable credentials could be identified.

ShowWhatYouKnow includes a Technical Assessment Inventory that lists how specific industry-recognized credentials that can articulate to course credit at individual postsecondary institutions. While this list provides transparency about which institutions accept each credential (and the course/credit equivalency), it does not reflect a statewide policy that is consistent across institutions and based on standardized criteria to determine the value of each credential in the labor market.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

The Governor's Workforce Council for Workforce and Economic Development can consider affirming what constitutes stackable credentials from K-12 through postsecondary, including skills retraining certificates. The council can also identify criteria to ensure that all stackable credentials hold market value in the workforce.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Stackable Credential Legislation](#)
- Idaho – [SkillStack](#)
- Indiana – [Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant](#)

RESOURCES

- [ShowWhatYouKnow.org](#)
[Technical Assessment Inventory](#)

POLICIES

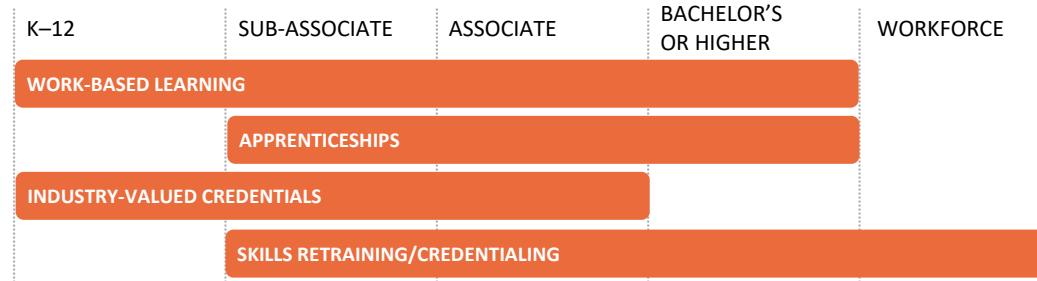
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WORKFORCE READINESS

Ensure the skills, credentials and apprenticeships students pursue help to prepare a strong workforce within the state.



WORK-BASED LEARNING

Establish a statewide K-12 and postsecondary work-based learning program that promotes learning through a series of progressive learner experiences both in the classroom and in a work setting. Provide guidance and support for how education and business and industry collaborate to achieve mutual priorities.



APPRENTICESHIPS

Establish clearly defined program guidance for state-promoted apprenticeships outlining prerequisites, requirements, funding, stakeholder incentives and participant outcomes.



INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS

Ensure all industry credentials earned in K-12 or postsecondary are aligned with high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations and valued by state and regional employers.



SKILLS RETRAINING/CREDENTIALING

Identify and promote non-degree programs and credentials that support new, transitioning and displaced learners in career change and advancement. Ensure that supports include funding supports for learners and incentives for participating employers who train or retrain them.





WORKFORCE READINESS

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Work-Based Learning



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

In 2017, Governor Fallin set the “Earn and Learn Oklahoma” goal, which seeks to establish 20,000 quality work-based learning opportunities by 2020. (Online research could not identify if this was met). The goal was coupled with the passage of SB 1171 which established a work-based learning program as an official duty of the Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) and approved annual funding for the management of the program. HB 2155 (2017) established the state’s ICAP program, which includes service-learning or work-based learning experiences as part of the state’s high school graduation requirements.

Oklahoma’s Perkins V plan lists work-based learning as an area of need, and identifies work-based learning participation as the state’s secondary program quality indicator. In November 2019, ODCTE hired a statewide work-based learning liaison to serve as a connection between business/industry and CTE educators. ODCTE created a CareerTech Work-Based Learning Manual that is a how-to guide with suggestions and tools for planning and implementing specific WBL activities. Work-based learning opportunities are available in CareerTech and K-12 districts.

Oklahoma has worked to remove the legal barriers for K-12 learners to participate in work-based learning through a partnership with the Express Employment Professionals which functions as the employer of record for the WBL student and covers the required workers’ compensation insurance and liability.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

The GCWED has identified development of competency standards for internships and the development of sector partnership with intermediary network in its strategic plan which are both good steps to take to strengthen work-based learning. Oklahoma can analyze its work-based learning placement and experience data to gauge student access to high-quality placements and to ensure that the state’s K-12 work-based learning graduation requirement is achieving its intended outcomes. The state can also more clearly articulate whether and how WBL opportunities and experiences align across K-12 and postsecondary education systems

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Delaware – [Work-Based Learning Practicum](#)
- Georgia – [Work-Based Learning Framework](#)
- Rhode Island – [PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Perkins V Plan](#)
- [CareerTech Work-Based Learning](#)
- [Express WBL Partnership](#)

POLICIES

- [Earn and Learn Executive Order 2017-34](#)
- [SB 1171 Work-based Learning Program](#)
- [Apprenticeships Internships and Mentorships Act of 2016](#)
- [70 O.S. § 1210.508-4 - Individual Career and Academic Plan \(ICAP\) Requirements](#)





WORKFORCE READINESS

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Registered Apprenticeship



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

OklahomaWorks (Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development) coordinates the state's apprenticeships programs and lists them under the larger umbrella of work-based learning. Under SB 1171 (2018), Oklahoma Works currently offers an incentive grant for employers to apply for up to \$12,000 to establish or expand a USDOL-Registered Apprenticeship program.

In 2021 SB 619 expanded the Apprenticeships Internships and Mentorships Act of 2016 to allow high school sophomores to participate in school-sponsored apprenticeships (formerly it was limited to junior and seniors) . SB 619 also allows school districts to obtain liability insurance to protect students who participate in the program. The 2016 Act authorized schools to enter with private or public organizations to create apprenticeship, internship and mentorship programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

To build on its steady progress, Oklahoma can consider an incentive program for students who are in registered apprenticeship programs to be eligible for reimbursement of tuition, books, required tools and other approved expenses required for participation in the program. Additionally, the state can analyze its Registered Apprenticeship participation and completion data to develop policy, program and/or funding strategies that a) ensure apprenticeship opportunities align with the state's workforce needs and b) work to close any gaps in apprenticeship access, quality or outcomes across industries, occupations and learner groups.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Iowa – [Earn and Learn](#)
- Kentucky – [Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky](#) and [Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship](#)
- New Jersey – [Apprenticeship Network](#)
- South Carolina – [Apprenticeship Carolina](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Works Apprenticeships](#)
- [Oklahoma Works Work-Based Learning](#)
- [Oklahoma Works Defining Work-Based Learning](#)

POLICIES

- [SB 619 Apprenticeships Internships and Mentorships](#)
- [Apprenticeships Internships and Mentorships Act of 2016](#)
- [74 O.S. § 5003.10e: Establishment of a WBL Program](#)





WORKFORCE READINESS

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Industry-Valued Credentials



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

According to ExcelinEd's research with Burning Glass for [CredentialsMatter.org](https://www.credentialsmatter.org), in 2017–18, only 10 percent of the industry credentials earned by Oklahoma K–12 students were asked for by employers and were associated with occupations that pay at least \$15 per hour. Importantly, 66% of the credentials earned are categorized as CTE Assessments (39%) or General Career Readiness (27%)—the categories that reflect low levels of specificity for industry/occupations or low levels of recognition and value by employers.

No legislation or policy could be found to ensure the industry credentials offered aligned with high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations and valued by state/regional employers. ODCTE releases both a "Credentials Book" and "Approved Assessment List" which categorize approved credentials as "industry-required, industry-endorsed, industry-aligned skill," but no information on the process and criteria used to review the value of each credential could be found online. The Oklahoma Department of Education approves an industry-valued credentials list that "may be used" by CTE programs to provide the training and skills necessary for students to be successful in the workplace. The list could not be found during online research. It is unclear whether the value and portability of these promoted credentials are communicated to learners. Oklahoma is unique among states in that it offers many Oklahoma-specific CTE credentials. However, it is unclear whether these credentials are valued by Oklahoma (or national) employers, or whether they are instructional assessments that are promoted as credentials.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can continue to strengthen its list of promoted industry-credentials in collaboration with industry to ensure alignment to high-skill, high-wage, high-demand occupations in collaboration with postsecondary. Postsecondary can strengthen data collection and reporting of credentials earned in postsecondary and their quality/stackability to degrees or additional credentials. Oklahoma can also consider a way to incentivize attainment of high-quality industry-recognized credentials. This could be an incentive for additional funds (weighted funding) to districts and schools that offer programs that align to the in-demand, high-skill, high-wage credentials. Or funds back to districts and schools per credential earned.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Indiana – [Promoted Industry Certifications](https://www.industrycertifications.org)
- Kentucky – [Valid Industry Certifications](https://www.validindustrycertifications.org)
- Louisiana – [Industry-Based Certification State Focus List](https://www.industrybasedcertification.org)

RESOURCES

- [CareerTech Industry Credentials](https://www.careertech.org/industry-credentials)
- [Department of Education Career Pathways](https://www.ed.gov/career-pathways)

POLICIES

- [SB 1370 Subject Matter Standards](https://www.ok.gov/ode/legislative/legislative-priorities/sb-1370)





WORKFORCE READINESS

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Skills Retraining/Credentialing



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma Works coordinates skills retraining/upskilling and workforce programs. The State Regent's Reach Higher Program supports adults to return and complete degrees in high-demand fields. A couple of specific innovative programs of note: Oklahoma Works offers a CompTIA A+ Mentored Learning program to provide online instructor-led workshops that are geared towards the CompTIA A+ (IT) certification. The 180 Skills program offers free access to courses and 13 career program certifications in logistics, aerospace manufacturing and advanced manufacturing.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider providing a grant that reimburses employers or individuals for skills retraining upon completion of a qualifying degree or credential within an in-demand, high-skill, high-wage field.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Indiana – [Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant](#)
- Ohio – [TechCred](#)
- Washington – [Worker Retraining Program](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Works](#)

POLICIES

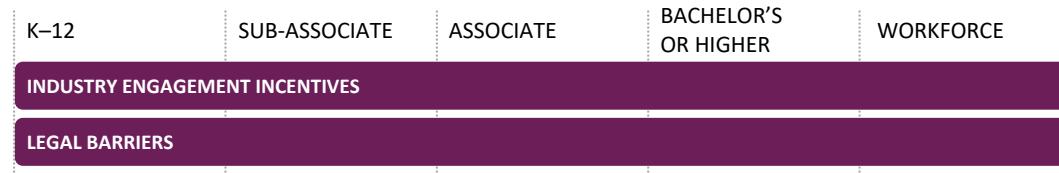
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EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Incentivize workforce engagement in student pathways and reduce the barriers that keep employers from participating.



INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES

Establish, sustain and promote a comprehensive set of industry and employer engagement incentives for supporting education to workforce pathways. Incentives may include grant funds, tax credits, or local and regional support services.



LEGAL BARRIERS

Remove or lessen legal barriers such as liability insurance, workers' compensation and worksite age restrictions to provide more learners with work-based learning opportunities.





EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Industry Engagement Incentives



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

OklahomaWorks currently (2021) has an incentive grant for employers to apply for up to \$12,000 to establish a new apprenticeship.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can also consider providing financial incentives or tax credits for employers that hire students participating in a formal work-based learning program or funding reimbursement for employers who train, hire and retain new or incumbent workers to fill in-demand positions within recognized job fields.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Georgia – [Work-Based Learning Premium Credit](#)
- Indiana – [Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant](#)
- Iowa – [Tax Credit](#)

RESOURCES

- [Oklahoma Works Apprenticeships](#)

POLICIES

- N/A





EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Legal Barriers



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma CareerTech is partnering with Express Employment Professionals to remove legal barriers for employers participating in work-based learning. Express Employment Professionals is the actual employer of the WBL student and covers the required workers' compensation insurance and liability. The onboarding and off-boarding processes are covered by Express. The partnership began as a pilot and has expanded out for statewide participation in August 2021.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma is one of the few states with a policy in place to help reduce employer liability. Oklahoma can also consider expanding this partnership to include students participating in WBL placements through K-12 districts, or allowing K-12 public schools to purchase certain insurance coverage for the benefit of businesses and students participating in CTE programs and provide for some immunity from liability of certain public school students participating in these programs.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Kentucky – [Apprenticeship Programs & Partnerships](#)
- Rhode Island – [Work Immersion Training Grant](#)
- Texas – [Insurance Coverage](#)

RESOURCES

- [Express WBL Partnership](#)

POLICIES

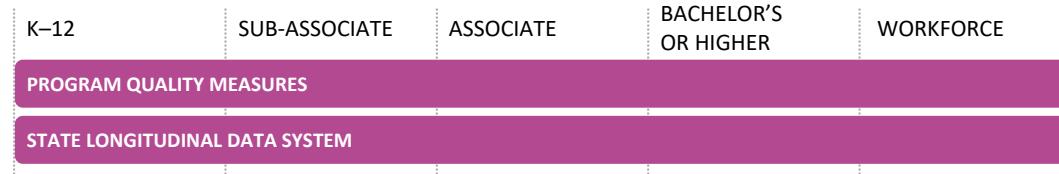
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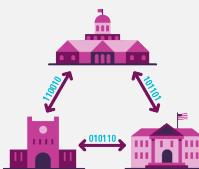
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

To ensure the strength of all the other policies, there must be cross-sector agreement on outcomes, strategies to get there and data to track progress.



PROGRAM QUALITY MEASURES

Establish shared statewide definitions and measures for quality of and success in education to workforce pathways. Ensure these shared priorities extend across agencies and systems and inform decisions about program offerings, funding and outcomes.



STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

Ensure the state's cross-agency data system collects and reports on data needed to evaluate education workforce programs against shared metrics for quality and success. Data should span agencies and education systems and into the workforce to inform decision-making and drive outcomes.





DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Oklahoma



KEY POLICY

Program Quality Measures



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Oklahoma does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to develop shared education to workforce program definitions and indicators that can be transformed used to support aligned policies and priorities across education and workforce systems. Shared program quality definitions and indicators occur on an ad hoc basis.

The postsecondary attainment goal for the state is part of the State Regents for Higher Education, Complete College America Initiative. The goal is to increase the number of degrees and certificates earned in Oklahoma by 67% by 2023 to meet our state's workforce needs and keep Oklahoma competitive in a global economy.

The Governor's Council on Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) has set four impact goals with data-based outcomes and targets. The four goals are

- Increase Oklahoma's Labor Force Participation rate from 60-65%
- Create 50,000 new private sector jobs with an average salary of \$55,000 per year
- Achieve top ten status in U.S. unemployment rate
- Increase effectiveness in serving employers

In 2021, Oklahoma's Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability was tasked with creating a report on the education system, higher education, CTE and the state workforce by analyzing data such as graduation rates (K-12 and PS), assessment scores, remediation rates and ability to find in-state employment. (HB 2691) However, it is unclear whether the data used in this report will provide consistent definitions and indicators of success across the various agencies and education systems.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma could consider coupling an [audit](#) for quality and equity (to understand student access and outcomes) with a process to develop a public-facing data dashboard that strengthens data collection and reporting to all stakeholders. This would involve a cross-agency, statewide analysis of existing data and gaps in information about labor market opportunities, education and training programs, learner experiences and outcomes to ensure the state can effectively: 1) analyze and make decisions about program offerings, 2) identify and address gaps in access, quality and outcomes and 3) provide useful data about pathway opportunities and quality to all stakeholders (including students and families) to be able to leverage in their pathway development. This could even involve a culling down of types of reporting that is being required of districts or postsecondary institutions to streamline to state priorities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Talent Pipeline Report](#)
- Indiana – [Governor's Workforce Cabinet](#)
- Rhode Island – [PrepareRI](#)

RESOURCES

- [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics \(OEWS\)](#)
- [GCWED Strategic Plan](#)

POLICIES

- [HB 2691](#)





DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

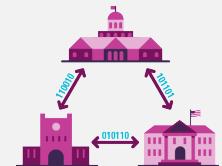
Oklahoma



OKLAHOMA

KEY POLICY

State Longitudinal Data System



STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Oklahoma Longitudinal Data System (OLDS) is the longitudinal data system. The OLDS is governed by the Oklahoma P-20 Council, a committee comprised of the representatives from the state departments and public education institutions that provides guidance to the Oklahoma Department of Education which maintains the OLDS. The OLDS system is publicly accessible as the Wave System and provides K-12 information.

In addition to the OLDS system, the Economic Research and Analysis Division of the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC), in collaboration with employers, the public, government agencies to analyze and produces labor market statistics.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Oklahoma can consider strengthening the data in OLDS by linking the K-12 data systems with early learning, postsecondary, workforce and other critical state agency data systems.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – [Talent Pipeline Report](#)
- Florida – [Talent Development Council](#)
- Kentucky – [KYStats](#)

RESOURCES

- [Wave System](#)

POLICIES

- §70-3-163 [P-20 Data Coordinating Council](#)

