

CTE Course Equivalencies

Statutory and/or Budget Language

\$358,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$358,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the implementation of chapter 221, Laws of 2019 (CTE course equivalencies).

\$55,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$55,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction for statewide implementation of career and technical education course equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 for math and science. This may include development of additional equivalency course frameworks, course performance assessments, and professional development for districts implementing the new frameworks.

Purpose

NF2 CTE Course Equivalencies: The funding provides support of statewide implementation of 2SHB 1424 (2019 Session), Career and Technical Education (CTE) course equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 and support the expansion of Core Plus curriculum, a model statewide course equivalency framework. This legislation included the costs associated with staffing 2.0 FTE at OSPI to support students accessing courses that meet graduation requirements aligned with their interests and postsecondary plans.

AS2 CTE Equivalency Frameworks: Funding is provided to support statewide implementation of CTE course equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 for all academic course content areas. Grant funds to school districts may assist with increasing the integration and rigor of academic core content instruction in CTE-based courses. Statewide CTE equivalencies offer flexibility for students to meet credit requirements and possibly a graduation pathway that aligns with their postsecondary plans.

Description of Services Provided

Oversight of the expansion of CTE equivalency courses and Core Plus: Services provided include the collection and analysis of CTE course equivalency data for the purpose of supporting the development of new statewide and local CTE course equivalencies. These course frameworks align academic core content to relevant CTE courses, providing students with flexible course options to meet specific credit requirements. The Core Plus manufacturing curriculum was initially designed in public-private partnership with the Boeing Company and gave the foundation for leading to expansions into both the construction sector with the Associated General Contractors Education Foundation, and the maritime sector with the Manufacturing Industrial Council (MIC). Framework development has led to implementation for adoption of



industry-based programs in all three sectors, leading to immediate employment, as well as advanced post-secondary training opportunities. Statewide Core Plus course equivalency frameworks were approved in the areas of mathematics, science, English language arts (ELA), and multiple combination options, allowing students to meet core credit requirements with this comprehensive CTE program. The approach to building Core Plus programs represents an innovative opportunity to include other advanced manufacturing fields, as the existing curriculum provides the structure for future development across multiple industry sectors. These proviso funds lead to enhanced development of resources and guidance tools, as well as professional learning opportunities for educators teaching these courses. Additionally, they provide technical assistance to school districts for implementing CTE course equivalencies. Funds are also utilized to support educator convenings to support the development of equivalency frameworks for statewide adoption.

Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

NF2: Regarding the provision of oversight for statewide CTE frameworks, professional learning and resource development, RCW 284.700.070 provides the mechanism for OSPI to develop additional frameworks in all academic content areas, and RCW 28A.230.097 gives OPSI authority for the approval of statewide equivalency course frameworks. The increased demand for new CTE equivalency course framework development and the responsibility of the waiver approval process on OSPI generates the need for consistent staff support at OSPI. This funding ensures statewide support of CTE course equivalency development, adoption, and implementation.

AS2: To receive funding support for CTE statewide equivalencies, participating educators must have content expertise in the academic content area or CTE program area to inform the development or review of the course framework. Specialists, industry personnel, and post-secondary partners are also involved in the development of these critical resources. Funds may be provided to districts that seek to increase statewide equivalency course adoption and access to equivalencies at the local level.

Beneficiaries in the 2023-24 School Year

Number of School Districts	254
Number of Schools	Undetermined
Number of Students	Undetermined
Number of Educators	Undetermined
Other	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

NF – CTE Course Equivalencies

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$358,000	\$154,202
2023	\$358,000	\$211,649
2022	\$358,000	\$337,999
2021	\$358,000	\$256,346
2020	\$369,000	\$217,683

AS – CTE Course Equivalency Framework

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$55,000	\$813
2023	\$55,000	\$5,003
2022	\$55,000	\$7,692
2021	\$55,000	\$10,868
2020	\$31,000	\$28,088

Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

NF – CTE Course Equivalencies

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	254
2023	254
2022	254
2021	254
2020	254

AS – CTE Course Equivalency Framework

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	79
2023	25
2022	35
2021	51
2020	32

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

In 2018, the legislature amended RCW 28A.700.070, to expand the areas of statewide equivalency courses from science and mathematics to any academic content area. Additionally, the legislature amended RCW 28A.230.097 in 2019, to require school districts to provide access to at least one statewide equivalency course from a list of approved courses and transcribe

those courses as meeting academic credit and fulfilling a graduation requirement until September 1, 2021. They further added that on or after September 1, 2021, any statewide equivalency course offered by the district or provided at a skills center must be offered for academic credit. Then, in 2023, the legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5617, requiring that “an interdistrict cooperative agreement between all participating school districts in a skills center... must stipulate that any approved state and local equivalency courses offered by the host school district must be honored as equivalency courses by all school districts participating in the skills center.”

Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

This year, six new statewide frameworks were published following the equivalency development and approval process under the leadership of the CTE Course Equivalency Program Supervisor. The process includes identifying the need for the course, drafting the framework, convening technical working groups, refining and evaluating the framework for academic and CTE learning standard alignment, and finalizing the framework for review and approval by the Superintendent. The new frameworks included:

1. CIP 030506: Introduction to Forest Management (1.0 credit of Lab Science)
2. CIP 030501: Advanced Forest Management (1.0 credit of Lab Science)
3. CIP 030101: Introduction to Restoration Ecology (1.0 credit of Lab Science)
4. CIP 030201: Advanced Restoration to Ecology (1.0 credit of Lab Science)
5. CIP 130101: Introduction to Education through Outdoor Learning (1.0 credit of ELA)
6. CIP 130101: Advanced Education through Outdoor Learning (1.0 credit of ELA)

These frameworks were built with core academic content, CTE educator experts, and key industry and post-secondary partners. The development detail of these course frameworks may be found on the OSPI Statewide Course Equivalencies webpage within each course’s CTE Course Equivalency Framework. The Superintendent approved these six new courses on October 8, 2024.

Convening educators in-person to build the frameworks continues to be challenging as districts struggle to maintain staffing and budget capacity. Thus, the budget use was reduced again this year due to lack of travel and meeting expenses for teachers and OSPI staff. Instead, virtual means of gathering and communicating were predominantly used, which enables greater connection to staff and partners across the state who volunteer to do the work but can extend the timeline as it can be a less efficient way of collaborating. This year, workgroup participants included academic specialists, CTE educators, and industry partners. Once the six approved frameworks were posted in October, the focus switched to providing equivalency trainings and

professional development at conferences, along with updating resources and drafting communications to reflect new laws and processes passed in the 2024 session.

The Core Plus Program Supervisor provided support to the expansion of programs by promoting, monitoring, and managing the Core Plus professional development, tracking grant awards, leading data collection development, cultivating industry buy in and supporting employer engagement activities to build systems for strategic scale up of Core Plus programs. A Core Plus grant program includes grant opportunities for school districts and skills centers, providing funding for annual startup or expansion of Aerospace Manufacturing, Construction, and Maritime programs, and for professional development of instructors leading these programs.

Efforts to support districts with the accuracy of equivalency data expanded this year to include providing new professional learning to districts which did not have additional costs associated with the proviso per se. These trainings sparked additional questions from districts that prompted OSPI to explore and consider adjustments. Thus, improving statewide data collection and reporting. Annual data analysis also evolved to include student demographic information to better understand which student groups have access to state and local equivalencies. This information will help identify gaps in access and enable OSPI to provide districts with enhanced support and resources to better engage students furthest from educational opportunity.

Major Challenges Faced by the Program

The previous vacancy in the Equivalency Program Supervisor position, along with staff transitions to new roles within the agency and the hiring of new personnel, have collectively contributed to a substantial reduction in the use of this proviso for the 2023–24 fiscal year.

Additionally, work groups encountered several challenges. In-person meetings were difficult due to staffing and budget constraints, resulting in reduced travel expenses. While virtual collaboration allowed for broader connections, it proved to be less efficient. Educators also faced scheduling issues, particularly during late spring recruitment and summer break, which affected responsiveness. Recruiting teachers in specialized content areas was also challenging. Technical workgroups were primarily convened by Zoom or other virtual meeting spaces. Finally, an extended timeline may be needed for developing course equivalency frameworks, as best practices recommend shorter, more frequent meetings to enhance engagement.

Future Opportunities

As part of OSPI's strategic goals, staff have prioritized increasing flexibility in meeting the 24-credit requirements for graduation, and CTE course equivalencies are one way to make progress towards that goal. OSPI staff will continue to rely on business, industry, and educational partnership to build and promote opportunities for expansion of CTE course equivalencies and Core Plus programs. With the improvement in accessible data due to data refinement, future opportunities will be explored to include expanding dual credit articulation agreements by

enlisting postsecondary partners to be included in the framework build and implementation of trainings. Other opportunities include:

- CTE course equivalency for college level courses and transparent alignment with the College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADRs) required for admission to Washington's public baccalaureate institutions.
- Continuous promotion of the statewide CTE course equivalency development process and adoption for local districts.
- Expanding existing locally approved CTE course equivalencies to statewide frameworks to increase student access to course options that meet specific graduation requirements and prepares them for their post-secondary goals.
- Assisting skill centers with communicating to participating districts all the approved course equivalencies and supporting partner districts with updating their courses in their student information system to ensure accuracy with SSB 5617.
- Revising existing frameworks with newly updated academic content learning standards as they become available.
- Investing in professional development will empower school counselors to effectively incorporate CTE course equivalencies into graduation pathways, equipping educators to deliver these courses and enhancing data accuracy.

Other Relevant Information

As OSPI's Secondary Content department continues their work to update state learning standards for core content areas, all existing statewide CTE course equivalency frameworks and Core Plus curriculum frameworks will need to be adapted to align with the newly revised learning standards.

The following resources are posted on the OSPI Statewide Course Equivalencies webpage:

- CTE Course Equivalency Framework Application Form to request the development of a new statewide equivalency framework.
- State Equivalency Certificate Template for documentation of application of CTE equivalencies to meet core academic content credits.
- CTE Statewide Course Equivalency Framework list, including both the corresponding CTE program area and equivalent core content area.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#)

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