



Career and Technical Education

CTE DIRECTIONS

Career and Technical Education (CTE) News and Information

March 2026

Career and Technical Education provides all students access to high-quality, rigorous career-focused programs that result in attainment of credentials with labor market value.

Utah Durable Skills

Utah CTE wants to ensure that students are not only technically proficient but also possess the invaluable durable skills that will set them apart from their competition in the workforce. This month we highlight the skill of leadership. Leadership is defined as the capacity to influence, motivate, and guide others toward a common goal while demonstrating integrity and responsibility. It involves not just holding a position of authority, but inspiring others through action and character. Key components of leadership include integrity, responsibility, influence, motivation, and guidance.

Why Leadership Matters in CTE

As our CTE students transition into the professional world, leadership skills will differentiate them as high-value employees and future industry leaders. Fostering leadership ensures they can:

- **Influence Positive Change:** Move beyond individual tasks to motivate a team, improving workplace culture and productivity.
- **Demonstrate Integrity:** Make ethical decisions in complex industry scenarios, building trust with clients and colleagues.
- **Take Ownership:** Transition from being a student who follows directions to a professional who takes responsibility for project outcomes and team success.
- **Navigate Career Advancement:** Leadership is often the primary driver for promotion into management and supervisory roles within any technical field.

Practical Ideas for Teaching Leadership

Below are a few practical ways teachers can incorporate the teaching of leadership into their CTE classroom:

- **"Workplace Manager" Rotations:** Assign students rotating leadership roles within the classroom or shop. For example, a "Safety Foreman" in a construction class or a "Lead Developer" in a computer science lab. These students are responsible for guiding their peers through daily protocols and ensuring project milestones are met.
- **CTSO Leadership Integration:** Actively utilize Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). Give students the platform to lead committees, organize local events, or mentor younger members in competitive events.
- **Ethical Dilemma Case Studies:** Present students with a real-world "gray area" from your industry (e.g., a conflict of interest in business or a safety shortcut in manufacturing). Have them lead a small group discussion to reach a solution that demonstrates integrity and responsibility.
- **Peer Mentoring & Instruction:** Task advanced students with leading a "Tech Tip" segment or guiding a small group through a specific skill check. This forces them to practice the guidance and motivation components of leadership in a peer-to-peer setting.
- **Service-Learning Leadership:** Have students identify a community need related to their CTE Career Pathway and lead a project to address it. For example, a graphic design student leading a team to create branding for a local non-profit.



U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

The [U.S. Presidential Scholars Program](#) recognizes and honors distinguished graduating high school seniors. The program was established in 1964 by executive order of the President. In 2015, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in CTE fields.

Congratulations to the 128 Utah students who are candidates for the 2026 U.S. Presidential Scholar <https://tinyurl.com/ybcta26k>. Five of the 128 candidates—Abigail, Evealla, Naomi, Shawn, and Wachaykeah—are candidates for the 2026 U.S. Presidential Scholar in Career and Technical Education. The semi-finalists will be announced in April and the finalists will be announced in May.

Work-Based Learning Experience



“My work-based learning experience taught me how to build a house from start to finish, which improved my troubleshooting and problem-solving skills that are crucial for my future in manufacturing technology. I’ve learned to meet industry standards, never leave a job unfinished, and understand what to expect in the field. Having a great mentor showed me lessons I wouldn’t have learned on my own. While challenging at times, especially with precision and time management, it made me more adaptable and detail oriented. These skills will be a strong foundation as I pursue my two-year degree and a career in manufacturing,” said Tyler.

Advice to Students

Utah high school seniors were asked, “What advice would you offer to future students about taking CTE courses during high school? Amelhie gives this advice.

Amelhie: Future Veterinarian

“The biggest thing is not to be afraid to take whatever CTE class is offered, even if it might seem scary or you’re unsure you will enjoy it. CTE classes help you find out your interests and passions, so take as many classes as you think are interesting. CTE classes help you figure out if the career you have chosen is the right fit for you. There’s no judgement if once you take the class you decide that this is not the occupation for you, because that’s the whole reason these classes are offered. They will help you develop skills no matter if you have a continued interest in it or not. The leadership, listening skills, and knowledge you gain from these classes will help you no matter what. If you take the class and decide this is something you want to do, the CTE teachers are more than willing to help you grow and figure out the best path for you. You will also make countless friendships with people in your CTE classes. You will go through the highs and the lows of the classes together, and you are all each other’s support system. So, don’t worry about not knowing anyone in your classes, because by the end of the first semester you will be close to all the students in your class.



@UtahCTE Social Media Highlights

- Utah Senator Balderree visited Cedar Valley High School to take a CTE tour. Here is what she posted on Instagram about her visit <https://tinyurl.com/yndx634m>. “This is innovation, opportunity, and student success—right here in Utah.”
- Weber High School student Ahanna Land builds her craft as she connects wrestling to welding, all while studying to become a professional welder <https://tinyurl.com/cnh425fd>.
- Listen to the Tooele School District podcast celebrating CTE Month highlighting CTE Career Pathways and CTE student success stories <https://tinyurl.com/ytxdnfuz>.

Calendar:

March 12: [Utah State Board of Education Meeting – 250 East 500 South – Salt Lake City, UT](#)

March 12: [Utah State Charter School Board Meeting – 10008 Creek Run Way – Sandy, UT](#)

[Utah CTE Calendar](#) | [ACTE Calendar](#)

Utah CTE classes are open to all qualified students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

Utah State Board of Education | Career and Technical Education
250 East 500 South P.O. Box 144200 Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200

