STATE POLICY CASE STUDY

Kentucky

Analyzing the learner continuum in Kentucky.

Kentucky has a strong track record of identifying ways to align its K-12 and postsecondary education priorities with its economic and workforce priorities. These efforts are found in state statutes, as well as agency and cross-agency policies and collaborations. Most recently in December 2020, Governor Andy Beshear announced the creation of the Commonwealth Education Continuum (CEC), comprising the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the Kentucky Department of Education. This initiative aims to further strengthen the state’s education to workforce continuum policies, collaborations and communications.

STRENGTHS

• Kentucky’s statewide K-12 work-based learning program and the Youth Employment Solutions (YES!) initiative.

• Kentucky’s support of registered apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs exemplified by the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) and the Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK).

• Kentucky’s focus on fully aligned stackable credentials through its KY Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) policies.

OPPORTUNITIES

• Expand core elements of Kentucky’s YES! to cover liability concerns for other youth- and adult-related workforce programs and initiatives, particularly for underrepresented groups.

• Implement a state last dollar or last mile program for any resident attending a KCTCS.

• Consolidate program evaluation efforts into a comprehensive audit of K-12 and postsecondary pathway offerings for alignment, quality and equitable access.
**LEARNER PATHWAYS**

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

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**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.
**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

There is no formal statute in place to address vertically aligned, high-quality state CTE programs of study. However, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE) promotes a K–12 to postsecondary vertical alignment for stakeholders. Kentucky’s CTE Secondary to Postsecondary Pathway Alignment Models outline example pathways with equivalent credentialed programs at the postsecondary level. Additionally, they provide specific objectives for creating, implementing and sustaining a high-quality vertically aligned pathway. Kentucky’s Perkins V plan names five priority sectors, determined by their impact on the state’s industry and employment, which align with career clusters that are set by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB). Both the KDOE and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System provide aligned programs of study for students. Additional CTE programs follow standardized statewide curriculum for secondary and postsecondary levels.

All KDOE career pathways offered in the program of studies guidance document have been aligned to (1) one of the state’s top industry sectors or (2) a top support occupation. Pathways are annually validated by KWIB and are refined as needed through pathway-specific business and education alignment teams. Kentucky has also created heat maps showing where access to and secondary enrollment in high-demand occupations exist in the state’s most in-demand sectors and occupations.

In 2020, the Council on Postsecondary Education announced an updated academic review process with a greater focus on data such as job placement and market data. This systemwide review process will combine academic quality and productivity measures.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

For K–12 Kentucky’s alignment and “heat map” process are central elements to the development of high-quality CTE programs. Kentucky can continue to enhance and strengthen its review process to further continue the alignment of programs of study to high-demand, high-wage, high-skill occupations and work to conduct the review process with postsecondary. Kentucky can consider codifying an audit process in statute to occur biannually.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

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

**RESOURCES**

- [Career and Technical Education Secondary to Postsecondary Pathway Alignment](#)
- [Kentucky Perkins V State Plan](#)
- [Council on Postsecondary Education Academic Program Review](#)

**POLICIES**

- [KAR § 705.4.231](#), General Program Standards for CTE
- [KRS § 164.020 (16)](#), Council on Postsecondary Education

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3 | PathwaysMatter.org | #LetsContinuum
Targeted CTE Program Funding

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Kentucky provides for weighted K–12 funding specific to CTE curriculum, including the coverage of high-cost equipment, which means that some, but not all, CTE programs and schools receive funding. There have been no new state appropriations to support the continued scaling of high-demand programs and new CTE centers in more than seven years. Additionally, state administrative regulations require that funds appropriated by the General Assembly to support locally operated area CTE centers and CTE departments are distributed by a weighted funding formula that is based on the cost of programs and the projected full-time equivalent student enrollments.

In 2019 a legislative task force was developed to begin exploring future funding and governance reform for secondary CTE. Performance-based funding at both the K–12 and postsecondary levels is also being discussed as part of the task force. This work is currently ongoing and will result in recommendations presented to the Legislature.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Kentucky can consider targeted funding to help incentivize local education agencies and postsecondary programs in their development and implementation of high-quality, aligned programs of study. This could include funds to support the startup and sustainment of high-quality, aligned programs and incentive funds for students who complete a high-quality, aligned program of study or obtain aligned industry credentials. Kentucky can consider how to ensure that the funding mechanism appropriately addresses the unique needs of individual CTE programs and career pathways and hold programs accountable for positive student outcomes.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Indiana – Funding Methodology
- Ohio – Innovative Workforce Incentive Program
- Texas – House Bill 3

RESOURCES
- Kentucky CTE Task Force

POLICIES
- KY Rules § 705.2.140. Equalization of Funding
- KRS § 157.069. Distribution of Funds
Kentucky does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to address equitable access to high-quality CTE programs of study that reflect high-demand, high-skill, high-wage (H3) occupations/industries. The state does provide support through technical assistance and resources for the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) so that districts can “identify and address equity gaps in access to, performance in, and completion of high-demand CTE programs of study.”

Kentucky has elements of the audit for quality and equity as noted in the “High-Quality CTE Programs” policy area through the alignment of programs to (1) one of the state’s top industry sectors or (2) a top support occupation and through the development of heat maps, which were shared with school and district leaders, to show where access to and secondary enrollment in high-demand occupations exist in the state’s most in-demand sectors and occupations.

Kentucky can consider consolidating its work on quality and equity into one comprehensive biannual review undertaken in collaboration with postsecondary. The comprehensive audit can build on the state’s existing work to (1) continue to ensure that existing CTE programs of study are aligned with workforce needs, informed by labor market demand, linked to middle- to high-wage occupations and vertically aligned to postsecondary programs; (2) know where H3 CTE programs are offered across all recognized local education agencies; and (3) understand student access, participation and completion data by student groups to determine potential inequities. 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
• KY CLNA Presentation

POLICIES
N/A
State Cross-Agency Shared Priorities

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Kentucky’s Education and Workforce Development Cabinet is chaired by the lieutenant governor and provides oversight of several statewide initiatives, including the state’s registered apprenticeships program, Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program, Dual Credit Scholarship program, KentuckyWorks Collaborative and the Work Ready Skills Initiative. Key objectives include aligning resources to support high-demand degree and credential attainment, developing partnerships and incentives to encourage lifelong learning and career development, and increasing postsecondary degree and credential attainment in high-demand sectors.

Additional cross-agency collaboration occurs on an as-needed basis such as the work for the New Skills for Youth (NSFY) grant received by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE). NSFY partners included postsecondary, commerce, the Kentucky Center for Statistics and economic development.

In December 2020, Governor Beshear announced the creation of the Commonwealth Education Continuum (CEC) initiative. The CEC is a partnership between the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, and KDOE. The three priorities are: (1) Providing more and better information on planning and paying for college; (2) improving access to dual credit and other college preparatory programs for all students; and (3) diversifying the teaching force by attracting more men and people of color.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Kentucky’s Education and Workforce Development Cabinet can take charge in ensuring coordination among cross-agency groups to help create alignment to shared agency goals and metrics, as well as potentially bundled agency funding to drive state advances. ExcelinEd’s Building Cross-Sector Partnerships to Support Career and Technical Education Pathways resource provides a step-by-step process for building cross-agency shared priorities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Delaware – Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education (DACCTE)
- Indiana – Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
- Washington – Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

RESOURCES
- Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
- KentuckyWorks Collaborative
- CEC
- NSFY Kentucky

POLICIES
- KY Rules § 787, Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
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.

**REMEDICATION**
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.
KEY POLICY

College Acceleration

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Kentucky possesses a robust policy/program approach to early postsecondary credit. This includes the Kentucky Dual Credit Scholarship program, which provides financial assistance for Kentucky high school and home school students who are taking dual credit classes at a participating Kentucky college or university. Eligible students may receive scholarships for up to two classes. In support of the state’s overall focus on dual credit, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE), Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), and Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education have also released various policies and related documents reflecting this coordinated approach. Additionally, the state has legislated early graduation, which serves as a pathway for students in grades 9–11 who wish to move on when ready, receive a diploma from the district, and be eligible for acceptance into Kentucky public universities and nonprofit independent colleges and universities. The pathway provides a financial scholarship, known as the Early Graduation Certificate, to support this action. Secondary students also have access to the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship, which provides up eight additional dual credit scholarships (two per year) for courses aligned to one of KDOE’s approved career pathways, beginning in the ninth grade.

Additionally, one of the three priorities for the newly created Commonwealth Education Continuum (CEC) initiative is improving access to dual credit and other college preparatory programs for all students.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

The focus of the CEC on improving access to dual credit and other college preparatory programs is a step to strengthen Kentucky’s system. As part of this work Kentucky can consider how to expand access to college acceleration through implementing multiple measures of eligibility criteria.

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

- Dual Credit Scholarship Program
- KDOE Dual Credit Pathway Alignment
- KCTCS/CTE
- Council on Postsecondary Education Dual Credit Policy
- Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship

POLICIES

- KRS § 158.142. Early Graduation
- KCTCS/KDOE Memorandum of Understanding, Dual Credit
POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Kentucky

KEY POLICY

Credit for Prior Learning and Credentials

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Kentucky provides both legislated policy and agency policy regarding credit for prior learning. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) Prior Learning Initiative provides credit for prior learning that applies toward majors, minors, concentrations, general education requirements and electives that count toward a degree or certificate from a credentialed program. Approved prior learning areas include high school acceleration courses/credit (e.g., Advanced Placement), work experience, employer training programs, military service, independent study, volunteer work or community service, open source courseware, and industry credentials and licensure. KCTCS will honor a maximum of 30 credit hours of prior learning credit for an associate degree. However, whether a student is seeking a certificate, diploma or degree, at least 25 percent of the credit hours required for a credential must be completed at the KCTCS college awarding the credential.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Kentucky can prioritize collecting and reporting on data that examine the overall effectiveness of its prior learning policies in terms of student outcomes. This includes understanding which students have access to and successfully complete college credit coursework aligned to high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – Prior Learning Assessment Credit Policy
- Ohio – Military Strategic Implementation Team

RESOURCES

- Prior Learning Initiative

POLICIES

- KY Rules § 13.3.060, Council on Postsecondary Education Prior Learning Definition
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Postsecondary partners have worked with the Kentucky Department of Education’s Office of Career and Technical Education in developing statewide agreements for students to receive articulated credit for completing coursework, meeting benchmarks on CTE end-of-program assessments or earning industry certifications. The agreement requirements and amount of articulated credit may vary with each articulation agreement. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) articulation agreements between institutions specify the terms and conditions for courses taken at one institution that will apply to another institution’s credential. The awarding of credit is subject to the specific terms for each agreement, and all requirements specified in the agreement must be met before credit can be awarded.

In 2020, Kentucky passed SB 101 to require the Council on Postsecondary Education to facilitate the development and implementation of a statewide standardized articulation agreement to be executed by July 1, 2021, between public colleges and universities and the Kentucky Department of Education for each approved high school career pathway that leads to a postsecondary credential, certification, license or degree. Upon meeting the requirements of the standardized articulation agreement, a student shall be awarded postsecondary credit for prior learning at any public college or university.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Kentucky’s initiatives to support broad transfer and articulation of college credit are already quite robust. Kentucky can continue to collect and analyze data on K–12 to postsecondary and within postsecondary transfer articulation to ensure that there is equity in the process.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Florida – Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements
• Indiana – Core Transfer Library

RESOURCES
• Kentucky Department of Education Articulation Agreements with Postsecondary Institutions
• KCTCS Articulation Agreements

POLICIES
• KCTCS Policy 4.12. Articulation
• SB 101. Awarding of Credit Under Articulation Agreements
Remediation

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The state, through the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, promotes a co-requisite policy. Under this policy a postsecondary student shall have access to a co-requisite or credit bearing content course in the curriculum pathway (English or mathematics) within the first academic year of enrollment. A co-requisite course is defined as a course that includes enhanced academic supports, such as additional hours of instruction, tutoring, mentoring or advising that awards credit toward a credential or degree.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Kentucky can consider broadening the co-requisite initiative to K–12 for secondary students who qualify. From an equity perspective, the state can also analyze which students are faring better than others and target additional supports to bolster their efforts.

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

• Assessment and Placement

POLICIES

N/A
POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

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

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**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.
KEY POLICY

Reverse Transfer Credentials

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Note: Although reverse transfer exists, there does not appear to be a state policy behind its implementation.

Reverse transfer agreements are in place between Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and four-year state-based institutions. Under KCTCS, the reverse transfer allows students who transfer to another school before earning their degree at KCTCS to earn their associate degree when the missing coursework is completed at the other school. KCTCS has an agreement with Northern Kentucky University and the University of Kentucky to award eligible students an associate degree through reverse transfer. Several community colleges also have agreements in place with private Kentucky four-year institutions. These agreements contain various criteria that students must meet including, but not limited to, earning at least 25 percent of credit hours required for their degree at a KCTCS college, earning at least three semester credit hours from four-year institution and earning a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

While the vehicle for reverse transfer of degrees is present across both public and private postsecondary institutions in Kentucky, the state can consider the development and promotion of systemwide policies that affirm the actual conferral of awards consistently across all institutions. The state can also consider collecting, reporting and using data on student eligibility for and participation in reverse transfer processes established by institutions. In addition, if there is considerable variation in the processes established by institutions, stronger state coordination can be considered to achieve a single, comprehensive, cross-agency approach.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

• Colorado – Reverse Transfer Process
• Florida – Reverse Transfer Statewide Articulation Agreements
• Texas – Reverse Transfer Process

RESOURCES

• KCTCS Reverse Transfer Program
• Education Commission of the States Reverse Transfer Kentucky State Profile

POLICIES

N/A
POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

KEY POLICY

Last Dollar/Last Mile Financial Aid

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Through the Kentucky Economic and Workforce Development Cabinet, the state promotes the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program. It is a collaborative effort between the cabinet, public and private universities, and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to provide tuition assistance for Kentucky students to receive a maximum of 60 credit hours toward career certifications and associate degrees in applied science. The scholarship provides tuition assistance for Kentucky students and adults to obtain an industry-recognized certificate, associate degree in applied science or diploma at one of 21 participating colleges and universities throughout Kentucky. Approved programs must be in one of Kentucky’s five high-demand industry sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Business and IT, Construction Trades, Healthcare, and Transportation and Logistics. In 2022, eligibility was expanded to be inclusive of students with intellectual disabilities who are enrolled in comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs.

Jefferson County has a Last Dollar Scholarship, which is partnership between Jefferson County Public Schools and Evolve502. Students can apply the scholarship to a two-year college degree, technical credential or workforce certification at any KCTCS institution or at Simmons College of Kentucky.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
To reduce financial barriers and increase postsecondary completion for its citizens, Kentucky can consider implementing a last dollar or last mile program for students attending public postsecondary institutions similar to Jefferson County’s Last Dollar Scholarship. The Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program could be expanded beyond the five high-demand sectors to include all high-wage, high-demand career pathways.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Florida – Last Mile College Completion Program
- Rhode Island – Rhode Island Promise
- Tennessee – Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect

RESOURCES
- Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship Initiative
- Jefferson County Last Dollar Scholarship Initiative

POLICIES
- SB 94 – Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship Program
KEY POLICY

Outcomes-Based Funding

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Kentucky possesses a state statute on its performance funding model, which was adopted in 2017. It created the comprehensive funding model for general fund appropriations. Section 11(a) directed the Council on Postsecondary Education to establish the Postsecondary Education Working Group to determine if the comprehensive funding model is functioning as expected, identify any unintended consequences of the model, and recommend any adjustments to the model beginning fiscal year 2021 and every three fiscal years thereafter. Kentucky’s new performance funding model focuses the state’s community colleges and universities on raising Kentucky’s educational attainment level from 45 percent to 60 percent by 2030, as outlined in the state’s strategic plan for postsecondary education. The models for the public universities and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System are to be phased in over three years, beginning in fiscal year 2018–19. The model distributes funding based on three basic components:

- Student success (35 percent of allocable resources distributed based on relative success in achieving student progression milestones and degree and credential production).
- Course completion (35 percent of allocable resources distributed based on share of earned student credit hours).
- Operational support (30 percent of allocable resources distributed in support of vital campus operations, services and infrastructure related to student learning and success).

The performance-based funding model is also being discussed as part of the CTE legislative task force that was created in 2019. Components of a performance-based funding model are being discussed that include items such as performance on state accountability, postsecondary success, quality curriculum and postsecondary alignment, career exploration and counseling, work-based learning initiatives and participation, and employer engagement and partnerships.

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. Kentucky can consider certain at-risk populations, including adult, low-income and academically underprepared students, and provide premiums for these focus populations success to further advance their equitable opportunities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Missouri – Performance Funding
- Tennessee – Outcomes-Based Funding Formula
- Texas – State Technical College Funding Model

RESOURCES

N/A

POLICIES

- KRS 164.092. Performance Funding Model
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Under state statute (164.580), the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) is directed to facilitate transfers of credit between certificate, diploma, technical, and associate degree programs. To fulfill this, KCTCS has broken down technical degree programs into modules that articulate toward certificates and degrees. The system also promotes an information awareness campaign on how credentials and credit can be stacked, leading to more advanced credentials. The KnowHow2Transfer program also highlights how students can progress in their credential attainment from the KCTCS to a Kentucky four-year institution.

Additionally, state statute (164.092) notes that “building a stronger economy can be achieved by [Kentucky’s] public college and university system focusing its efforts and resources on the goals of: Increasing the retention and progression of students toward timely credential or degree completion; Increasing the number and types of credentials and degrees earned by all types of student; Facilitating credit hour accumulation and transfer of students from KCTCS to four (4) year postsecondary institutions.”

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

The state could facilitate partnerships between the education and business sectors (such as a workforce council) to identify opportunities through which students can see how these credentials play out in the workforce and businesses can identify potential employees, similar to Idaho’s SkillStack. The state could also provide additional funding to implement and promote stackable credentials.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – Stackable Credential Legislation
- Idaho – SkillStack
- Indiana – Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant

RESOURCES

- KCTCS Credit and Credential Policy and Approach
- KnowHow2Transfer Program

POLICIES

- KRS § 164.580. KCTCS Degree Programs
- KRS § 164.092. Higher Education Credential Progression
WORKFORCE READINESS

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

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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.
Work-Based Learning

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Kentucky Administrative Rules (704.3.305) recognize work-based learning programs as a viable component of a high school graduation requirement. It serves as an option for students, along with various other options geared toward the promotion of a ready graduate. In addition, both the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE) and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) promote work-based learning programs. KDOE provides a comprehensive manual to provide guidance and direction for schools when developing and implementing the components of work-based learning experiences. KCTCS work-based learning experiences are program specific and campus specific.

Kentucky (KAR 705.4.041) has defined work-based learning programs as those that “engage students in real-life occupational experiences” and apply learned classroom skills and knowledge to workplace experiences. Programs must include a learning action plan, an evaluation and at least 10 hours per week of work experience to be approved for credit.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Kentucky can collect data on the types of experiences, and equity of the experiences, being undertaken with the work-based learning graduation requirement to ensure that the requirement is having the intended outcomes in supporting career exploration, participation and awareness.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Delaware – Work-Based Learning Practicum
- Georgia – Work-Based Learning Framework
- Rhode Island – PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator

RESOURCES
- KDOE Work-Based Learning Manual

POLICIES
- KY Rules § 704.3.305. Requirements for High School Graduation
- KAR § 705.4.041. Work-Based Learning Program Standards
Under state statute (343), the state establishes requirements for apprenticeship programs. The state has also codified an incentive program for students who are in registered apprenticeship programs to be eligible for the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship, which includes reimbursement of tuition, books, required tools and other approved expenses required for participation in the program.

Complementary to this work is the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. The cabinet is chaired by the lieutenant governor and consists of 11 state agencies. The cabinet provides oversight of several statewide initiatives including the state’s registered apprenticeship program.

At the K–12 level, Kentucky promotes the Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) Pre-Apprenticeship or Youth Apprenticeship program. TRACK is a partnership between the Kentucky Department of Education’s Office of Career and Technical Education and the Kentucky Office of Apprenticeship to provide secondary students with career pathway opportunities into registered apprenticeship programs.

Kentucky can consider conducting an audit of both TRACK and the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship to ensure that they are meeting intended outcomes and to identify and analyze any potential gaps in terms of outcomes or student groups who may be underrepresented.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Iowa – [Earn and Learn](#)
- New Jersey – [Apprenticeship Network](#)
- South Carolina – [Apprenticeship Carolina](#)

**RESOURCES**

- [TRACK Program](#)
- [TRACK Program Process](#)
- [Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship](#)
- [Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet](#)
- [Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Apprenticeship](#)

**POLICIES**

- [KRS § 343.020](#), Kentucky Apprenticeship Council
- [KRS § 164.7884](#), Eligibility of Student in a Registered Apprenticeship Program for a Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship
- [KAR § 787.3.010](#), Registration of Apprenticeship Programs
KEY POLICY

Industry-Valued Credentials

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Under state statute (158.6455), the state establishes the process used to determine which industry certifications are recognized for K–12 learners in Kentucky. To be considered “industry recognized,” certifications must go through a verification process. The Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) works with each local workforce investment board to give job and demand data for the region. Local workforce investment boards work with local economic development organizations and business to compile a list of industry-recognized certifications, licensures and credentials, ranked by demand for that region. The lists are then given to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB). KWIB and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDOE) edit and refine the list before it is disseminated to all school districts.

Statute requires that KDOE shall pay for the cost of an assessment taken by a high school student for attaining an industry-recognized certification, credential or licensure if the student consecutively completes at least two related career pathway courses approved by the department prior to taking the assessment. Additionally, incentives for industry certification attainment exist within the state’s K–12 assessment and accountability system, with even greater weight being given to industry certifications earned in the state’s high-demand fields (these certifications earn a school/district a weight of 1.25, as opposed to a 1.0 in their accountability ratings).

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

According to ExcelinEd’s research with Burning Glass for CredentialsMatter.org, in 2017–18, just 19 percent of industry credentials earned by Kentucky K–12 students were asked for by employers and were associated with occupations that pay at least $15 per hour. Kentucky can continue engaging with workforce to strengthen the alignment of earned industry credentials with employer demand.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Indiana – [Promoted Industry Certifications](#)
- Louisiana – [Industry-Based Certification State Focus List](#)

RESOURCES

- [Credentials Matter Kentucky State Summary](#)

POLICIES

- [KRS § 158.6455](#). Industry Certification Process
**WORKFORCE READINESS**

**KEY POLICY**

**Skills Retraining/Credentialing**

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**
Kentucky has in statute the requirement to assess the need for technical assistance, training and other support to assist in the development of adult education and workforce development that support the state strategic agenda and that include a comprehensive coordinated approach to education and training services.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**
Though there is a direct reference to address adult skills retraining, it is uncertain how successfully the assessment leads to policy and program revisions to support and/or expand the retraining and credentialing of adult workers. The state can consider reinforcing this statute with further language that specifically addresses the impact the assessment has on state agency policies and initiatives.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**
- Indiana – Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant
- Ohio – TechCred
- Washington – Worker Retraining Program

**RESOURCES**
N/A

**POLICIES**
- KRS § 164.035. Needs Assessment for Adult Education and Workforce Development
**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

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

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<th>K–12</th>
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<td>INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES</td>
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<td>LEGAL BARRIERS</td>
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**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.
Kentucky does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to address industry engagement incentives as they relate to educational engagement. In its 2016–21 strategic agenda, the Council on Postsecondary Education does call out the need for increased industry engagement in work-based learning-related experiences but does not provide specifics.

Kentucky can consider providing financial incentives or tax credits for employers to engage in work-based learning placements. This could include for the hiring of 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
N/A

POLICIES
N/A
Kentucky does not appear to have a formal statute in place to address existing barriers that often limit employer engagement in various educational initiatives, particularly in direct engagement with K–12 students. The Kentucky Department of Education, however, in partnership with the Kentucky Labor Cabinet, developed the Kentucky Youth Employment Solutions (YES!). This agency partnership works with the Adecco staffing agency to employ work-based learning students and remove employer liability and workers’ compensation concerns for students under 18 years of age.

Kentucky’s YES! program is an innovative approach to addressing legal barriers. Core elements of this creative approach can be considered for various forms of replication or adaptation—such as to support adult and at-risk youth initiatives designed to get deeper, longer employer exposure for underrepresented groups.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

- **Rhode Island** – [Work Immersion Training Grant](#)
- **Texas** – [Insurance Coverage](#)

**RESOURCES**

- [Kentucky Youth Employment Solutions (YES!)](#)

**POLICIES**

N/A
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.

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<td>STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM</td>
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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.
KEY POLICY

Program Quality Measures

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Kentucky does not appear to have a formal statute or agency policy/initiative in place to address shared education to workforce program definitions that can be transformed into shared policy to further support agency alignment and priorities associated with education to workforce pathways.

Under state statute (158.816), the state establishes the need to annually assess, analyze and report on the academic achievement of technical education students who have completed or are enrolled in a sequence of a technical program of at least three high school credits. Though part of the statute reflects general reporting requirements associated with Perkins, it also requires the Kentucky Department of Education to coordinate the development of a statewide technical assistance plan to aid providers of programs in identifying areas for improvement for those schools that do not meet their school performance goal and for those schools in which technical students as a group do not score equal to or better than the school average in each of the academic areas.

Kentucky has engaged in some program quality and outcomes indicators through its work with New Skills for Youth and Education Strategy Group’s Credentials of Value Institute.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Kentucky can consider, whether through statute or executive order, the formal promotion of setting shared education to workforce program definitions to further support agency alignment and priorities associated with education to workforce pathways. Kentucky can also consider setting shared metrics to ascertain the collective success of cross-agency commitment to drive a statewide focus on education to workforce pathways for its citizenry.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
• Indiana – Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
• Rhode Island – PrepareRI

RESOURCES
• Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board Strategic Plan

POLICIES
• KRS § 158.816, Annual Statewide Analysis and Report of Academic Achievement of Technical Education Students
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

Under state statute (151B.132), the state established the Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS). The center’s purpose is to collect accurate data for the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System to link the data and generate timely reports about student performance through employment to be used to guide decision-makers in improving Kentucky’s education system and training programs. This data system is developed through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems program. Kentucky law specifies what data may be collected, the certification and ownership of data, and funding. The public agencies providing data to the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System shall be: (a) the Council on Postsecondary Education; (b) the Department of Education; (c) the Early Childhood Advisory Council; (d) the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority; (e) the Kentucky Commission on Proprietary Education; and (f) other agencies of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

KYSTATS authors the annual Kentucky Future Skills Report, which is utilized as the state’s central source for labor market information. The report is used by many agencies and groups to drive decisions regarding workforce development, economic development, education initiatives and pathway alignment projects. The data in KYSTATS is used to populate additional tools such as the Career Explorer tool and Employer Connector tool.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Kentucky can continue utilizing KYSTATS for valuable research projects that help to uncover outcomes, quality and equity of state initiatives and programs.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
- Florida – Talent Development Council

RESOURCES

- KYSTATS
- Kentucky Future Skills Report
- Career Explorer Tool
- Employer Connector Tool

POLICIES

- KRS § 151B.132. Office of the Kentucky Center for Statistics
- KRS § 151B.133. Duties of Office of the Kentucky Center for Statistics