



# Career & Technical Education Expert Review Team

## Post-Visit Report

## WICOMICO COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Governor's Workforce Development Board  
Career and Technical Education Committee

February 2026

## GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD CTE COMMITTEE

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The Governor's Workforce Development Board is grateful to the CTE Expert Review Team members that participated in the exploration of this District's CTE programs, as well as central office and school leadership, staff, and students that contributed valuable insights regarding CTE programs in their Local Education Agency (LEA).

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# Executive Summary

The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* ("the *Blueprint*") established the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee within the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) to develop an integrated, globally competitive framework for providing CTE to Maryland students in public schools, postsecondary institutions, and the workforce. As part of this effort, the *Blueprint* calls on the CTE Committee to establish, administer, and supervise Expert Review Teams (ERT) to visit schools offering CTE pathways. CTE ERTs are a key tool through which the state observes and tracks the progress of local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing CTE programs that align with the *Blueprint's* vision and the CTE Committee's framework and policies. In addition to reviewing progress, the visits are intended to provide support and identify technical assistance needs as LEAs build their CTE systems.

This CTE ERT visited Wicomico County Public Schools (WCPS), located in the Eastern Shore, on February 26, 2025. This was the seventh CTE ERT visit conducted by the CTE Committee during the 2024-2025 School Year (SY). WCPS offers 26 CTE programs in Wicomico County, with Parkside High School (PHS) serving as the CTE Center, located in Salisbury, Maryland. Wicomico High School, Mardela High School, and James Bennett High School are comprehensive high schools, meaning they are traditional schools with core classes and include CTE offerings, and include the Advanced Tech, Business, and Computer Science programs.

Two CTE Committee members, two CTE Committee staff members/contractual support, one CTE teacher from a neighboring LEA, two employer representatives, one Lower Shore Investment Board member (local workforce development board), two CTE Directors from a neighboring LEA, two school administrators from a neighboring LEA, one career counselor, and one CTE administrator from a neighboring LEA participated in the CTE ERT visit to WCPS. This report summarizes observations and initial recommendations that the CTE ERT developed by reviewing the LEA's self-reported data with district leaders and by conducting interviews, focus groups, school tours, and classroom visits during the CTE ERT visit.

WCPS's progress toward the *Blueprint's* goal that by the 2030-2031 SY, 45% of high school graduates shall complete the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship or another industry-recognized credential (45% goal) is at 17.3%, according to the Technical Skills Assessments (TSA) and IRC guidelines for the 2024-2025 SY.<sup>1</sup> WCPS's progress toward the 45% goal solely comes from IRC attainment, with no students completing a Registered Apprenticeship. For the 2023-2024 SY, 62% of graduating students in WCPS participated in CTE, meaning they had earned at least one credit in a CTE Program of Study.

One unique aspect that may be considered a takeaway for the State would be how WCPS offers Twilight CTE at the Evening High School (EHS). The EHS is primarily focused on getting

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<sup>1</sup> The updated [CTE IRC Policy](#), published in December 2024, does not go into effect until the 2025-2026 SY.

students to earn credentials in three specific areas: Nail Technician, Cisco-IT, and ServSafe. There is also space at the EHS for Related Instruction for Registered Apprentices.

Below is a summary of the observations and findings from this visit:

### WCPS Internal Strengths

- Teachers, Staff, and Administrators are Passionate About Supporting Students
- Applied Technical Exploration (ATEX) Course Available for 9th and 10th Graders
- CTE Program Design and WBL Opportunities in 12th Grade
- Evening High School with “Twilight CTE” Options
- Hands-On Learning That Sequentially Scaffolds Skills
- CTE Program Videos
- Overcoming Language Barriers
- Three-Phase Approach to Expanding Registered Apprenticeships and Youth Apprenticeships

### WCPS Internal Challenges

- CTE Demand Outpaces Available Seats
- Career Counselors Disconnected from CTE and WBL Coordinator
- CTE Teachers Input Important Factor for CTE Student Enrollment
- Post-Graduation Plans for CTE Students Falls on CTE Teachers
- CTE Program Marketing to Students; Not Enough Seats
- Teachers at Home Schools Should Know More About CTE at Parkside

### WCPS External Factors

- Strength: Useful Partnerships with Industry Professionals
- Strength: CTE Administrators and Teachers Want More External Collaborations and Professional Development
- Challenge: Supporting Students in Apprenticeships and Internships
- Challenge: Marketing and Sharing of Information with External Stakeholders
- Challenge: Lack of Available Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities
- Challenge: Communication Gaps Between State Boards and CTE Teachers

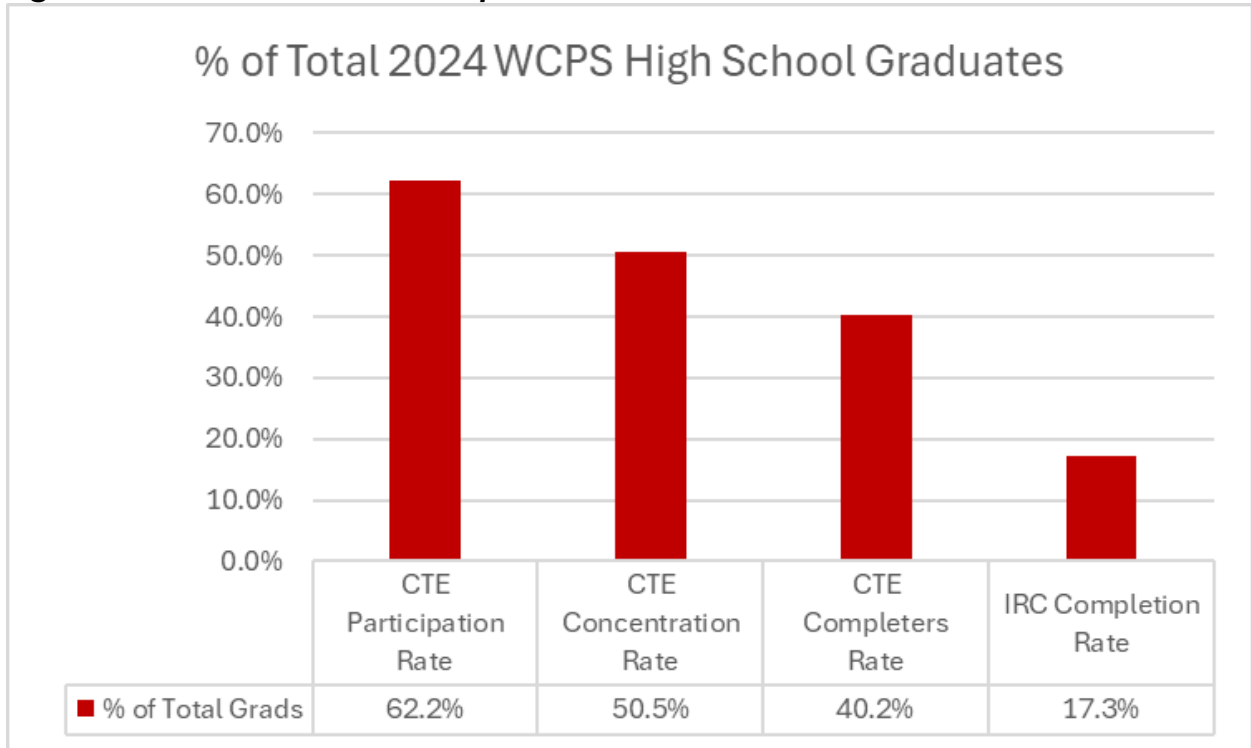
### WCPS Potential Next Steps

- Find Opportunities to Include Career Counselors into CTE
- Career Counselors Establish Regular Check-Ins with WBL Participants
- Coordinate with Teachers, School Counselors, and Career Counselors on Enrollment and Post-Graduation Plans
- Explore Collaborations in the Eastern Shore and Lower Shore
- Improve CTE Information Pathways with Internal and External Stakeholders
- Explore Technical Assistance with MSDE and the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) in meeting the Blueprint’s 45% Goal

The CTE Committee staff, along with the CTE ERT, have collaborated on this report to provide observations and preliminary points of analysis to readers. In this document, readers will find the purpose of the CTE ERT, a brief explanation of WCPS, a summary of the CTE ERT visit, Strengths, Challenges, and External (SCE) analysis, and Potential Next Steps for the LEA to consider.

Please feel free to reach out to the CTE Committee or CTE Committee staff to answer any questions, comments, or concerns at [GWDB.CTE@maryland.gov](mailto:GWDB.CTE@maryland.gov).

**Figure 1: WCPS CTE and IRC completion rates.**



# Purpose of the CTE ERT

The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* ("the *Blueprint*"), Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §21-209, established the Career and Technical (CTE) Committee as a unit within the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB). The GWDB serves as the Governor's chief strategic and policy-making body for workforce development in the State of Maryland.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the CTE Committee is to build an integrated, globally competitive framework for providing CTE to Maryland students in public schools, institutions of postsecondary education, and the workforce. The CTE Committee aims to fundamentally reimagine and redesign career-connected learning and career pathways to ensure all of Maryland's students have real access to fulfilling and family-sustaining careers.

The *Blueprint* requires the CTE Committee to establish, administer, and supervise CTE ERTs to visit schools with CTE pathways.<sup>3</sup> The goals of these visits are to: 1) review alignment of district programs and practices with *Blueprint* vision and policies, 2) assure a LEA's CTE programs and practices are consistent with the Maryland CTE Framework and policies on the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs), and 3) support technical assistance needs for LEAs as they create new systems, programs and practices in order to support *Blueprint* goals and expand career-connected learning, especially Registered Apprenticeship and other IRC attainment, for their students. Ultimately, the CTE ERTs report back to the CTE Committee on district progress toward *Blueprint* goals, common challenges, and opportunities for policy change, technical assistance, or other support to meet those goals. The CTE Committee staff will publish a summary of findings from CTE ERT visits every December within the CTE Committee's annual report.<sup>4</sup>

The CTE ERT Program has three phases that transition from Phase 1: Discovery, to Phase 2: Analyze and Assist, and Phase 3: Evaluate. The primary goal in Phase 1 is to visit all 24 LEAs and build a baseline set of observations to understand the state of CTE in Maryland, along with common challenges LEAs face in creating a robust CTE system. The common challenges will inform what technical assistance sessions will be in Phase 2, which will focus on alignment, systemic data collection, and assistance. Phase 2 is set to begin in the 2026-2027 SY, so the specifics for Phase 2 will be planned in Spring 2026. Phase 3 will begin in the 2028-2029 SY and will focus on evaluating progress toward *Blueprint* goals, but will be more specifically planned during Phase 2.

The CTE Expert Review Team visit to WCPS consisted of members from various backgrounds and brought expertise in areas such as student learning, workforce development, and CTE, ensuring a comprehensive review of the LEA's CTE programs (see Appendix A).

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<sup>2</sup> Executive Order No. 01.01.2023.22. (2023). <https://tinyurl.com/execorder01012023>

<sup>3</sup> Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §5-412 <https://tinyurl.com/5cb36cvy>

<sup>4</sup> Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §21-209, <https://bit.ly/3W0JoeU>

# About Wicomico County Public School System

Wicomico County Public Schools (WCPS), located in the Eastern Shore, enrolls 4,522 high school students, and has a 17.3% IRC Completion rate for graduating high school students. The LEA offers 26 CTE programs covering a wide range of areas of specialization, from Accounting to Welding. WCPS is in alignment with the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance Plan's focus on building key sectors like healthcare, skilled trades (construction, plumbing, welding, HVAC), and manufacturing. The CTE programs with the highest enrollment are Accounting, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), and Computer Science. This demonstrates WCPS's focus on developing a robust workforce targeting IT and healthcare as key sectors, sectors the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance targeted as key sectors in their Four-Year Local Plan 2024-2028.<sup>5</sup> That said, WCPS is considering expanding their Nursing Assistant program, further aligning with healthcare as a key sector. One unique aspect about WCPS's program design is the Evening High School (EHS), which hosts "Twilight CTE". In Twilight CTE, WCPS offers courses in Nail Tech, IT, and culinary, which are all connected to IRCs. In addition to EHS, WCPS's Applied Technical Exploration (ATEX) program, which is a half-credit exploratory course students take in 9th or 10th grade is a best practice that may be emulated in other LEAs. Students rotate through four different CTE programs for the first quarter, then choose the CTE program they want to study further in the second quarter. Rather than a direct entry into a course, students have a chance to explore multiple areas to find an area of interest while still earning credits.

Students enrolled in CTE programs have the opportunity to earn IRCs and 17% of graduating students earned an IRC; however, this rate comes from the previously approved Technical Skills Assessment (TSA) and IRC list as the updated list approved by the CTE Committee does not go into effect until the 2025-2026 SY. The CTE ERT learned WCPS did not have any students participate in Registered Apprenticeships, so WCPS's progress toward the 45% goal solely comes from IRC attainment. The CTE IRC Policy published in December 2024 may impact WCPS' attainment rate for 2025 and beyond.<sup>6</sup> WCPS has 40% of graduating students complete a CTE program.

WCPS has CTE offerings at the CTE Center, Parkside High School (PHS) and offers the ATEX, Business, and Computer Science programs at the three comprehensive high schools. WCPS has a different enrollment process for each CTE program. Most student enrollment in CTE begins with the CTE Exploration course, ATEX. At the end of ATEX, teachers use proficiency sheets to evaluate which students will enter a CTE program. Students must complete ATEX

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<sup>5</sup> Lower Shore Workforce Alliance Four-Year Local Plan 2024-2028:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdfp4j58>

<sup>6</sup> GWDB CTE Committee. (December 2024). *Career and Technical Education: Industry-Recognized Credentials*.

<https://www.gwdb.maryland.gov/policy/gwdbcte2024commindustrycredentialpolicy.pdf>



to apply to individual CTE programs with lower-enrolled programs earning direct entry. Programs like Cosmetology, Health Occupations, Nursing, and Nail Technician require an interview process, while PLTW is rostered with a lottery system coming from eligible middle school students. While CTE programs are available to all students, there is an emphasis on attendance, conduct, and GPA. The vast majority of programs are housed in PHS, but JROTC and Interactive Media are only available at Wicomico High School, with WCPS offering transportation to students' enrolled programs.

# Summary of Visit

Prior to the visit, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Expert Review Team (ERT) members attended a virtual orientation to review the visit agenda, materials, and tools. During this session, Wicomico County Public Schools' (WCPS's) CTE Lead Staff provided an overview of the Local Education Agency's (LEA's) CTE system, explaining WCPS's overarching goals and how they connect with CTE, data on students' academic proficiency and enrollment in CTE, and the Twilight CTE program. This pre-visit orientation helped the CTE ERT understand the specific context and priorities of Wicomico County's CTE programs, setting the stage for focused observations and discussions during the visit.

During the visit, the CTE ERT visited Parkside High School (PHS), WCPS's CTE Center, which includes 24 of WCPS's 26 CTE programs - JROTC and Interactive Media are offered at Wicomico High School. The CTE ERT conducted school tours to observe programs in action and held focus group conversations with students, teachers, administrators, and school and career counselors. At PHS, the team engaged in discussions with stakeholders to gain insights into the strengths and challenges of the CTE programs. These conversations revealed valuable information about how CTE supports students' postsecondary pathways and career goals, as well as areas where the LEA could enhance program access and resources.

The CTE Expert Review Team visit to WCPS consisted of members from various backgrounds, and brought expertise in areas such as student learning, workforce development, and CTE, ensuring a comprehensive review of the LEA's CTE programs (see Appendix A). Throughout the day, the team engaged in observations, interviews, and focus groups with stakeholders to gain insights into the strengths and challenges of the CTE programs. The CTE Committee staff created a set of questions for each focus group: leadership, teachers, students, career counselors/coaches, and school counselors (See Appendix D). These questions aimed to uncover the experience these stakeholders have in CTE by asking questions about professional development opportunities, their opinions on their experience in CTE classes, their perspective on hurdles, etc. (see Appendix D).

After the visit, the CTE ERT compiled their individual notes and shared it with CTE Committee staff. A week after the visit, the CTE ERT gathered together for a debrief, where the team members collaborated, reviewed, and discussed their compiled observations. These conversations revealed valuable information about how CTE in WCPS supports students' postsecondary pathways and career goals, as well as areas where the LEA could enhance program access and resources. Together, these data, observations, focus groups, interviews, and debrief help inform the following SCE analysis and Potential Next Steps.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXPERT REVIEW TEAM VISIT

### **ABOUT THE SCE ANALYSIS**

A SCE Analysis is meant to organize the CTE ERT's observations and notes into internal factors - Strengths and Challenges - and External factors. This method of analysis is based on the SWOT analysis method, which also differentiates between internal and external factors. This SCE analysis will help readers differentiate among internal Strengths, internal Challenges, and External factors, which are conventionally Opportunities and Threats. The CTE ERT did not have the opportunity to observe and coordinate with external stakeholders, but external factors came up in interviews, focus groups, debrief, and orientation that must be documented. With a SCE Analysis, readers may use this section to target changes and best practices internally.

### **INDICATORS OF STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES**

#### **Strength: Teachers, Staff, and Administrators are Passionate About Supporting Students**

The CTE ERT observed passion for supporting students in every focus group and conversation at Wicomico County Public Schools (WCPS). From the top administrator to the students, the CTE ERT observed a strong culture and community of support that places students first. WCPS's current Superintendent was previously the Principal at Parkside High School (PHS), so he knows the value and importance of CTE. During the pre-visit orientation, WCPS's CTE Lead Staff told the CTE ERT about how much they want to prioritize student exploration and interests:

***"If the kids want the course, we're going to do everything we can to give it to them."***

CTE Lead Staff also noted that 82.3% of CTE students attend college or the military within two quarters of graduation, suggesting that WCPS's program design is to support students' desired outcomes. This leadership has perhaps been a factor for the strong, supportive culture observed at WCPS.

#### **Strength: Applied Technical Exploration (ATEX) Courses Available for 9th and 10th Graders**

The Applied Technical Exploration (ATEX) course is WCPS's program design to introduce students to CTE programs. ATEX has two quarter-long classes: ATEX I, where students explore a new program every 11 days, and ATEX II, where students learn the foundational knowledge to be successful in their preferred CTE program. Students work with their school counselors to decide their top six CTE programs in priority order and ultimately explore four CTE programs through ATEX I. WCPS's CTE website has informational videos on each CTE program, which the CTE ERT highlighted as an internal strength later in this report.

At the end of the term, students select their top choices for ATEX II and rosters are filled based on student interest. ATEX II is a one-term class that offers introductory skills in the CTE course that the student was selected to advance in. This process is completed for two cohorts in a school year. Teachers then use proficiency sheets for both cohorts of ATEX II to determine which students will enter Level I of their CTE Program. While it is not strictly required to participate in ATEX in order to enroll in a CTE program, WCPS administrators

highly recommend it. Cosmetology, Health Occupations, Nursing, and Nail Technician programs are all rostered through an interview process. PLTW is rostered with a lottery system coming from eligible middle school students. Programs with lower enrollment have direct entry - Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM), Interactive Media, and Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI).

Previously, ATEX was only for 10th grade students, but recently, it has opened up to 9th grade students as well. In the 2024-2025 school year (SY), administrators reserved ATEX I for 9th grade students in their second semester and 10th graders, which teachers acknowledged has yielded positive results. In fact, teachers at PHS told the CTE ERT they think the ATEX course is working too well because there are a lot more students interested in programs than seats. One CTE teacher gave the CTE ERT an example: Auto Tech has 44 seats for ATEX, but only 22 for Auto Tech 1, leaving many students without their desired CTE program. While this example may not be wholly accurate for how the Auto Tech program is structured, it represents an example of how CTE teachers identified a challenge with enrollment. One of the school counselors told the CTE ERT that ATEX has been designed to ideally have students complete ATEX in 9th grade, complete their two-year CTE program in 11th grade, and find work-based learning opportunities in 12th grade.

During the pre-visit orientation, CTE Lead Staff told the CTE ERT that they had a great deal of success with non-traditional students, the percentage of students in CTE programs that lead to occupations in fields where one gender comprise less than 25% of those employed, because of the ATEX exploratory course. CTE teachers gave the ATEX II course a lot of credit for WCPS's 65% retention rate of CTE students, referencing the foundational skills they learned as a strength. While some teachers told the CTE ERT they wish they could spend more time with students during the ATEX I course and that they wish ATEX was only available for 10th grade students, ATEX courses are a strength that other LEAs may look to emulate.

### **Strength: CTE Program Design and WBL Opportunities in 12th Grade**

With its current design, WCPS's CTE programs lead to WBL opportunities for 12th grade students who have completed their CTE program and have the available time in their schedule. In most of the CTE programs, students complete the ATEX courses by at least the end of their first semester of 10th grade and then enter into a two-year CTE program. This means most students will complete their CTE program with at least one semester remaining until graduation, allowing time for students to find WBL opportunities. WCPS had six graduating students complete youth apprenticeships and at least seven others participated in other forms of WBL. School counselors told the CTE ERT about how they are piloting a "Practicum" in the Horticulture program, where 12th graders who completed the program and demonstrated excellence serve as a sort of teacher assistant, especially to the ATEX students. Students earn credit for the Practicum while continuing to develop industry-relevant skills. WCPS's Practicum and its connection to ATEX may be a best practice other LEAs should consider adopting. This Practicum adds to the strength in CTE program design because it intentionally creates opportunities for students to explore WBL opportunities like apprenticeships, internships, etc.

Some teachers shared hesitation about the changes to the CTE program design to create what they called a “gap year” for students. Teachers noted that some students who completed their CTE program before 12th grade did not meet age requirements for IRC assessments or for WBL opportunities like internships and apprenticeships. Teachers noted this gap year means many students are not able to retain important skills and knowledge from when they complete the program in 11th grade and take the IRC assessment in 12th grade. That said, WCPS’s program design is still a strength because it provides students with flexibility in having more time for WBL. Ultimately, the CTE ERT observed WCPS’s overall program design, which has been intentionally designed to create opportunities for WBL in 12th grade, is a strength other LEAs in Maryland should look to emulate.

### **Strength: Evening High School with “Twilight CTE” Options**

Wicomico County Public Schools offers “Twilight CTE” options at the Evening High School (EHS) in Salisbury, Maryland, located adjacent to Parkside High School. The EHS is for individuals under 21 years-old who are interested in earning a high school diploma or for students currently enrolled in a regular daytime high school program who wish to make-up credits or take extra courses. EHS has three periods: 3:15pm - 4:45pm, 4:50pm - 6:20pm, and 6:30pm - 8:00pm. Twilight CTE was designed for students to have career-focused education that leads directly to an IRC so program completers may enter the workforce. More importantly, Twilight CTE provides an alternative for students who could not enroll in a CTE program to earn an IRC.

EHS offers three Twilight CTE programs that are focused on earning IRCs: culinary with a ServSafe certification, IT with a Cisco certification, and Nail Technician with a Maryland Nail Technician certification. Students may earn their ServSafe certification through an eight-day class, and may earn the Cisco Certified Support Technician or Maryland Nail Technician certifications through programs that meet twice a week and last the entire SY. In addition to these three programs, the EHS offers space for the required related instruction (RI) component of Registered Apprenticeships. While CTE Lead Staff said they are still in the early stages and piloting these programs, they have plans on expanding Twilight CTE. As WCPS plans to expand Twilight CTE, CTE Lead Staff should anticipate facing transportation challenges because students must provide their own transportation to and from the EHS. Transportation challenges may compound other challenges, like the Nail Technician program’s 250-hour training requirement to earn an IRC. With these challenges in mind, the CTE ERT observed how Twilight CTE options were a strength at WCPS because it is IRC-focused instruction, provides opportunities for those who could not enroll in a conventional CTE program, and offers students flexibility to work and study at the same time.

### **Strength: Hands-On Learning That Sequentially Scaffolds Skills**

Student and teacher focus groups revealed WCPS students are engaged in hands-on learning to simulate workplace situations. CTE students spoke highly of their programs’ focus on simulating workplace situations while still in a learning environment. For instance, the Automotive program actively services vehicles for the county; the Horticulture program has a working flower shop that produces \$150,000 in revenue every year; the Carpentry program builds and sells a shed and a house every year; the Childhood Development Associate (CDA)

program works with WCPS's elementary schools; and the Health Occupations program collaborates with local medical professionals and nursing homes. All of these programs intentionally scaffold projects and tasks so students build subsequent skills to become industry professionals at the entry-level. For instance, the Carpentry program has students build a dog-house in ATEX II, build a shed in Carpentry Level I, and build a house in Carpentry Level II. These projects demonstrate how WCPS's CTE teachers create curriculum to build necessary skills for program completers to enter the workforce at the entry-level.

Students raved about the level of engagement in their CTE courses, especially when compared to their core classes. One student in the CDA program said, "It's so much fun interacting with kids and coming back and talking to my [CTE] class about it." A Health Occupations student agreed, saying, "I see how the skills they teach us are used in the real world and it made the residents feel better." A Carpentry student added,

***"I care about the CTE program because it prepares me for my future. It helps me get ahead."***

These quotes come from various programs, but they emphasize how the hands-on learning in CTE courses have helped them develop essential skills to be college and career ready.

### **Strength: CTE Program Videos**

The CTE ERT learned that WCPS's website has short introductory videos for each CTE program. All the videos are between one and five minutes long, covering what students will learn, what students may earn (IRCs or college credit or both), and what skills for employment they will develop. WCPS school counselors provided the context for the videos and even suggested that students from the Interactive Media program should make it their Level 2 projects to create videos for all the CTE programs. An important benefit for these videos is that students have an understanding of what to expect from a CTE program before they even sign up for it in ATEX I. These CTE program videos may be a best practice other LEAs may look to emulate so that students come into the CTE program with accurate expectations.

### **Strength: Overcoming Language Barriers**

During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE ERT learned that Wicomico County is a minority majority county, meaning that the total number of individuals categorized as racial minorities is greater than the number of individuals categorized as a racial majority. In order to meet this community need, WCPS has several of their school communications and broadcasts available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. In addition to these alternatives, the English Language Support Center provides high school English Language Learners with core content courses that are taught in partnership with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers and bilingual assistants. Students take courses in English Language Arts, History and Government, Science, and Math that are taught with both a content teacher and an ESOL teacher or bilingual assistant. WCPS provides shuttle bus transportation for students in the English Language Support Center and students complete electives at their home schools. The English Language Support Center is located at the Schumaker Complex, which is where Twilight CTE is located and is adjacent to PHS. CTE Lead

Staff and school counselors talked about how their long-term goal is to establish a pipeline from the English Language Support Center to CTE. While overcoming language barriers will continue to be a challenge for WCPS, offering language alternatives and supports are one of WCPS's strengths that other LEAs with similarly evolving populations may seek to mirror.

### **Strength: Three-Phase Approach to Expanding Registered Apprenticeships and Youth Apprenticeships**

The CTE ERT learned WCPS is implementing a three-phase approach to expanding the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeships. The first phase focused on building staff awareness, where principals, counselors, and career coaches attended three informational meetings about the benefits and requirements of apprenticeships. In the second phase, administrators targeted student outreach and engagement. The CTE Coordinator collaborated with career counselors and coaches to host informational sessions for students interested in apprenticeships, guiding them on program details and the application process. School and career counselors use SchoolLinks to support this effort to create a dedicated job board where students may explore available apprenticeship opportunities. In the third phase, administrators plan on expanding employer partnerships. WCPS plans to visit local businesses, identify new and emerging job opportunities, and collaborate with Wicomico County's Apprenticeship Navigator to recruit new partners at local trade shows. Additionally, WCPS has integrated certification courses into the Evening High School program to provide Related Instruction and IRCs for smaller employers in the food and technology industries. This three-phased approach demonstrates that WCPS is working toward prioritizing the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship and getting students to earn IRCs, which are the path to accomplishing the 45% goal.

### **Challenge: CTE Demand Outpaces Available Seats**

During the CTE ERT visit, it became apparent that demand outpaces available seats in CTE programs by a great deal. One CTE teacher told the CTE ERT that their class sizes are supposed to be 14, but that they regularly overload their classes to 22 students to keep up with demand. CTE teachers and school counselors pointed to how the ATEX courses are working too well: programs may have up to 44 students in ATEX II, but only 22 seats available for the CTE Level I course. This means only half of the students completing the ATEX courses will be able to enroll in the CTE program. While WCPS administrators have attempted to mitigate this challenge by offering alternatives like Twilight CTE, dual enrollment, and other options, there are not enough instructors, classrooms, or budget to expand CTE programs. WCPS has done a great job of developing students' interest for CTE, but as one school counselor put it,

***“Some programs I could triple the size and still not meet demand.”***

At WCPS, demand for CTE outpaces available seats and this will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future.

### **Challenge: Career Counselors Disconnected from CTE and WBL Coordinator**

During the career counselor focus group, the CTE ERT learned about how the career counselors are disconnected from CTE and from the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Coordinator. School and career counselors have separate monthly meetings and the WBL Coordinator attends the career counselor meetings, but it does not seem like there is a streamlined channel of communication between the WBL Coordinator and career counselors. The Counseling Supervisor attends both the school counselor and career counselor meetings. These monthly meetings are the only regular time where career counselors from the high schools interact with the career coaches from the middle schools. WCPS employs career counselors and career coaches, but they are housed at the home schools, not at Parkside High School. As previously mentioned, space continues to be a problem as one career counselor complained that they had to share space with the social worker, which can make it difficult to have individualized career counseling for students, especially when the career coaching focus group revealed WCPS has 1,325 students for each career counselor.

Career counselors use SchoolLinks and Naviance to try to keep up with the challenging student-to-counselor ratios. All of the career counselors the CTE ERT spoke to were in their first year. During their onboarding, they toured PHS, but other than going to the CTE website, there is no current embedded process for career counselors to stay up to date on CTE programming and workforce needs. One career counselor said, “I only really learn from overhearing other people’s conversations. Everything I learned about CTE, I’ve learned on my own.” Another added,

***“There is essentially a line where I do not know enough about CTE: after students enroll in 9th grade, I have no idea what happens with them in the CTE world.”***

Another career counselor agreed, “I am under the impression that with CTE, they already get guidance by their teachers and CTE school counselor.” One of the career counselors summed up everyone’s perspective by saying, “If I had a CTE student who had a problem with CTE, I would not know anything about that because it’s separate.” Ultimately, the CTE ERT observed how the career counselors seemed disconnected from CTE and this can be particularly challenging when students are in WBL opportunities.

Because career counselors are disconnected from CTE, when a student completes a CTE program, they tend to coordinate among their CTE teacher, the WBL Coordinator, and the Parkside school counselor to identify a WBL opportunity that works for them. That said, students who complete a CTE program from any of the other four home high schools will no longer have regular access to their CTE teacher, the WBL Coordinator, or the Parkside school counselor. This means that when a student is struggling with a WBL assignment, there is not a person who is involved at the home schools to assist students. The disconnect between career counselors and CTE is a challenge WCPS faces.

### **Challenge: CTE Teachers Input Important Factor for CTE Student Enrollment**

The vast majority of students enroll into CTE through the ATEX program. CTE programs are rostered based on student interest, but if a class is overfilled, the proficiency sheet teachers use to evaluate students determines which students enroll. This means lower enrolled programs have direct entry into the program, but most programs at WCPS leverage teacher

input as a critical factor for enrollment. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) programs are rostered with a lottery system coming from eligible middle school students. All the other programs that are more in-demand require the CTE teacher to choose which ATEX II students to enroll into their CTE program based on their proficiency sheet evaluations. A handful of programs require an interview process to enroll: Cosmetology, Health Occupations, Nail Technician, and Nursing. Even though the LEA brief did not highlight overenrollment as a challenge, the CTE ERT observed how several programs were at or exceeding maximum capacity.

CTE courses are supposed to be 14 students, but many teachers are happy to overload their roster to 22 students. When there are two ATEX II courses, there can be upwards of 44 students, but only one Level I CTE course with 14 available seats, it leads to several students unable to enroll in their desired CTE course. Several CTE teachers are happy to extend their CTE courses to 22 students, but when teachers are the leading decision-makers on who enrolls and who does not enroll in a CTE program, it can be challenging for teachers and for CTE students. CTE teachers shared with the CTE ERT that they may appreciate having their input incorporated into enrollment, but explained not enrolling a student into their CTE program was difficult.

When CTE enrollment falls on CTE teachers instead of a randomized system, there can be issues surrounding equity, especially for students who come from underserved communities. Enrollment practices and equity of access will be an area that the CTE ERT focuses on in future phases of visits.

### **Challenge: CTE Student Post-Graduation Plans Falls on CTE Teachers**

In addition to enrollment, the CTE ERT observed how CTE teachers took the lead on working with students to create post-graduation plans. In focus groups with teachers, counselors, and students, it became clear that neither school counselors nor career counselors worked with students to create post-graduation plans for CTE students. As previously mentioned, WCPS is facing the challenge of career counseling not being integrated into CTE as of visit date, which has led to CTE teachers working with students to create post-graduation plans. One teacher saw what the career counselors had to offer as beneficial, but

***“We [teachers] get to know students on such a personal level because we work with them for three years, so teachers are the ones who help students develop post-grad plans.”***

Teachers spoke about creating post-graduation plans with students as a point of pride and as if neither school counselors nor career counselors were equipped to mentor CTE students for post-graduation plans.

Teachers talked about how they do resume writing, mock interviews, skills reflections, and community service in their CTE classes. Students develop a portfolio of work in their CTE classes, with teachers repeating, “let others see what you can do” as an important motivator. While teachers are properly equipped to work with students to create post-graduation plans, career counselors should be the ones working with students to create post-graduation plans, which enables teachers to focus more time on content instruction. Speaking with teachers, career counselors, and school counselors, it became clear that teachers had a better idea of

student outcomes after graduation, acknowledging many of their students either attend college or the military after graduation. Ultimately, WCPS is facing a challenge with CTE teachers having a high workload and working with CTE students to create post-graduation plans exacerbates the problem.

### **Challenge: CTE Program Marketing to Students; Not Enough Seats**

An observation that came up throughout the visit is that there simply are not enough seats to accommodate students who are interested in CTE. As previously mentioned, CTE courses in WCPS are normally capped at 14, but teachers are frequently willing to overload their roster to 22 to accommodate student interest. As one CTE teacher put it, ATEX is working too well because there is more interest in CTE than available seats. One CTE teacher gave an example of a program with high demand: Auto Tech has 44 students in ATEX, but only 22 seats available for Auto Tech I. The CTE teacher said this means at least half the ATEX students will not be able to enroll in the Auto Tech program. While the exact structure for Auto Tech may not be fully accurate, this example represents how CTE teachers identified a challenge of there not being enough available seats to meet CTE demand. Teachers expressed a desire for more teacher aides to support overloaded classes, but there is not enough in the budget to support teachers this way. That said, CTE Lead Staff told the CTE ERT they plan on expanding their Nursing Assistant program because there is a great deal of demand from both students and employers. CTE Lead Staff have attempted to alleviate this challenge by offering alternatives, like Twilight CTE.

In addition, school and career counselors identified marketing and communication as a related challenge. For some of the school and career counselors the CTE ERT spoke to, there seemed to be a sense that students and parents/guardians do not have the appropriate information to choose CTE programs that work for them. School and career counselors said that the 8th grade CTE tours should be mandatory for all students, which may allow for students to have a more comprehensive understanding of what will be expected of them as CTE students. Among the marketing and communication tactics the CTE ERT observed, like the CTE program videos, the ATEX program, etc., WCPS seems to have multiple ways to get messaging to students, with communications available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole; however, it seemed like the nature of the school and career counselor criticism is that there is a great deal of breadth in marketing and communications, but not enough depth. In other words, according to school and career counselors, students see how great a CTE program may be, but students do not have enough information to make informed decisions on what program they should enroll in. With a marketing strategy that has led to CTE demand outpacing available seats, WCPS is facing a marketing challenge that has high breadth, but not enough depth for students to make informed decisions on what CTE program to enroll in.

### **Challenge: Teachers at Home Schools Should Know More About CTE at Parkside**

Teacher, school counselor, and career counselor focus groups all revealed that there was a sentiment that teachers at the home schools did not know enough about CTE. According to school counselors and career counselors, teachers at the home schools know that CTE happens at Parkside High School and they know there are some things they can benefit

from, like getting their car looked at by the Auto Tech program, flower arrangements from the Horticulture program, hair touch-ups or hand massages by the Cosmetology program, etc., but teachers at the home schools are not knowledgeable about what happens in CTE programs. CTE teachers agreed that there was a lack of collaboration and interest from teachers at the home schools to learn about what CTE is and what its benefits are. Because teachers are the ones who have the most frequent communications with students, it is important for them to be knowledgeable about CTE programs. While the CTE ERT observed how WCPS is working toward alleviating this challenge with their three-phased approach to expanding the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship, the CTE program videos, and other methods of communication, there is an opportunity for teachers at WCPS's home schools to learn more about CTE.

## **INDICATORS OF EXTERNAL FACTORS AND INFLUENCES**

A SCE Analysis is meant to organize the CTE ERT's observations and notes into internal factors - Strengths and Challenges - and External factors. This method of analysis is based on the SWOT analysis method, which also differentiates between internal and external factors. With a SCE Analysis, readers may use this section to advocate for change with external partners.

### **External Strength: Useful Partnerships with Industry Professionals**

The CTE ERT observed how WCPS teachers and administrators speak with great pride about their industry partnerships and the projects they are involved in with community partners. Several teachers and administrators repeated what seemed to be WCPS's motto: "Let others see what you can do." To begin with, every February, WCPS hosts the Skills Open House in Parkside High School, where community members may tour CTE programs and meet with students and teachers. One school counselor said there were plans on expanding the Skills Open House to invite elementary school students to tour the facilities as well. During the career counselor focus group, the CTE ERT learned that CTE teachers and administrators have strong relationships with their Program Advisory Committees (PACs), who help provide industry expertise in the Wicomico County area.

WCPS teachers were able to offer more specifics about their industry and community partnerships. For example, the Criminal Justice program has a strong partnership with Wor-Wic Community College, which hosts an entry-level law enforcement training program, and Salisbury University's Forensic Science Program. Teachers also invite local attorneys to the Criminal Justice program to talk about how to collect evidence for court proceedings. In addition, the Auto Tech program has connections and alumni throughout the Salisbury, MD area. During a focus group, one of the teachers said,

***"There is not a dealership in Salisbury that doesn't have one of our former students working there."***

The Carpentry program has also developed useful industry partnerships with East Coast Tile, which was founded by a former student and has hired program completers. Every year, the Carpentry program builds and sells a house, which helps support not just the Carpentry program, but other CTE programs as well. Finally, the Horticulture program has a structured business that opens at 8am and closes at 3pm every school day. Patrons come to purchase floral arrangements, seeds, or other products that help support the CTE programs. Ultimately, WCPS has developed strong industry partnerships in Wicomico County that it can continue to build on to reach toward the 45% goal.

### **External Strength: CTE Administrators and Teachers Engage In External Collaborations**

Although WCPS seems to have strong industry and community partnerships, the CTE ERT observed how teachers, administrators, career counselors, and school counselors are all interested in finding opportunities to collaborate with their counterparts in the Lower Shore region. Administrators and teachers were able to talk about what their colleagues in Worcester and Somerset Counties were doing and spoke with curiosity and an interest in collaborating. The collaborations among CTE Lead Designees in the Lower Shore is a

strength that helps find innovative solutions to common challenges they are facing, while considering the specific needs of the communities they serve. For instance, the CTE Lead Designee in Somerset County is now considering adopting something similar to WCPS's "Twilight CTE" so they can offer more IRC opportunities to students. This regional collaboration and interest for more collaboration is an external strength and demonstrates WCPS's commitment to finding ways to serve their students more effectively.

### **External Challenge: Supporting Students in Apprenticeships and Internships**

During conversations with school and career counselors, the CTE ERT learned that WCPS is facing challenges supporting students in work-based learning opportunities. During focus groups with teachers, the CTE ERT learned that in the past, WCPS's program design had ATEX start in 10th grade, so 12th grade students would simultaneously participate in WBL opportunities and attend CTE courses, allowing CTE teachers to be available as a resource for students. Now that ATEX is available for 9th grade students, students complete their CTE program before participating in WBL opportunities, which means the CTE teacher is no longer available as a resource for that student. When a student completes a CTE program, they no longer attend Parkside High School (PHS), which is the CTE Center, if it is not their home school. Because career counselors do not have a strong connection with CTE, most students find their WBL opportunities with the help of their CTE teacher or the school counselor at PHS. This means that when a student earns an apprenticeship or internship after they complete a CTE program, that CTE teacher or PHS school counselor would then be disconnected from that student because they no longer attend PHS if it is not their home school. Students who no longer have access to the teacher or counselor who helped that student find a WBL opportunity face a challenge of not having familiar support when participating in WBL opportunities.

Career counselors noted that they believe CTE takes care of itself and that CTE teachers want to take the initiative connecting students to WBL opportunities because teachers are the ones with industry connections. Career counselors have a challenging workload with 1,325 students for every career counselor, which is an important factor for why supporting students in WBL opportunities is difficult. A career counselor may know a student is in an apprenticeship or internship, but they do not know anything else about that situation because the CTE teacher or PHS school counselor helped that student find that opportunity. One career counselor reported that they had a meeting with a student to discuss why the student lost their WBL opportunity, only to learn there was not enough support for this student to succeed in their WBL opportunity. The career counselor wished there were more check-ins so they would have known this student was struggling with the WBL opportunity earlier and found a way to support them. Supporting students in WBL opportunities is a challenge at WCPS because the CTE ERT observed that career counselors seemed to be disconnected from CTE.

### **External Challenge: Marketing and Sharing of Information with External Stakeholders**

Even though the ATEX program is working well to get students interested in CTE, teachers, career counselors, and school counselors all pointed to communication and marketing with external stakeholders as a challenge. Teachers talked about how there is plenty of marketing

for getting folks interested in CTE, but there is not enough depth of information shared to community members and parents/guardians for CTE programs to get the kind of support they need. CTE teachers talked about how there is still a stigma that CTE career pathways do not include college, even though several of WCPS's CTE programs have strong PACs and strong connections with the community. Sharing information with these external stakeholders is a challenge when there seems to be a negative bias toward the skilled trades.

Career counselors spoke highly of WCPS's PACs and how they have supported the CTE programs, but the demand for these community connections outpaces supply. There is a great deal of interest from students, teachers, and career counselors to expand community connections to keep up with WCPS's growing and evolving population, but there are not enough engaged employers to keep up. WCPS has a Work-Based Learning Coordinator who places students into internships and apprenticeships and has, according to career counselors, added at least ten new employer-partners in their first year. School counselors and career counselors talked about how SchoolLinks is a great platform to share information with the community, but the challenge is populating it and encouraging both parents/guardians and industry partners to keep up with the information. As WCPS continues to expand its community and industry connections, communication and marketing with external stakeholders has been a challenge. WCPS's three-phased approach to expanding the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship may help WCPS overcome this challenge.

### **External Challenge: Lack of Available Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities**

Teachers, career counselors, school counselors, and administrators agreed that the gold standard of the high school level of Registered Apprenticeships is not a feasible goal without significant overhaul of many stakeholder systems. Salisbury may be the central hub for the Lower Shore region, but there are not enough employers who are willing to sponsor a high school student in a Registered Apprenticeship. WCPS's WBL Coordinator and Wicomico's Apprenticeship Navigator have regular collaborations and they have had success adding multiple WBL sponsors, but given the evolving and growing student population in WCPS, there are not enough WBL sponsors.

In the LEA Brief, WCPS's self-reported data said 13 graduating students participated in work-based learning, but none of those students participated in the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship. While the WBL Coordinator is off to a great start after their first year, career counselors and school counselors made it clear to the CTE ERT that the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship is not a feasible goal without added support and increased incentives for employers. WCPS's three-phased approach to expand Registered Apprenticeships has a great deal of potential to alleviate this challenge.

### **External Challenge: Communication Gaps Between State Boards and CTE Teachers**

Teacher focus groups revealed that there is a communication gap between State Boards that dictate CTE curriculum and outcomes and the CTE teachers in those corresponding programs. Teachers talked about how they received little-to-no notice about how the State Boards for both Nursing and Cosmetology made impactful changes. Other teachers agreed that there is a systemic communication gap between State Boards and schools that cause

misalignment. More importantly, one teacher talked about how their State Board made changes to the curriculum without them knowing and this misalignment led to several students struggling to pass State exams. When there is a communication gap between State Boards that are in control of curriculum and instructors that teach the curriculum, it leads to the type of misalignment WCPS has experienced.

## POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Although the CTE ERT has presented its observations in this report, these observations and potential next steps are preliminary. The purposes of Phase 1 of the CTE ERT are to establish a baseline for progress toward *Blueprint* goals across Maryland and identify key challenges. While the following Potential Next Steps are preliminary, they are areas WCPS may look for improvement in and something the CTE ERT will look at more closely as the CTE Committee transitions into Phase 2 in the 2026-2027 SY. In other words, these potential next steps are not a directive, but opportunities of improvement to explore. These Potential Next Steps are meant to be the beginning of a conversation with WCPS that will continue into Phase 2, and for this reason, these Potential Next Steps do not comprehensively address the challenges the CTE ERT notes in this report. In Phase 2, the CTE ERT will target specific areas to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the state of CTE in WCPS.<sup>7</sup> While Phase 2 is focused on analysis and assistance, it is when the CTE ERT can make recommendations to the AIB to withhold funding if there is resistance complying with the *Blueprint*.<sup>8</sup>

### **Find Opportunities to Include Career Counselors into CTE**

The CTE ERT observed how career counselors were disconnected from CTE and from students participating in WBL opportunities. In order to alleviate this, the CTE ERT recommends WCPS explore what it would look like to include Career Counselors into CTE. Perhaps housing a career counselor at Parkside High School or creating regular check-ins with career counselors for CTE students and students participating in WBL opportunities would be a useful place to start. It may also be worth considering having a CTE teacher representative to attend the monthly career counselor meetings so they can report back to their colleagues about what is happening in career counseling. And likewise, WCPS should explore what it would look like to have a career counselor attend CTE teacher meetings so they can report back to their colleagues about what CTE teachers are doing. Ultimately, WCPS should find opportunities to include career counselors in CTE because the CTE ERT observed how career counselors were disconnected from both CTE teachers and students.

### **Career Counselors Establish Regular Check-Ins with WBL Participants**

Career counselors, school counselors, and CTE teachers informed the CTE ERT about how work-based learning (WBL) participants faced challenges in regards to completing WBL opportunities. In order to mitigate these challenges, the CTE ERT recommends career counselors establish regular check-ins with students who participate in WBL opportunities. While the WBL Coordinator has a connection with students participating in WBL opportunities, career counselors are at the home schools and can therefore be a more effective resource for students in WBL opportunities. Career counselors establishing regular

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<sup>7</sup> GWDB CTE Committee. (July 1, 2024). CTE Committee Expert Review Team Deployment Plan School Year 2024-2025. [https://gwdb.maryland.gov/ctecomm/ctecomm-ctedeploymentplan\\_draftsy24-25\\_62624.pdf](https://gwdb.maryland.gov/ctecomm/ctecomm-ctedeploymentplan_draftsy24-25_62624.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> AIB's Updated Comprehensive Implementation Plan, August 2023, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PsYQGhld5Qwk7Pgk2cEubr68SSKrG5dH/view?usp=sharing>.

check-ins with WBL participants would allow for there to be more opportunities for collaboration to overcome challenges the student may face completing their WBL.

Career counselors becoming more familiar with CTE students would also require those career counselors to collaborate with CTE teachers to coordinate how to best support those students participating in WBL opportunities. It may be useful to have career counselors collaborate with CTE teachers to create a checklist or set of questions to ask WBL participants to help them complete those WBL opportunities. Having career counselors establish regular meetings with students participating in WBL opportunities and collaborate with CTE teachers could potentially alleviate two challenges the CTE ERT observed: career counselors' disconnect from CTE and support for WBL participants.

### **Coordinate with Teachers, School Counselors, and Career Counselors on Enrollment and Post-Graduation Plans**

The CTE ERT observed how both CTE student enrollment and post-graduation plans fall on the shoulders of CTE teachers. While teachers seemed pleased to be able to choose which students enroll into their CTE program after ATEX, it is quite laborious and has the potential to lead to equity gaps. In addition to enrollment, CTE teachers work on post-graduation plans with CTE students, while career counselors and school counselors work with students at the home schools to create post-graduation plans. In addition to having more intentional collaboration time to include career counselors in CTE and supporting WBL participants, the CTE ERT recommends CTE teachers, school counselors, and career counselors find time to coordinate on both enrollment and post-graduation plans. It should be noted that MSDE's forthcoming guidance on Six-Year Plans will provide LEAs with further instruction on the development and process for updating post-graduation plans.

This coordination could take the form of collaborating to create a systemic process for enrollment that includes perspectives from CTE teachers, school counselors, and career counselors. It may also lead to communication pathways that connect these stakeholders so enrollment and post-graduation plans are shared among CTE teachers, school counselors, and career counselors. At neighboring Worcester County Public Schools, school counselors developed CTE Program of Study binders that provide detailed information connecting CTE pathways to careers, and Wicomico County Public Schools could emulate something similar so CTE enrollment and post-graduation plans for CTE students can be comprehensively supported. Having CTE teachers, school counselors, and career counselors coordinate on enrollment and post-graduation plans would lead to CTE students having multi-faceted support for enrollment and post-graduation plans instead of having that labor fall solely on CTE teachers.

### **Explore Collaborations in the Eastern Shore and Lower Shore**

Administrators, teachers, school counselors, and career counselors all expressed interest in finding opportunities to collaborate with their counterparts in Maryland and in the Eastern Shore region, especially the Lower Shore region (Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset Counties) who are more familiar with their local contexts. WCPS should explore creating collaboration pathways with counterparts in the Lower Shore, in the Eastern Shore region, and across Maryland. CTE teachers do not have many peers who have similar expertise in

their district, but collaborating with CTE teachers from the Lower Shore may lead to opportunities for collectively overcoming similar challenges. For instance, WCPS is planning on expanding their Nursing Program and may find it useful to collaborate with neighboring LEAs to proactively address challenges associated with growing a program like this, especially in the Lower Shore. Career counselors expressed interest in collaborating with career counselors in the Eastern Shore region, which may create an opportunity for WCPS's career counselors to overcome common barriers and share WCPS's best practices, like the ATEX classes, "Practicum" for 12th graders who completed their CTE program, etc. CTE Lead Designees in Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester already have frequent collaborations, but having these collaboration pathways available for school counselors, career counselors, and CTE teachers has great potential.

### **Improve CTE Information Pathways with Internal and External Stakeholders**

One of the challenges the CTE ERT observed is that even though it seems like there is effective marketing to get students interested in CTE programs, there is an opportunity to improve the depth of information that is communicated to both internal and external stakeholders. Between the CTE program videos and the ATEX courses, students have a great deal of information on how to best choose the CTE program for them. That said, career counselors told the CTE ERT that teachers at the home schools do not know enough about CTE to give students any information about CTE. In neighboring Worcester County Public Schools, school counselors created informational binders on all of their CTE programs so all stakeholders have quick access to a plethora of information. Perhaps Wicomico County Public Schools may want to create something similar so that internal stakeholders have the most accurate information quickly or can point students to useful resources quickly.

The CTE ERT observed how communication with external stakeholders was challenging. In focus groups, career counselors talked about how SchoolLinks has great potential, but does not have enough content for it to be used to its fullest extent. All three Lower Shore districts (Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset Counties) use SchoolLinks as a digital platform to assist students with self-discovery, career exploration, and personalized academic and post-graduation planning. SchoolLinks has the potential to send information to external collaborators, but career counselors talked about how difficult it is to populate the list of external stakeholders and find effective ways to communicate information with them.

WCPS's list of external collaborators has grown and will continue to grow, but WCPS should look to improve its information pathways to maintain and grow relationships with external collaborators. Career counselors talked about how regular communications go out to these external stakeholders, but even though it is more labor intensive, it may be useful to take a more personalized approach when communicating with these external stakeholders. For instance, instead of sending out a monthly newsletter on all things CTE, perhaps the students in the Interactive Media program may create a quarterly newsletter for each of WCPS's CTE Cluster Groups - Building & Moving, Caring for Communities, Connecting & Supporting Success, Creating & Experiencing, Cultivating Resources, and Investing in the

Future.<sup>9</sup> Ultimately, WCPS should explore opportunities to improve communication and information pathways with both internal and external stakeholders.

### **Explore Technical Assistance with MSDE and the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) in meeting the *Blueprint's* 45% Goal**

In order to achieve the *Blueprint's* 45% goal, establishing and expanding RAs should be one of WCPS's priorities. WCPS should explore closer collaboration with MD Labor's Apprenticeship Navigators on what opportunities are available for high school students in Wicomico County and the surrounding Lower Shore. At the time of the visit, WCPS told the CTE ERT about their three-phase plan to improve participation in the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship, but nevertheless, WCPS can seek technical assistance from MSDE and similar LEAs in strategies to increase the amount of students completing an RA, which is the gold-standard for the 45% goal. The CTE Committee will also be developing more targeted technical assistance around this topic, and facilitating a community of practice utilizing findings from CTE ERT visits. The CTE Committee recognizes that policies defining the 45% goal were not issued until December 2024, and this CTE ERT visit took place in February 2025, so all of those implementing this work and the partnerships required are still in the early stages of development. Exploring technical assistance with MSDE, MD Labor, and the CTE Committee will prove to be a useful addition to WCPS meeting the 45% goal.

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<sup>9</sup> Advance CTE. (2025, June). *Guidebook: The modernized National Career Clusters Framework*. Advance CTE. <https://careertech.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Guidebook-National-Career-Clusters-Framework.pdf>



## APPENDIX GUIDE

- A. Visit Participants
- B. LEA Brief
- C. Visit Agenda
- D. Interview & Focus Group Questions

# Appendix A | Visit Participants

Name	Role
Brian Cavey	VP, International Assoc. Of Heat and Frost Insulators & Allied Workers; Chair, MATC (CTE Committee Member)
Carrie Akins	CTE Director, Calvert County Public Schools
Christine Wright	CTE Teacher, Caroline County Public Schools
John Strickland	Expert Review Team Manager, CTE Committee
Cortney Monar	Supervisor of CTE, Somerset County Public Schools
Matthew Holloway	Owner, Quantico Creek Sod (CTE Committee Member)
Courtney Handte	Principal, Caroline County Public Schools
TJ Thompson	Assistant Principal, Talbot County Public Schools
Lateefah Durant	VP of Innovation, Cityworks DC
Thomas Saito-Sherris	Career Coach Liaison, Lower Shore Workforce Investment Board
Julie Allen	Business Service Manager, Lower Shore Workforce Investment Board
Georgeta Wainwright	Education and Compliance Manager, Delaware Elevator
Dr. James Bell	Director of Instruction, Academic Support, and Well-Being, Building African American Minds
Diane Stulz	Coordinator of Instruction, Worcester County Public Schools

# Appendix B | LEA Brief

## CTE LEA LEAD STAFF

Name	Role(s)	Contact Info
Bryan Ashby	Supervisor	bashby@mywcps.org
Billy Witte	Coordinator	wwitte@mywcps.org
Brian Briggs	Comprehensive Principal	bbriggs@mywcps.org
Scott Pegg	Assistant Principal (CTE)	spegg@mywcps.org

## COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOLS WITH CTE

- Parkside High School
- Wicomico High School
- James M Bennett High School
- Mardela Middle and High School

## LEA CTE Center(s)

Parkside High School – CTE Center

### **CTE ERT Visit**

Date: 2/26/2025

Schools: Parkside High School CTE Center: 1015 Beaglin Park Drive, Salisbury, MD.

## LEA CTE ENROLLMENT, PARTICIPATION and COMPLETION RATES

	Wicomico
Total Enrollment (# of all <b>HS students</b> )	<b>4522</b>
Total Enrollment (# of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>968</b>
CTE Participation Rate <sup>10</sup> (% of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>602; 62%</b>
CTE Concentration Rate (% of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>489; 51%</b>
CTE Completers Rate (% of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>389; 40%</b>
IRC Completion Rate (% of all <b>graduating students</b> ) <sup>11</sup>	<b>17.3%</b>
Work-Based Learning Participants <sup>12 13</sup> (# of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>13</b>
Dual Enrollment Participants <sup>14</sup> (# of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>243</b>
Dual Enrollment Completers <sup>15</sup> (# of all <b>graduating students</b> )	<b>99</b>
Apprenticeship Participants (# of all <b>HS students</b> )	RA: 0 YA: 7
Apprenticeship Participants (# of all <b>graduating students</b> )	RA: 0 YA: 4
Apprenticeship Completers (# of <b>graduating students</b> )	RA: 0 YA: 6
<b>Progress Towards 45% Goal<sup>16</sup></b>	6 students

<sup>10</sup> CTE Participants are students completing not less than one credit in a MSDE-approved CTE program of study. CTE Concentrators are students who have completed at least two courses and are enrolled in a third course in a single MSDE-approved CTE program of study. CTE Completers are students who meet all requirements in a state-approved CTE program of study, typically three or four courses.

<sup>11</sup> Defined as the percentage of all graduating students who have earned an IRC (as defined by the CTE Committee)

## LEA CTE OFFERINGS

### CTE Program Enrollment

Program Name	Total Enrollment	Overenrolled or Underenrolled?	Number of Students on Waitlist
Automotive Technology	30		
Advanced Tech	275		
Business Admin Services	55		
Accounting	211		
Marketing	171		
Carpentry	35		
CISCO Networking	25		
Collision Repair	18		
Computer Science	233		
Cosmetology	38		
Criminal Justice	37		
Culinary Arts	41		
Child Development	21		

<sup>12</sup> Participation is defined as the number of all high school students or all graduating students who have participated in the high school portion of a registered apprenticeship (RA) or an AMP youth apprenticeship (YA). Completion is defined as the number of all graduating students who have completed the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) or have completed both an AMP youth apprenticeship (YA) and an IRC (YA completers who don't earn an IRC will not count towards 45% goal).

<sup>13</sup> Work-based learning includes internships, job shadowing, and other job-based experiences.

<sup>14</sup> Participation is defined as the number of all graduating students participating in dual enrollment (does not count towards the 45% goal unless they earn an IRC).

<sup>15</sup> Dual enrollment completers is defined as the number of all graduating students who earned college credit through dual enrollment.

<sup>16</sup> This metric is calculated by adding together the Apprenticeship Completion Rate (RA completers plus YA completers who also earn an IRC) and the IRC Completion Rate (based on draft guidance from the CTE Committee), divided by the total number of graduating students.

Associate			
Electricity	30		
Firefighter/EMT	5	Under Enrolled	
Health Occupations	33		
High Performance Manufacturing	18		
Horticulture	31		
HVAC	26		
Interactive Media	52		
JROTC	171		
Masonry	11	Slightly Underenrolled	
Nursing Assistant	23		
PLTW	179		
Welding	32		

**Progress Towards the 45% Goal:**

What are you projecting, for next school year, in growth towards the 45% goal for your district?

We anticipate 10% growth for the school year 2025-26. Currently 17.4% of graduates complete an IRC.

Next 3 years? - additional growth of 5% - projected as 32%

Next 5 years? - additional growth of 5% - projected as 37%

By SY 2030-2031? - I believe we can meet the 45% growth goal as the IRC list is reviewed and modified. Additional flexibility is needed for programs like JROTC, PLTW, Criminal Justice so these students have access to a usable and relevant IRC.

What are your plans for expanding Registered Apprenticeships in your LEA?

Wicomico County Public Schools (WCPS) is implementing a three-phase approach to expanding Registered Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship opportunities.

The first phase focused on building staff awareness. Three informational meetings were held to educate principals, counselors, and career coaches about the benefits and requirements of apprenticeships.

The second phase prioritized student outreach and engagement. The CTE Coordinator collaborated with Career Coaches to host informational sessions for students interested in apprenticeships, guiding them on program details and the application process. To further support this effort, we leveraged SchoolLinks, a career planning platform, to create a dedicated job board where students can explore available apprenticeship opportunities.

The third phase will concentrate on expanding employer partnerships. We plan to visit local businesses, identify new and emerging job opportunities, and collaborate with our apprenticeship navigator to recruit new partners at local trade shows. Additionally, we have integrated certification courses into our Evening High School program to provide Related Instruction and Industry-Recognized Credentials for smaller employers in the food and technology industries.

This structured approach ensures that WCPS continues to strengthen and grow apprenticeship opportunities, benefiting students, employers, and the local workforce.

### ***Program Plans for Future***

Are there any new programs you plan on adding to your current programming within the next 2 school years?

No

Why are you adding/not adding the program(s)?

Are there any current programs you plan on expanding upon within the next 2 school years?

Yes - Nursing Assitant

Why are you expanding upon the program(s)?

Additional students would benefit from the additional of a 2nd teacher and could easily find gainful employment beyond graduation

Are there any programs you are taking away within the next 2 school years?  
Why are you taking away the program(s)?

No

### **Enrollment Practices**

How do students enroll in programs?

A majority of our program enrollment comes through the ATEX program. Students can take ATEX as a ½ credit course in their 9th or 10th grade year. During registration, they indicate their top 6 choices in priority order.

Over the course of one term, they rotate through four 11 day rotations. Teachers complete CTE Proficiency rubrics for all students. At the end of the term, students select their top choices for ATEX II and rosters are filled based on student interest. If a class is overfilled, the proficiency sheet determines which students move forward to ATEX II.

ATEX II is a one term class that offers introductory skills in the course that a student was selected to advance. This process is completed for two cohorts in a school year. Teachers use proficiency sheets for both cohorts of ATEX II to determine which student will enter level I CTE.

In addition to ATEX selections, we have a handful of courses that are completed through interview processes: Cosmetology, Health Occupations, Nursing, Nail Technician. PLTW is rostered with a lottery system coming from eligible middle school students. Lower enrolled programs are direct entry - TAM, Firefighter/EMT, Interactive Media.

Are all CTE programs offered to all students?

Yes - there is an emphasis on attendance, conduct and GPA for ATEX selection. 10th graders are prioritized for 450 seats. 9th grade students that do not enter ATEX are given pointers to improve their chances in the following year.

Can a student participate in a CTE program at another school?

Business, Computer Science and Advanced Tech are offered at each of the home schools. In addition to this, JROTC and Interactive Media are courses that are offered at Wicomico High School rather than the shared time center. Transportation is offered for these courses as well as all shared time center courses.

### **Program Design**

What are some best practices from CTE in your LEA that you think are worth sharing with other CTE programs across the state?

The ATEX program has been an amazing tool for the success of our CTE programs. Rather than a direct entry into a course, students have a chance to

explore multiple areas to find an area of interest. Although some may think they want Auto Tech, they find a passion for collision repair. It creates a sense of competition that demands the best out of every student. In addition to this, student selection is based on experience which should help persistence. A direct entry level I student may quickly find a course is not for them, but the seat has been taken from another student.

### **LEA Support for Schools**

How is CTE financial support structured within the LEA?

Financial Support for Career and Technical Education primarily comes from local funding in a categorical budget. Categories include staff salaries, materials of instruction, equipment, software, small computers, textbooks, and equipment maintenance and repair.

In total Wicomico County Public Schools provided \$ 3,878,182 in funding to support CTE programming.

How is CTE staffing structured within the LEA?

Each of the schools whereby CTE courses are offered have dedicated FTE to offering courses/programming. Here is a breakdown:

Parkside/Parkside CTE	-	30 full time teachers and 2 instructional assistants
Wicomico High	-	7 full time teachers
Mardela High	-	4 full time teachers
James M. Bennett	-	8.5 full time teachers

### **Career Exploration**

What career exploration is available to students in your LEA?

These include monthly Career Talk Segments with guest speakers from various professions, interactive Career Exploration Classroom Lessons aligned with different career clusters, and Field Trips to local colleges for firsthand exposure to post-secondary options. We also host an annual Career Day Fair featuring professionals from diverse industries and offer events focused on career clusters such as Architecture & Construction, Health Sciences, Human Services, Manufacturing, and STEM. Additionally, students benefit from SchoolLinks, field trips, one-on-one career discussions, and employer panel discussions.

How do the students access their career coach(es)?

This varies from school to school. Students can access their coach through appointments, email, or the Remind app. They can also stop into the counseling office, meet one on one or have conversations in the hallway. Additionally, Coaches work through all classrooms completing career exploration activities and offering guidance.

How does/do the career coach(es) serve students in your LEA?

Career coaches in Wicomico County provide comprehensive support to help students explore, plan, and prepare for their futures. They facilitate career exploration activities, such as Career Talks with guest speakers, classroom lessons on career clusters, and field trips to colleges, businesses, and workplaces to give students real-world exposure. Personalized career planning includes one-on-one coaching through SchoolLink, email, or in-person meetings, as well as assistance with resume building, interview preparation, job applications, and post-secondary goal setting. Career coaches also collaborate with school staff to embed career exploration into the curriculum and work with community partners to offer job shadowing, internships, and other experiential learning opportunities. They provide guidance on various career paths, including alternatives to traditional four-year degrees, and offer parents insights into career options for their children. Through these initiatives, career coaches ensure students have the knowledge, resources, and confidence to succeed beyond high school.

## INFORMATION FOR VISITING SCHOOLS

### ***Parkside High School***

School Leadership: Bryan Ashby

School Contact: [Bryan ASHBY](#)

School Website: [Home | Career & Technical Education](#)

## CTE Lead, School Administrators & Staff Teachers and Faculty

### ***Overview of Meeting Participants***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Location</b>
Bryan Ashby	Supervisor	Parkside CTE
Billy Witte	Coordinator	Parkside CTE
Scott Pegg	Asst. Principal	Parkside CTE
Brian Briggs	Principal	Parkside CTE

**Parkside High School**

Name	Subject	Years in Position	Classes
<b>Shawn Taylor</b>	Auto Tech	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auto Technology I</li> <li>• Auto Technology II</li> </ul>
<b>Bradley Griffin</b>	Auto Tech	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auto Technology I</li> <li>• Auto Technology II</li> </ul>
<b>Jeri Ward</b>	Business	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Marketing</li> <li>• Advanced Marketing and Entrepreneurship Capstone</li> </ul>
<b>Jonta Ward</b>	Business	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Accounting and Finance Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Honors - Advanced Accounting</li> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> </ul>
<b>Blair Ritchey</b>	Carpentry	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpentry I</li> <li>• Carpentry II</li> </ul>
<b>Jamie Brandenburg</b>	CISCO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CISCO Networking I</li> <li>• CISCO Networking II</li> </ul>
<b>Danielle Amey</b>	Computer Science	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Computer Science</li> <li>• AP Computer Science Principles</li> </ul>
<b>Tricia Oertel</b>	Cosmetology	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles and Practices of Cosmetology</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Cosmetology: Theory and Application</li> <li>Honors Mastery of Cosmetology</li> </ul>
<b>Valerie Stevenson</b>	Cosmetology	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principles and Practices of Cosmetology</li> <li>Advanced Cosmetology: Theory and Application</li> <li>Honors Mastery of Cosmetology</li> </ul>
<b>Rich Kaiser</b>	Criminal Justice	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal Justice I</li> <li>Criminal Justice II</li> </ul>
<b>David Wells</b>	Culinary Arts	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culinary Arts I</li> <li>Culinary Arts II</li> </ul>
<b>Tamara Filippelli</b>	Child Development Associate	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childcare Development Associate I</li> <li>Childcare Development Associate II</li> </ul>
<b>Erin Green</b>	Child Development Associate	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childcare Development Associate I</li> <li>Childcare Development Associate II</li> </ul>
<b>Jacob Jackson</b>	Electricity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electricity I</li> <li>Electricity II</li> </ul>
<b>Karen Bunn</b>	Health Occupations	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Health Occupations</li> <li>Honors Psychology</li> <li>Clinical Affiliation I</li> <li>Honors Health Occupations II</li> <li>Honors Anatomy and Physiology</li> <li>Honors Clinical Affiliation II</li> </ul>
<b>Erica Grubb</b>	Health Occupations	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Health Occupations</li> <li>Honors Psychology</li> <li>Clinical Affiliation I</li> <li>Honors Health Occupations II</li> <li>Honors Anatomy and Physiology</li> <li>Honors Clinical Affiliation II</li> </ul>
<b>Steve Jenkins</b>	High Performance Manufacturing	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High Performance Manufacturing I</li> <li>High Performance Manufacturing II</li> </ul>
<b>Jerry Kelley</b>	Horticulture	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticulture Production Management I</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horticulture Production Management II</li> </ul>
<b>Paul Sichau</b>	HVAC	LTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HVAC I</li> <li>• HVAC II</li> </ul>
<b>Josh Johnson</b>	Masonry	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masonry I</li> <li>• Masonry II</li> </ul>
<b>Tracy Hunter</b>	Nursing	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing Assistant</li> <li>• Honors Psychology</li> </ul>
<b>Phil Bock</b>	PLTW	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Engineering (POE)</li> <li>• Aerospace Engineering (AE)</li> <li>• Engineering Design and Development (EDD)</li> </ul>
<b>Dan Seman</b>	PLTW	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineering Design and Development (EDD)</li> <li>• Civil Engineering and Architecture</li> <li>• Computer Integrated Manufacturing</li> <li>• Principles of Engineering (POE)</li> </ul>
<b>Dave Miles</b>	PLTW	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Engineering Design (IED)</li> <li>• Digital Electronics (DE)</li> </ul>
<b>Chris Grande</b>	TAM	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching as a Profession</li> </ul>
<b>Mollie Schoenfelder</b>	TAM	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Growth and Development</li> </ul>
<b>Kevin Horner</b>	Tech Ed	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Technology I</li> <li>• Advanced Technology II</li> <li>• Advanced Technology III</li> </ul>
<b>Greg McCarty</b>	Tech Ed	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Technology I</li> <li>• Advanced Technology II</li> <li>• Advanced Technology III</li> </ul>
<b>Jon Brittingham</b>	Welding	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welding I</li> <li>• Welding II</li> </ul>
<b>Alison Cornish</b>	Workplace Coordinator	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work-Based Learning Experience</li> </ul>
<b>Maria Davis</b>	SPED	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPED Support Facilitator</li> </ul>

<b>Michelle Gale</b>	SPED (IA)	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPED IA Caseload</li> </ul>
<b>Rich Leary</b>	SPED (IA)	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPED IA Caseload</li> </ul>

**James M Bennett High School**

Name	Subject	Years in Position	Classes
Andrew Borkowicz	Business	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> </ul>
Rebecca Gregory	Business	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Honors - Advanced Accounting</li> <li>• Principles of Accounting and Finance</li> <li>• Accounting and Finance Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
Debra Sebach	Business	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Marketing</li> <li>• Advanced Marketing and Entrepreneurship Capstone</li> </ul>
Chris Emge	Technology Education	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Technology II</li> </ul>
Shanita Hollis	Technology Education	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> </ul>
Brian Micciche	Technology Education/ Computer Science	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> <li>• Advanced Tech III</li> </ul>
Suzanne Midkiff	Technology Education	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> <li>• Advanced Technology I</li> </ul>
Justin Conklin	Computer Science	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Computer Science</li> <li>• AP Computer Science Principles</li> </ul>
Ann Schuchart	Teacher Academy of Maryland	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum and Instruction</li> <li>• Education Academy Internship</li> </ul>
Jennifer	Teacher	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Growth and Development</li> </ul>

Pariseau	Academy of Maryland		
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**Mardela Middle and High School**

Name	Subject	Years in Position	Classes
Joe Hastings	Business/Computer Science	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Computer Science</li> <li>• AP Computer Science Principles</li> <li>• Office System Management I</li> <li>• Office System Management II</li> </ul>
Dion Johnson	Business Education	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Principles of Accounting and Finance</li> <li>• Honors - Advanced Accounting</li> </ul>
Denise Skeen	Business Education	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> </ul>
Alex McRae	Technology Education	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> </ul>

**Wicomico High School**

Name	Subject	Years in Position	Classes
Tangela Ames	Business	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Principles of Accounting and Finance</li> <li>• Introduction to Marketing</li> </ul>
Ron Hollis	Business	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Business Management and Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Office System Management I</li> <li>• Office System Management II</li> </ul>
Teodore Lutz	Technology Education	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> <li>• Advanced Technology II</li> <li>• Advanced Technology III</li> </ul>

Craig Weaver	Technology Education	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Of Technology</li> <li>• Advanced Technology I</li> </ul>
Nick Bennett	Computer Science	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Computer Science</li> <li>• AP Computer Science A</li> <li>• AP Computer Science Principles</li> </ul>
Maria Cook	Interactive Media Production	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Art, Media, and Communication</li> <li>• Interactive Media and Design Level I</li> <li>• Interactive Media and Design Level II</li> <li>• Interactive Media Portfolio Capstone</li> </ul>
Eric Whitelock	JROTC - Senior Instructor	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Ed Training I</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training II</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training III</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training IV</li> </ul>
Demetrius Matthews	Instructor	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Ed Training I</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training II</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training III</li> <li>• Leadership Ed Training IV</li> </ul>

### CTE PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENT AT VISITING SCHOOLS

Schools with CTE Programs	CLUSTER	CTE PROGRAM	ENROLLMENT NUMBER	COMPLETION RATE	IRC ATTAINMENT RATE
Parkside High School	BMF	Accounting & Finance	211	0.03	N/A
Parkside High School	BMF	Business Administrative Services	55	0.4	N/A
Parkside High School	BMF	Marketing	171	0.13	N/A
Parkside High School	CD	Carpentry	35	0.89	17/17 - 100%
Parkside High School	IT	CISCO Networking	25	0.6	5/6 - 83%
Parkside High School	IT	Computer Science	233	0.02	N/A

Parkside High School	TT	Collision Repair	18	0.82	7/7 - 100%
Parkside High School	TT	Automotive Technology	30	0.92	14/14 - 100%
Parkside High School	CSHT	Cosmetology	38	0.8	10/10 - 100%
Parkside High School	HRS	Criminal Justice	37	0.89	No IRC Available
Parkside High School	CSHT	Culinary Arts	41	0.87	7/17 - 41%
Parkside High School	HRS	Child Development Associate	21	0.76	13/13 - 100%
Parkside High School	CD	Electricity	30	0.94	New Teacher - no assessment offered
Parkside High School	HRS	Firefighter/EMT	5	N/A	Program not offered in 2023-24
Parkside High School	HB	Health Occupations	33	0.94	13/13 - 100%
Parkside High School	MET	High Performance Manufacturing	18	0.45	6/6 - 100%
Parkside High School	MET	Advanced Technology	275	New Program	N/A
Parkside High School	EANR	Horticulture	31	0.79	13/13 - 100%
Parkside High School	CD	HVAC	26	0.71	8/8 - 100%
Parkside High School	AMC	Interactive Media	52	0.06	Working towards offering an IRC
Parkside High School	HRS	JROTC	171	9% (JROTC III offered SY 25-26)	No IRC Available, but all students take the ASVAB
Parkside High School	CD	Masonry	11	0.86	4/4 - 100%
Parkside High School	CSHT	Nail Technician (Evening High School)	10	1st year program	1st year program

Parkside High School	HB	Nursing Assistant	23	1	22/22 - 100%
Parkside High School	MET	PLTW	179	0.6	No IRC Available
Parkside High School	CD	Welding	32	0.93	15/15 - 100%
James M. Bennett			1379		
Mardela			429		
Parkside			1223		
Wicomico			1307		

### Overview of CTE Programs

View a complete list of CTE programs and full descriptions of each course [on the Wicomico County CTE Clusters page](#).

### LEA STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

	Maryland <sup>17</sup>	Wicomico County
District Student Demographics (2023)	276495	4,323
% Asian	7%	138
% American Indian / Alaska Native	<1%	35
% African American	33%	1522
% Hispanic	21%	624
% Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	<1%	n/a
% Two or More Races	4%	311
% White	34%	1687
% Students with Disabilities	11%	10.5%
# of Multi-Lingual Learners	9%	13.2%
% Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS)	47%	60.4%

<sup>17</sup> This is the most recent information according to [The Maryland Report Card](#)

Child Poverty Rate % (2023)	12% <sup>18</sup>	25% <sup>19</sup>
Unemployment Rate %	2.1% <sup>20</sup> (2023)	2.5% <sup>21</sup> (2023)

## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

### **Nearby Universities, Community College(s) and Other Continuing Education**

- Salisbury University
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- WorWic Community College

### **Economic Profile<sup>22</sup>**

With its strategic location along the East Coast and situated at the crossroads of Maryland’s Lower Eastern Shore, Wicomico County serves as a hub for commerce, industry, health care, education and transportation. Situated halfway between the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay, cultural, recreational and civic amenities add to the lure of Wicomico, offering citizens a lifestyle second to none. Wicomico is the number one agricultural producing county in Maryland, and ranks fourth in broiler chicken production. Popular crops include corn, soybeans, wheat and vegetables. In addition to agriculture and poultry, health care, educational sectors, and a diverse industrial base offer stability and a firm foundation for Wicomico’s economy. Chesapeake Shipbuilding recently announced the addition of 100 new jobs associated with the expansion of its Salisbury shipyard. Wicomico County’s private sector industries generate \$5.6 billion in economic output. Major employers are Chesapeake Shipbuilding, Delmarva Power, Piedmont Airlines, K&L Microwave, Tidal Health, Perdue Farms, Salisbury University and Tishcon. Wicomico County has a 5,223-acre State Enterprise Zone in Salisbury and a 129-acre zone in Fruitland.

### **Educational Attainment<sup>23</sup>**

<sup>18</sup> According to Census Reporter <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/04000US24-maryland/>

<sup>19</sup> According to Census Reporter <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US24045-wicomico-county-md/>

<sup>20</sup> According to Maryland Manual Online <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/economy/html/unemployrates.html>

<sup>21</sup> According to Maryland Manual Online <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/economy/html/unemployrates.html>

<sup>22</sup> Link to full Economic Profile <https://commerce.maryland.gov/Documents/ResearchDocument/WicomicoBef.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Link to full Educational Attainment: <https://data.census.gov/profile/Maryland?g=040XX00US24>

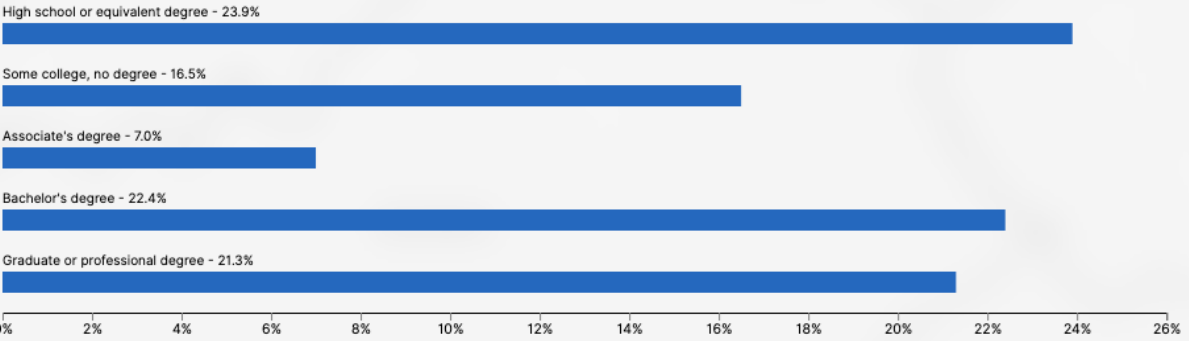
**43.7%** ± 0.5%  
Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Maryland

**36.2%** ± 0.1%  
Bachelor's Degree or Higher in United States

S1501 | 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

**Education Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)**  
in Maryland

Share / Embed



**Leading Business Groups<sup>24</sup>**

Name	Industry	Size Category
ACME Markets	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Anchorage Healthcare Ctr	Health Care and Social Assistance	● 100-249
Apple Discount Drugs	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Bennett Middle School	Educational Services	● 100-249
Best Buy	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Blind Industries & Svc of MD	Manufacturing	● 100-249
Boscov's	Retail Trade	● 100-249

<sup>24</sup> Data in this table comes from the Maryland Department of Labor, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/lmi/emplists/>

Name	Industry	Size Category
Cadista Holdings Inc	Manufacturing	● 250-499
Car Max	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Cato Gas & Oil	Wholesale Trade	● 100-249
Chesapeake Nurseries Inc	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Chick-Fil-A	Accommodation and Food Services	● 100-249
Coastal Hospice	Health Care and Social Assistance	● 100-249
Coca Cola Bottling Cons	Manufacturing	● 100-249
Cracker Barrel Old Country Str	Accommodation and Food Services	● 100-249
Credit Plus Inc	Administrative and Support and Waste .	● 100-249
Deer's Head Hospital Ctr	Health Care and Social Assistance	● 250-499
Delaware Elevator Inc	Construction	● 100-249
Delmar Elementary	Educational Services	● 100-249
Delmarva Media Group	Information	● 100-249
Dove Pointe Residential Svc	Other Services (except Public Administr.)	● 100-249

Name	Industry	Size Category
Eastern Quality Vending Inc	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Encompass Health Rehab Hosp	Health Care and Social Assistance	● 100-249
Encore Catering	Accommodation and Food Services	● 100-249
Food Lion	Retail Trade	● 100-249
Genesis Healthcare LLC	Health Care and Social Assistance	● 100-249
Handy International Inc	Manufacturing	● 100-249
Henson School of Sci & Tech	Educational Services	● 100-249
Home Depot	Retail Trade	● 100-249

**Legend:**

- 100-249 (Blue)
- 250-499 (Orange)
- 750-1000 (Red)
- 1000+ (Teal)

# Appendix C | Visit Agenda

Visit Date: February 26, 2025  
 Time: 7:45am-3:00pm  
 Arrival Time: 7:45am-8:00am

Location: Parkside High School  
 1015 Beaglin Park Dr  
 Salisbury, MD 21801

## Parkside High School CTE

Team 1:  
 John Strickland, Brian Cavey, TJ  
 Thompson, Thomas Saito-Sherris, Christine  
 Wright, Courtney Handte, Cortney Monar

Team 2:  
 Carrie Akins, Georgeta Wainwright, James  
 Bell, Lateefah Durant, Matt Holloway, Julie  
 Allen, Diane Stulz

Time	Activity	Time	Activity
7:45am-8:15am	Meet and Greet	7:45am-8:15am	Meet and Greet
8:15am-9:15am	School Tour & Discussion with CTE Lead and Admin	8:15am-9:15am	Student Focus Group Location: Media Center
9:15am-10:15am	School Tour & Discussion with CTE Lead and Admin	9:15am-10:15am	School Tour & Discussion with CTE Lead and Admin
10:15am-11:15am	Career Coach Focus Group Location: Media Center	10:15am-11:15am	School Tour & Discussion with CTE Lead and Admin
11:15am-12:15pm	Lunch	11:15am-12:15pm	Lunch
12:15pm-1:15pm	Student Focus Group Location: Media Center	12:15pm-1:15pm	Teacher Focus Group Location: Media Center
1:15pm-2:15pm	Teacher Focus Group Location: Media Center	1:15pm-2:15pm	Counselor Focus Group Location: Media Center



2:15pm-3:00pm	End of Day Debrief & Gathering	2:15pm-3:00pm	End of Day Debrief & Gathering
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***Team Member Roles***

**Team 1**

Facilitator/Recorder: John Strickland  
Notes/Time: Cortney Monar

**Team 2**

Facilitator/Recorder: James Bell  
Notes/Time: Lateefah Durant

# Appendix D | Interview & Focus Group Questions

## Focus Group Reminders

**To be used by team facilitator for focus group participants before starting**

- We're here on behalf of the CTE Committee, committed to improving CTE programs in line with Maryland's goals outlined in the *Blueprint*.
- Our team represents a variety of different perspectives. Our members here today are teachers, administrators, school leaders, researchers, employers, local workforce board members, and CTE Committee staff and board members.
- Our purpose in this visit is to try to understand what is in place now in your LEA, including plans for expanding or strengthening existing programs and current challenges. We also want to identify any strong practices in place that we might be able to highlight statewide. These visits will also inform the CTE Committee's development of the statewide CTE framework.
- We are not here to "assess" or grade CTE programming or CTE teachers in schools or LEAs.
- After the visit, CTE Committee staff will draft a LEA report summarizing what we saw and heard, including our understanding of the LEA's CTE strategy, current strengths and challenges, and suggestions to help the LEA reach its goals.
- We look forward to hearing about your experiences and your thoughts on what's working and where we can support CTE here in your LEA.
- We would like to record this session (except student groups) to capture your thoughts accurately—does that work for you all? To be clear, this recording is only for note-taking purposes; we ensure confidentiality meaning no names will be cited in our reports.
- Your contributions today will help us improve CTE programs both here and statewide. Any questions before we start?

## Questions for School Leadership

### **Priority Questions:**

1. How long have you been in your role? What is your background in CTE?
2. Can you give us an overview of the structure of CTE programs in your school / LEA? *If not addressed, ask about: Dual enrollment, WBL, Range of programs, Application process, Transportation*
3. What are the school's current priorities for CTE in your school/LEA? *If not addressed, ask about: Eliminate/add programs, Apprenticeship, Increasing enrollment, Working with industry*
4. In your opinion, how well does the programming at your school align with key (*high-growth, high-wage*) industries in your community and statewide?
5. Is there capacity for all interested students to participate in CTE programs? Are there any barriers to enrollment?
6. For those students who are not able to enroll and stay on a waitlist, what's the process for those students? What happens if they don't get off the waitlist?
7. How does the LEA/district update CTE programs? What are some current plans you have for adding new programs, expanding existing programs or eliminate current programs?
8. From your perspective, what are the strengths of your LEA/school's CTE program, and what have you made the most progress on recently?
9. What do you see as the key challenges facing your LEA/school now?
10. Where would you like the LEA to be in five years in regards to CTE?

### **Additional Questions:**

- Are any CTE teachers earning National Board Certification? If so, have they been able to move into differentiated roles?
- How do you collaborate with local business and industry and community colleges?
- Do you have sufficient teachers for current programs? If not, what are the issues in recruiting them?
- What's your process for reviewing the IRCs currently offered to students as part of their CTE program?
- What measures are in place to assess the long-term impact of CTE programs on students' career trajectories and contributions to the local economy?

- Do certain programs have higher completion rates than others?
- Are there clear pathways from current CTE programs to community college certificate and degree programs?
- What strategies are employed to raise awareness and improve perceptions of CTE programs among students, parents, and the broader community?

### Questions for CTE Teachers

*Instructions for focus group lead:* Please start by asking everyone to introduce themselves with the first question. Since there are a lot of questions to get through, ask for a few people, not everyone, to answer each of the following questions, asking for different perspectives as needed.

#### **Priority Questions:**

1. What program do you teach in? How long have you been in your role? What is your background in this area?
2. Can you give us an overview of your CTE program? *If not addressed, ask about: Dual enrollment, WBL, IRCs, completion rates, post-grad options*
3. Do you have contact with employers in your industry? If so, what partnerships have been most beneficial for students?
4. Where do students from your program go after graduating (i.e., further training, work, college, etc.)?
5. What support do you and/or the school provide to help CTE students develop post-graduation plans? *Are your students getting time with a Career Coach as part of that support?*
6. If you could redesign your subject's program of study, what would you change?
7. What professional learning opportunities are available for you?
8. From your perspective, what are the strengths of your school's CTE programs?
9. What do you need as a CTE teacher that you feel you may not be getting?
10. What do you see as the key CTE challenges facing your school now?

#### **Additional Questions:**

- How do you collaborate with your colleagues (CTE and academic teachers)?
- Do any of your programs have school-based businesses that serve the school community and/or local clients?

- Do you think the certification requirements for CTE teachers are well-aligned to what was needed to teach in the area you teach in?
- Do most students who enroll in your program intend on completing the program?
- Can you share a success story of a former student who has benefited from your program?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of your CTE program, and what data or feedback informs changes or improvements?

## Questions for CTE Students

### **Priority Questions:**

1. What year are you, what program are you enrolled in, and why did you choose the program you're in?
2. How did you learn about the program you are enrolled in now? What was the process of getting in to the program?
3. How has your experience in the classroom been for your CTE classes? Is it different from your other classes?
4. Have you had any work experience as part of your program?
5. If you have a different home school, how do you get to your CTE program and / or to your job (if applicable)?
6. Will you graduate with any certifications/credentials or college credits?
7. What is your plan post-graduation, and how did you develop it?
8. How much do you know about careers in your industry (salary, training paths)?
9. What would you say is the best thing about your program?
10. If you could change anything in your program, what would it be?

### **Additional Questions:**

- Are there any CTE programs you think the school/LEA should offer that it does not now?

- Have you participated in any competitions or extracurricular activities related to your CTE program? If so, what was your experience like?
- How well do you feel your CTE program is preparing you for the workforce or further education in your chosen field?
- How do your family and friends perceive your enrollment in a CTE program, and has their perception changed since you started?
- How does your school promote CTE programs to students, and what improvements would you suggest to increase awareness and interest?
- Looking back on when you first enrolled in your CTE program, what advice would you give to students who are currently considering CTE as an option?

### Questions for School Counselors/Career Coaches & Staff

*Instructions for focus group lead:* Please start by asking everyone to introduce themselves with the first question. Since there are a lot of questions to get through, ask for a few people, not everyone, to answer each of the following questions, asking for different perspectives as needed.

#### **Priority Questions:**

1. How long have you been in your role? What is your background in this role?
2. How is school counseling and career counseling organized at your school? Do the counselors work together?
3. Is there a work-based learning coordinator and if so what is their scope of work and how do they interact with counselors?
4. How does the school counseling staff and career counseling staff stay up-to-date with CTE programming and workforce trends in the LEA and the state?
5. How are students introduced to CTE programs? Do students have opportunities for career exploration/education?
6. How are CTE students supported in making post-graduation plans?
7. How are parents and families introduced to programs? Are there other efforts to publicize CTE in the community?
8. What do you see as the strengths of CTE in this school?
9. What do you see as the key challenges facing your LEA/school's CTE programs?

#### **Additional Questions:**

- Do you track post-graduation outcomes, such as enrolling in further education / training or entering the workforce?
- In what ways does the school involve parents and the community in the CTE program?
- How are students who change their mind about a career path supported?
- How do you think the CTE guidance could be improved? Is feedback on guidance and support collected from students?
- Are there issues with students being able to access CTE programs? If so, what are the reasons and what are current strategies to address access issues from a counseling perspective?



# Maryland

GWDB CTE COMMITTEE

Governor's Workforce Development Board  
Career and Technical Education Committee

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