

The November 2020 Career and Technical Education Districts (CTEDs) special study found that CTEDs and CTED member districts spent \$67 million in fiscal year 2019 on career and technical education (CTE) programs designed to prepare students for jobs in high-demand technical fields but did not have accurate and complete data to show whether they were effective in doing so. We made 8 recommendations to CTEDs, CTED member districts, and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and 2 recommendations to the Legislature, and their status in implementing the recommendations is as follows:

Status of 8 CTEDs, CTED member districts, and ADE recommendations

Implementation in process 8

Status of 2 legislative recommendations

Not implemented 2

We will conduct a 36-month followup on the status of those recommendations that have not yet been fully implemented.

Finding 1: CTEDs and member districts spent \$67 million in fiscal year 2019 on programs designed to prepare students for jobs in high-demand technical fields but do not have accurate and complete data to show whether they are effective in doing so

1. The Legislature should consider:

- a. Revising A.R.S. §15-393.01 to clarify that ADE should include CTED member districts in the annual achievement profiles and publish data that is disaggregated, when appropriate, by CTE program and district.

Not implemented—The Legislature has not revised A.R.S. §15-393.01 to clarify that ADE should include CTED member districts in the CTED annual achievement profiles or that ADE should publish disaggregated data, when appropriate, by CTE program and district. However, ADE included CTED member districts in the fiscal years 2021 and 2022 CTED achievement profiles it published in December 2021 and December 2022, respectively. ADE officials reported that they are planning to continue including CTED member districts in the CTED annual achievement profiles. Regardless, absent revisions to A.R.S. §15-393.01 to specify that CTED member districts should be included in the CTED annual achievement profiles, ADE is not required to include this information.

Related to ADE publishing disaggregated data, ADE did not disaggregate performance metrics by district in its fiscal years 2021 or 2022 CTED achievement profiles. ADE officials stated they planned to disaggregate data by member districts' satellite programs and CTEDs' central programs in the fiscal year 2022 CTED achievement profiles but were unable to do so because of CTEDs' and member districts' data reporting errors and inconsistencies. However, ADE officials stated they have offered updated training and provided guidance to CTEDs and member districts to address these data concerns and are planning to publish performance metrics disaggregated by satellite and central programs in the fiscal year 2023 CTED achievement profiles. Regardless, absent revisions to A.R.S. §15-393.01 to specify that performance metrics should be disaggregated by satellite and central programs in the CTED annual achievement profiles, ADE

is not required to include this information. We will review any revisions made to A.R.S. §15-393.01 and the CTED annual achievement profiles during our 36-month followup.

- b. Revising A.R.S. §15-393.01 to include industry certifications students earned as a performance indicator in CTEDs' and CTED member districts' annual achievement profiles.

Not implemented—The Legislature has not revised A.R.S. §15-393.01 to add industry certifications students earned as a performance indicator in the CTED annual achievement profiles. Further, ADE officials stated that although ADE started collecting this data for all students in fiscal year 2022, it does not plan to include this information in the CTED annual achievement profiles because it is not statutorily required to do so and because of the cost associated with modifying its website to add information to the annual achievement profiles. We will review any revisions made to A.R.S. §15-393.01 and the CTED annual achievement profiles during our 36-month followup.

- 2. To ensure accurate, complete, and comparable data is available to assess CTE program effectiveness, CTEDs, CTED member districts, and ADE should:

- a. Fully implement the Auditor General's 2017 audit recommendation by continuing to work together to develop and implement ways to consistently collect data for all students participating in CTE programs, including industry certification data, and use this data to help evaluate the effectiveness of their CTE programs in preparing students for jobs related to their CTE program.

Implementation in process—ADE has been working with CTEDs and member districts to ensure uniform data reporting by requiring enrollment, postgraduation placement, and industry certification data to be reported for all CTE students starting in fiscal year 2022.¹ ADE has offered trainings for all CTEDs and has provided written guidance to all CTEDs and member districts on how to report this data accurately and completely, and it has now begun to offer a second round of training to all districts. Further, ADE has included using outcome measures such as job placement and industry certification data to help evaluate CTE programs' effectiveness as 1 component of a quality CTE program in ADE's quality and compliance monitoring tool. ADE officials reported that they will assess how CTEDs and member districts are using outcome data to evaluate their programs as part of ADE's monitoring reviews. We will review this data at a future followup after it has been reported to and reviewed by ADE and determine how it is being used to help evaluate CTE program effectiveness in preparing students for jobs related to their CTE program.

- b. Ensure districts are consistent in how they collect CTE program data by developing guidance that addresses what population of students will be tracked and reported on, the time period districts will collect data, verification procedures districts should perform, supporting documentation districts should maintain, and any other clarification districts need.

Implementation in process—As previously reported, ADE has offered trainings and provided written guidance for all CTEDs and member districts to help ensure districts collect and report program data consistently. ADE's guidance indicates the population of students for which CTEDs and member districts are responsible for collecting and reporting enrollment, postgraduation placement, and industry certification data. Additionally, ADE's guidance defines the time periods that districts should collect and report data and includes supporting documentation districts should collect and maintain. For example, although districts are not required to upload supporting documentation for all industry certifications earned by students, they are required to collect and maintain supporting documentation for ADE's review during its on-site monitoring visits. Further, ADE developed an enrollment-discrepancy-reporting tool to ensure both CTEDs and member districts report consistent enrollment information. Because CTEDs only recently began to report performance indicators such as credential attainment and job placement data, which is not due to ADE until June 2023, we will review CTE program data reported to ADE during our 36-month followup.

¹ ADE's guidance provides 1 year for districts to collect placement and certification data because of the time it may take a student to be placed or earn a certification after completing their CTE program. Districts are required to submit fiscal year 2022 placement and certification data to ADE by June 30, 2023.

3. ADE should:

- a. Implement the requirement in A.R.S. §15-393.01 to include each CTED in its annual achievement profiles and letter grade classification system.

Implementation in process—A.R.S. §15-393.01 was revised during the 2021 regular legislative session to exclude CTEDs from being assigned a letter grade based on ADE's letter grade classification system, but the remaining requirements for the CTED annual achievement profile were not revised. Therefore, ADE officials began working to create CTED annual achievement profiles, and in October 2021, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved ADE's proposed CTED annual achievement profiles. ADE published fiscal years 2021 and 2022 CTED achievement profiles to the [AZ School Report Cards website](#) that included all 4 statutorily required performance metrics (graduation rate, completion rate for each CTE program, technical skills assessment results, and postgraduation placement rates). However, our review of fiscal year 2022 CTED annual achievement profiles and source data found that the profiles did not include data for all CTED students and programs as required. Specifically, program completion rates and postgraduation placement rates did not include central program students who were not enrolled at a member district's high school, such as home school and private school students. Further, we identified various programs that were excluded from their respective district's achievement profiles but included in the source data, such as the Cyber Criminology, Digital Animation, and Technology Device Maintenance programs. ADE reported that it is in the process of collecting program data for fiscal year 2023 and that it plans to include this data, disaggregated by central and satellite campuses, in the fiscal year 2023 CTED achievement profiles. Additionally, ADE officials stated that ADE plans to develop a review process for the fiscal year 2023 CTED achievement profiles to ensure the data reported matches the underlying source data and all data is uploaded and included appropriately.

Additionally, although SBE approved ADE's fiscal year 2021 CTED achievement profiles, it asked ADE to consider including additional information in the fiscal year 2022 CTED achievement profiles, including comparing CTEDs' performance metrics to a State-wide CTED average, providing information about students who did not respond to postgraduation placement surveys in the postgraduation placement rates, and indicating whether a student's job was related to their CTE program of study. However, ADE's fiscal year 2022 CTED achievement profiles did not include this information. ADE officials reported that they did not include this additional information in the fiscal year 2022 CTED achievement profiles because it is not statutorily required but reported that they would explore options to include this additional information in fiscal year 2023 achievement profiles. We will review ADE's progress in updating CTED annual achievement profiles to include all required program data and the additional data requested by SBE during our 36-month followup.

- b. Ensure its reporting processes allow all CTEDs and CTED member districts to report performance data, such as student job placement and industry certification data, for all their CTE students to ADE in a manner that identifies whether the student completed the program at a CTED central or CTED member district satellite campus.

Implementation in process—ADE has been working with CTEDs to ensure uniform data reporting by requiring enrollment, placement, and industry certification data to be reported for all students starting in fiscal year 2022, which should allow ADE to identify whether each student completed the program at a CTED central or CTED member district satellite campus. Further, ADE is requiring both CTEDs and member districts to report enrollment information and allowing both CTEDs and member districts to report postgraduation placement information for students who attend central CTE programs to help ensure both entities submit complete and accurate data. ADE has also developed discrepancy reporting tools to be used by CTEDs and member districts to help ensure complete and accurate data across both entities. Fiscal year 2022 data is required to be reported to ADE by June 2023, and we will review this data during our 36-month followup.

- c. Implement data-sharing agreements with the Department of Economic Security (DES) and other State agencies, as needed, to obtain CTE students' postgraduation employment and wage information.

Implementation in process—ADE and the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) have developed a Memorandum of Understanding to allow ADE to access CTE students' postgraduation employment and

wage information through OEO's Integrated Data System. However, ADE officials stated that additional approval from DES is required for it to receive and publish unemployment insurance wage data. ADE officials reported that they expected to receive DES approval and employment and wage data for CTE students between July and September 2023. We will review ADE's progress implementing this recommendation during our 36-month followup.

- d. Implement data-sharing agreements with industry certification providers, as needed, to obtain CTE students' certification testing results and attainment data directly from providers.

Implementation in process—As we reported in our previous followup, ADE reported that it has contacted over 30 industry certification providers but has not yet been able to implement any data-sharing agreements because providers have been unresponsive or unwilling to share certification data with ADE. Since then, ADE officials reported pursuing an alternative solution in which CTE students would sign a release form allowing for the release of certification results from third-party certification providers to students' home districts. ADE officials stated that they will begin researching and developing this alternative option for approval and implementation. We will review this recommendation during our 36-month followup to determine if any data-sharing agreements with industry certification providers or alternative solutions have been established.

- e. Partner with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), as needed, to obtain CTE students' postgraduation postsecondary enrollment and outcome data from a single credible source.

Implementation in process—ADE has established a 5-year partnership with NSC to obtain CTE students' postgraduation, postsecondary enrollment data. However, ADE officials stated that ADE does not receive this data until after the due date for CTEDs and member districts to report postgraduation placement data to ADE. For example, member districts were required to report fiscal year 2021 postgraduation placement data to ADE by June 30, 2022, and ADE officials indicated that as of April 2023, ADE had not yet received fiscal year 2021 NSC data. As a result, ADE officials stated that they plan to use NSC data to verify the accuracy of postgraduation, postsecondary enrollment data reported by CTEDs and member districts and will follow up with districts that have significant discrepancies between their reported data and the NSC data. We will review this recommendation during our 36-month followup to determine how ADE is using NSC data to ensure accurate postgraduation, postsecondary enrollment reporting.

- f. Ensure its data-sharing agreements allow it to share CTE students' data with their CTED or member district and work with CTEDs and member districts to supplement any missing information.

Implementation in process—As previously discussed, ADE is in the process of establishing a data-sharing agreement related to postgraduation employment and wage data for CTE students, but the data-sharing agreement has not been finalized. For postsecondary enrollment data, ADE officials stated that they have shared and plan to continue sharing this data with districts as a part of ADE's data verification process and did not believe there were any limitations to sharing this data with districts (see explanation for recommendation 3e). We will review this recommendation during our 36-month followup to determine if data is being shared appropriately with CTEDs and member districts and any missing information is supplemented.