



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

CTE Equivalency Frameworks

1. **Purpose:**

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

2. **Description of services provided:**

Funds can be used to modify previously developed statewide CTE course equivalency frameworks, develop new statewide equivalency frameworks, create related course performance assessments, and provide professional development for districts and specific educators implementing the new frameworks. OSPI convenes teams of educators, other subject matter experts, industry partners and related OSPI staff to create new and update previous frameworks, as well as create supplemental supports for the implementation of equivalency course options across the state. This year, seven statewide CTE course equivalencies were created in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Fine Arts, Health and Lab Science.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

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

Beneficiaries in the 2022-23 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	25
Number of Schools:	Undetermined
Number of Students:	Undetermined
Number of Educators:	Undetermined
Other:	Staff from Project Lead the Way also supported the development of a new CTE course equivalency



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4. Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?

☒ No

5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2023	\$55,000	\$5,003
2022	\$55,000	\$7,692
2021	\$55,000	\$10,868
2020	\$31,000	\$28,088
2019	\$55,000	\$37,967

6. Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:

Fiscal Year	Number of School Districts
2023	25
2022	35
2021	51
2020	32
2019	25

7. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):

In 2018, the legislature amended RCW 28A.700.070, to expand the areas of statewide equivalency courses from science and mathematics to any academic content area. Additionally, the legislature amended RCW 28A.230.097 in 2019, to require school districts to provide access to at least one statewide equivalency course from a list of approved courses and transcribe those courses as meeting academic credit and fulfilling a graduation requirement until September 1, 2021. They further added that, on or after September 1, 2021, any statewide equivalency course offered by the district or provided at a skill center must be offered for academic credit. Then, in 2023, the legislature passed [Substitute Senate Bill \(SSB\) 5617](#), requiring that "an interdistrict cooperative agreement between all participating school districts in a skill center... must stipulate that any approved state and local equivalency courses offered by the host school district must be honored as equivalency courses by all school districts participating in the skill center."

8. Program evaluation or evaluation of major findings:

Funds were used to convene teams to update previously approved frameworks in areas with newly updated industry standards, which required committed industry partners with



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specialized expertise. Teams were also convened to draft and review proposed frameworks for seven new course equivalencies:

- Three new 1.0 credit Fine Art equivalencies including Textiles and Design, Floral Design, and Computer Aided Drafting,
- One new 0.5 credit Health equivalency through Sports Med 1,
- Two new 1.0 credit lab science courses, including Sports Medicine 2 and Engineering Essentials, and
- One new 1.0 credit ELA equivalency through Business Communications.

Convening educators in-person to build the frameworks continues to be challenging as districts struggle to maintain staffing and budget capacity. Thus, the budget use was reduced again this year due to lack of travel and meeting expenses for teachers and OSPI staff. Instead, virtual means of gathering and communicating were predominantly used, which enables greater connection to staff and partners across the state who volunteer to do the work, but can extend the timeline as it can be a less efficient way of collaborating. This year, workgroup participants included academic specialists, CTE educators, and industry partners. Once the seven approved frameworks were posted in March, the focus switched to providing equivalency trainings and professional development at conferences, along with updating resources and drafting communications to reflect new laws and processes passed in the 2023 session.

Not all work done in support of this program requires use of these proviso funds, but the outcomes are worth noting in this evaluation of major findings. Efforts to support districts with the accuracy of equivalency data expanded this year to include providing new professional learning to district and building Registrars in partnership with OSPI's Student Information System staff. This training resulted in significant questions from districts that OSPI staff were able to answer, thus improving statewide data collection and reporting. Annual data analysis also evolved to include student demographic information to better understand which student groups have access to state and local equivalencies. This information will help identify gaps in access and enable OSPI to provide districts with enhanced support and resources to better engage students furthest from educational opportunity.

9. Major challenges faced by the program:

Work groups were impacted by:

- Convening educators in-person to build the frameworks continues to be challenging as districts struggle to maintain staffing and budget capacity. Thus, fewer funds were used again this year due to less travel and fewer in-person meeting expenses for teachers and



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OSPI staff. Instead, virtual means of gathering and communicating were predominantly used, which enables greater connection to staff and partners across the state who volunteer to do the work, but can be a less efficient way of collaborating.

- Educator's time/schedule constraints, particularly with recruiting in late spring when responsiveness to email is lessened or summer break impedes communication altogether.
- Attaining teacher/educational partners in specialized content areas.
- Conducting technical workgroups and sharing critical information and feedback via Zoom.
- A longer timeline is needed to complete the review and development of course equivalency frameworks due to best practices for Zoom meetings that include shorter, more frequent workgroup meetings to maximize participants' engagement.

10. Future opportunities:

As part of [OSPI's Strategic Goals](#) published in 2020, staff have prioritized increasing flexibility in meeting the 24-credit requirements for graduation, and CTE course equivalencies are one way to make progress toward that goal. Future opportunities include:

- developing new statewide frameworks that span our K-12 and higher education systems to provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit and/or Industry Recognized Credentials through courses articulated with a community or technical college,
- further promoting the use of the [CTE Course Equivalency Frameworks Application Form](#), which is needed to start the process to expand course equivalency development,
- expanding existing locally approved CTE courses into statewide equivalencies to increase student access to course options that meet specific graduation requirements and prepare them for their post-secondary goals,
- assisting skill centers with communicating to participating districts all the approved course equivalencies and supporting partner districts with updating their courses in their student information system to ensure accuracy with SSB 5617,
- revising existing frameworks with newly updated academic content learning standards as they become available,
- continuing to analyze data to better understand the student populations who do not have access to equivalencies and create best practices to minimize the gaps,
- developing and delivering resources related to best practices in supporting diversity, equity and inclusion, and
- using funds to support the development and delivery of professional development that expands school counselors' understanding of incorporating CTE course equivalencies into graduation pathways, prepares educators to deliver equivalency courses and improves data accuracy.



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11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

\$55,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and \$55,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction for statewide implementation of career and technical education course equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 for math and science. This may include development of additional equivalency course frameworks, course performance assessments, and professional development for districts implementing the new framework.

12. **Other relevant information:**

The following resources are posted on the OSPI [Statewide Course Equivalencies webpage](#):

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

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

[preliminaryfy23state-fundedprovisograntawardsupdated-42823.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

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