

***Quick Reference: Career Clusters Critical Components & Benchmarks  
for STATE/SYSTEM Implementation***

***On the STATE or SYSTEM level, in order to successfully implement the Career Clusters framework and meet the Career Cluster goals for learners, the following critical components need to be met:***

<b>Critical Components</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
State Plan/ Administrative Support	State CTE, field staff and industry/education partners develop and adopt a statewide vision, mission, goals, and strategies for Career Clusters implementation.  State CTE staff and statewide administrators are informed of the Career Clusters process and components.
Shared Planning	State CTE staff, statewide administrators, counselors and teachers/faculty <i>jointly</i> participate in professional development activities that help build their knowledge and skills in the Career Cluster area and strengthen teaching strategies.
Career Development	Statewide career education plan templates are available for each of the 16 Career Clusters. Each learner (statewide) in a Career Cluster has a scheduled meeting with a career counselor, teacher advisor or faculty advisor at least on two occasions each school year to develop or revise his/her career education plan (plan of study).
Professional Development	State CTE staff, statewide administrators, counselors and teachers/faculty <i>jointly</i> participate in professional development activities that help build their knowledge and skills in the Career Cluster area and strengthen teaching strategies.
Standards-Based Curriculum	Curriculum is designed to address both the Career Cluster Foundation/Pathway Knowledge and Skills, industry standards, and appropriate academic standards. Curriculum expands, enhances and reinforces academic content and, as a result, improves Cluster Knowledge and Skills as well as academic achievement.
Parent and Community Support	Parents/guardians/mentors and community groups are informed of the Career Clusters process and components.
Education Partnerships	Elementary school, middle school, high school, career technical school, and college/university faculty are included in the Career Clusters learning continuum. Statewide career technical school, community college, and university articulation agreements are negotiated and in place. When appropriate, shared faculty and labs are utilized.
Business and Industry Partnerships/ Economic Development Involvement/Workforce Preparation	A statewide business/industry partner advisory committee representing all 16 Career Clusters is in place to provide input into the system.  Statewide economic development and workforce preparation groups/agencies are informed of the Career Clusters process and components and are involved in the implementation of the system.

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Multi-Measure Assessments/ Industry-Based Credentials or Certifications	Statewide assessment includes both cumulative (projects, research papers, portfolios, workplace learning or community service) and on-demand (multiple choice, presentation, demonstration, scenario response) measures. Certifications and/or credentials are industry-based and transferable.
Interdisciplinary Teams	Elementary school, middle school, high school, career technical school, and college/university faculty are included in the Career Clusters learning continuum. Career technical school, community college, and university articulation agreements are negotiated and in place. When appropriate, shared faculty and labs are utilized.
Flexible Schedules	State level policies encourage flexible school schedules and promote interdisciplinary team managed blocks of time as needed for projects, labs, and other action-based activities.
Integrated Curriculum	Curriculum is designed to address both the Career Clusters Foundation/Pathway Knowledge and Skills and appropriate academic standards. Curriculum expands, enhances, and reinforces academic content and, as a result, improves Cluster Knowledge and Skills as well as academic achievement.
Creative and Innovative Teaching Strategies	State CTE staff, statewide administrators, counselors, and teachers/faculty <i>jointly</i> participate in professional development activities that build their knowledge and skills in the Career Cluster area and strengthen their teaching strategies.
Workplace Learning	Statewide economic development and workforce preparation groups/agencies are informed of the Career Clusters process and components and are involved in the implementation of the system.
Student-Centered Learning	State policies encourage the involvement of learners in the design and development of their own coursework based on their interests, their career goals, and consistency with the standard(s) to be met.