

# ARIZONA

## ★ State Highlight

**MyFutureAZ Trainings.** The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) supports a graduation and career planning tool called [MyFutureAZ](#). The tool allows students to take a career assessment, explore careers, and create a postsecondary plan. ADE provides frequent [training](#) for new and returning users, as well as some featuring best practices for using the tool.



### VISION



**Perkins Plan.** Within Arizona's [Perkins V State Plan](#), career exploration includes an investigation of the contemporary workplace and understanding the relationships among personal abilities, education, knowledge, and skills needed to pursue occupations and careers.

Arizona has yet to codify the definition of career exploration or to state career exploration as an official priority.



### POLICY



**Career Literacy Standards.** The Arizona Department of Education established [Career literacy standards](#) for grades K-8 to help students develop essential professional skills, gain workplace exposure, and explore passions and interests related to career fields. The career literacy standards are integrated into their CTE programs, which are available to middle-grade students.

**Perkins Funding.** Arizona requires the [inclusion of middle school career exploration](#) for districts to be eligible for Secondary Perkins funding.

Arizona has yet to establish career exploration requirements or formally include middle school career exploration in state or federal accountability systems.



### INFRASTRUCTURE






**MyFutureAZ.** [MyFutureAZ](#) is an online college and career planning resource funded by the Arizona Department of Education, available for students starting in 5th grade to begin career planning or career exploration. The resource is available for students at all levels and can be used at the postsecondary level or in a career center.





# ARIZONA • VISION

Category	Status	Description
<b>Leadership</b> Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Although ADE's website does spotlight middle schools that are doing exemplary work in career exploration, there are no public priorities within the state's leadership around middle school career exploration.
<b>Career Exploration Definition</b> Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Within AZ's <a href="#">Perkins V State Plan</a> , career exploration is described as including an investigation of the contemporary workplace and gaining an understanding of the relationships among personal abilities, education, knowledge, and skills needed to pursue occupations and careers.
<b>Advocacy</b> Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The <a href="#">Center for the Future of Arizona</a> is a nonpartisan organization working to "create a stronger and brighter future for the state." Their <a href="#">Pathways to Prosperity</a> program works to mobilize employers, leaders in K-12 and postsecondary education, and policymakers to design, implement, and scale seamless college and career pathways. Thus far, the organization has enrolled more than 1,400 middle and high school students in career-connected pathways.



# ARIZONA • POLICY

Category	Status	Description
<b>Standards</b> Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The ADE established <a href="#">Career Literacy Standards</a> for grades K-8 to help students develop essential professional skills, gain workplace exposure, and explore passions and interests related to career fields. The career literacy standards are integrated into their CTE programs and can result in students developing an Education and Career Action Plan.
<b>Accountability</b> Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The state does not integrate career exploration into its ESSA state plan. The state does require the <a href="#">inclusion</a> of middle school career exploration for districts to be eligible for Secondary Perkins V funding.
<b>Student Requirements</b> Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The state does not require middle school students to complete career exploration activities; however, high school students are <a href="#">required</a> to complete an Education and Career Action Plan prior to graduation. Some districts have implemented <a href="#">optional Pre-ECAPs</a> in middle school to assist students in transitioning into high school.
<b>Incentives</b> Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	AZ has no incentives for career exploration; however, the ADE does spotlight middle schools doing exemplary work in career exploration on the state website. Emphasizing districts exhibiting best practices could encourage other districts to do the same and provide guidance on quality implementation.



# ARIZONA • INFRASTRUCTURE

Category	Status	Description
<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?</p>		<p>Through AZ's <a href="#">Perkins V Plan</a> and <a href="#">ESSA State Plan</a>, districts are able to leverage funds to support activities that align with college and career counseling and to support the implementation of career literacy standards. ADOE funds an online college and career planning resource, <a href="#">MyFuture AZ</a> so that students beginning in 5th grade can start their Pre-ECAP portfolios and begin a self-exploration and career awareness process. The platform can be used at the postsecondary level or a career center.</p>
<p><b>Professional Development</b></p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p>		<p>The ADE provides <a href="#">resources and links</a> for career literacy teachers' professional development. The Department also <a href="#">trains</a> school district personnel to implement MyFutureAZ, a career development and job skills exploration platform.</p>
<p><b>Material Supports</b></p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p>		<p>The ADE provides links to <a href="#">resources</a> that support implementing the Career Literacy standards, including the American School Counselor Association's Career Conversations, the Council for Aid to Education's Middle School College and Career Readiness Assessment, and the ADE's ECAP for AZ Students.</p>
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p>		<p>Outside of <a href="#">course enrollment data</a>, including career literacy course data, the ADE does not systematically collect career exploration data or publicly display such data.</p>
<p><b>CTSOs</b></p> <p>Does the state support student participation in career and technical student organizations?</p>		<p>AZ has several middle school chapters of CTSOs; however, districts cannot use <a href="#">Perkins V funds</a> to cover student costs associated with participating. This can prevent all students from fully participating in valuable CTSO experiences, including competitions.</p>
<p><b>Organizations</b></p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p>		<p>AZ has several organizations that support district efforts to facilitate middle school career exploration with curriculum, hands-on experiences, and professional development training. Examples include the <a href="#">Flagstaff Career &amp; College Readiness Partnership</a>, <a href="#">Junior Achievement of Arizona</a>, <a href="#">Education Forward Arizona</a>, and <a href="#">Arizona Coalition for Career Readiness</a>.</p>