

CALIFORNIA



★ State Highlight

California Career Resource Network. The [California Resource Network Program](#) was established in statute to provide career development information and resources. The program distributes resources and training materials to middle and high school counselors, educators, and administrators so they can provide students with guidance and instruction on education and job requirements necessary for career development.



VISION



State Definition. The California Department of Education (CDE) [defines career planning](#) as the decision-making process by which you identify the alternatives open to you in your life's occupational, educational, and leisure areas.

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



POLICY



Educational Counseling. Under the [California Education Code](#), educational counseling should provide high-quality career programs at all grade levels for students. The code describes the required competencies students should meet through counseling.

CTE Course Standards. California Department of Education's Career and Technical Education course standards, [written](#) for grades 7-12, include standards for [career-ready practice](#) and are woven into all course standards by industry sector.

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



INFRASTRUCTURE






California CareerZone. The California Department of Education sponsors [The California CareerZone](#), an online career exploration and training system that supports college and career readiness and transition planning. It provides LEAs and educators, including those in middle school, with tools to assess students' interests and skills, financial literacy resources, and data on a large variety of occupations.

California has yet to include middle school career exploration into data collection processes, provide dynamic training opportunities to staff related to middle school career exploration, or provide resources that emphasize best practices.





CALIFORNIA • VISION

Category	Status	Description
Leadership Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The state's leadership has does not have any public statements about middle school career exploration as a priority for the state.
Career Exploration Definition Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	CA does not officially define 'career exploration'; however, the CDE <u>defines career planning</u> as the decision-making process by which you identify the alternatives open to you in your life's occupational, educational, and leisure areas.
Advocacy Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	<u>Linked Learning Alliance</u> is a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting all youth to college, career, and purpose and works with educators, employers, and communities to fulfill this mission. The organization also produces policy recommendations and research to guide evidence-based practices.



CALIFORNIA • POLICY

Category	Status	Description
Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Under the CA Education Code , educational counseling should provide high-quality career programs at all grade levels for students. The code describes the required competencies students should meet through counseling. CDE's Career and Technical Education course standards, written for grades 7-12, include standards for career-ready practice and are woven into all course standards by industry sector.
Accountability 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. However, middle school career exploration activities are formally included in CA's Perkins V Plan .
Student Requirements 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.
Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	CA does not have any incentives directly related to middle school career exploration.



CALIFORNIA • INFRASTRUCTURE

Category	Status	Description
Funding Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	CA supports CTE programming through Perkins V funds , including middle school programs. The state supports California CareerZone , an online career planning tool, and the CA Career Resource Network , a program required through statute to provide career development information to students and educators.
Professional Development Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The state does not support training or professional development opportunities for school counselors and other school staff in career exploration.
Material Supports Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The CA Career Resource Network provides various resources to educators to support the implementation of middle school career exploration, including Career and College Readiness Lesson Plans.
Data Collection Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?	 Building Emerging Advanced	There are no formal state-level data collection practices related to middle school career exploration.
CTSOs Does the state support student participation in career and technical student organizations?	 Building Emerging Advanced	CA has several CTSOs which offer middle school chapters, including DECA, FCCLA, FBLA, FFA, HOSA, and SkillsUSA.
Organizations Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Linked Learning Alliance is a non-profit organization that offers a Middle School Network that brings together middle school educators to expand and deepen college and career learning opportunities for students. The organization offers a certification to schools that meet their Linked Learning pathways standards.