

IDAHO

★ State Highlight

First Steps Grants. In response to the legislature's extension of career and technical education to 7th grade, the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education (IDCTE) launched First Steps and offered grants to school districts to implement the initiative, which includes a comprehensive career exploration program designed to help middle school students learn about different career options and pathways.



VISION



First Steps. The Idaho Division of Career Technical Education (IDCTE) launched First Steps: Understanding the World of Work through Career Technical Education to research best practices and develop a CTE-focused career development program. Beginning July 1, 2023, Idaho legislation required 7th or 8th-grade students enrolled in a public school district, specially designed charter district, or public charter school to complete one or more career exploration courses aligned to the First Steps Standards.

Idaho has yet to define career exploration or coordinate across state agencies on career exploration.



POLICY



Required Career Exploration Courses. Idaho State Code 33-1614 states that starting in fiscal year 2024, every student in grades 7 or 8 enrolled in an Idaho public school shall complete one or more career exploration courses. Students must also develop a career pathway plan to outline a course of study and learning activities, including career exploration courses or workforce discovery activities. The student's school shall provide a personalized career pathway plan progress report to the student's parent or guardian.

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



INFRASTRUCTURE






Idaho Advanced Opportunities Program. Through the Idaho Advanced Opportunities Program, the state provides \$4,125 per student for students enrolled in a public school who want to take advanced courses while in grades 7-12. These opportunities include overload courses, dual credits, postsecondary credit-bearing and career technical certificate exams, career technical education workforce training, and college entrance exams. The funds are allocated from the state's educational support program, ensuring students can access resources that enhance their academic and career readiness.

Idaho has yet to include middle school career exploration into data collection processes.





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Category	Status	Description
<p>Leadership</p> <p>Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>In 2018, the ID Legislature <u>expanded</u> career and technical education (CTE) to 7th and 8th grades. In response, the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education (IDCTE) launched an initiative, First Steps: Understanding the World of Work through Career and Technical Education, to research best practices and develop a CTE-focused, career development program. ID educators developed the First Steps Standards and curriculum resources. Beginning July 1, 2023, Idaho Code 33-1614 required 7th or 8th-grade students enrolled in an Idaho public school district, specially designed charter district, or public charter school to complete one or more career exploration courses aligned to the First Steps Standards. All staff teaching the course must complete the First Steps Standards Professional Development Course prior to teaching this course.</p>
<p>Career Exploration Definition</p> <p>Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>ID defines career-related concepts, such as work-based learning, but does not have a specific definition for middle school career exploration.</p>
<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?</p>	 <p>Building Emerging Advanced</p>	<p>ID does not have any organizations advocating for middle school career exploration that rose to recognition within the landscape.</p>



Category	Status	Description
Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?		<p><u>Idaho State Code 33-1614</u> states that starting in fiscal year 2024, every student in grade 7 or 8 enrolled in an ID public school district, a specially chartered district, or a public charter school shall complete one or more career exploration courses. All staff teaching a career exploration course must have participated in a career exploration professional development course approved by the state board of education. The state board of education will maintain resources that can be utilized or modified to implement this section. A career pathway plan shall be developed by students with the approval of parents or guardians, with advice and recommendations from school personnel, including career exploration courses or workforce discovery activities. The purpose of a parent-approved student career pathway plan is to outline a course of study and learning activities to help students become successful in life. Every student's career pathway plan shall be reviewed annually and can be revised at any time. The school shall provide a personalized career pathway plan progress report to the student's parent or guardian. The progress report may be sent via electronic communication.</p>
Accountability Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?		<p>The state does not integrate career exploration into its ESSA state plan. However, middle school career exploration activities are formally included in <u>ID's Perkins V Plan</u>.</p>
Student Requirements Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?		<p>In ID, 8th graders are <u>required</u> to complete learning plans for high school and beyond before transitioning to 9th grade. Starting in 2024, every student in grade 7 or 8 enrolled in an ID public school district, a specially chartered district, or a public charter school shall complete one (1) or more career exploration courses. Such courses should align with the "first step" standards set by the state board of education for career technical education. A student may opt out by submitting a form to the school showing that the student's parent or legal guardian has consented to the student not participating in the career exploration courses.</p>
Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?		<p>ID does not have any incentives directly related to middle school career exploration.</p>



Category	Status	Description
Funding Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?		ID's Advanced Opportunities Program provides \$4,125 per student in grades 7-12 for opportunities, including career exploration, to give students access to academic and career readiness resources. IDCTE offers several grants to districts to implement the First Steps initiative, a comprehensive career exploration program designed to help middle school students learn about different career options and pathways. Perkins V funds are allocated for career exploration and development coursework, activities, and services; Next Step Idaho, career fairs, graduation and career plans, guest speakers, and college CTE program visits. Educational Support Program funds may be used to provide professional development to career exploration course instructors.
Professional Development Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?		All staff teaching career exploration courses are required to complete the First Steps Standards Professional Development Course before teaching the course. Professional development funds can be accessed through the state's Educational Support Program .
Material Supports Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?		ID's career readiness efforts are coordinated through the Next Steps Idaho website , which the Idaho State Board of Education runs. Next Steps includes resources for instructors and students on 8th-grade career exploration via their 8th Grade Checklist.
Data Collection Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?		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?		The Technology Student Association (TSA) is a non-profit career and technical student organization (CTSO) dedicated to students enrolled in engineering and technology education programs. Idaho TSA (ITSA) is the state affiliate and currently has six middle school chapters and 27 high school chapters, with over 580 affiliated members.
Organizations Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?		No organizations in ID rose to recognition for the results of this landscape scan.