



NEW JERSEY

★ State Highlight

Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Grant. New Jersey established the Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Grant using Perkins V dollars to cultivate the development of innovative career awareness and exploration programs focused on engaging career-focused instruction and unique experiences for students in the middle grades.



VISION



State Definition. NJ administrative code defines career awareness, exploration, and preparation as instruction and programs that assist students in clarifying career goals, exploring career possibilities, developing employability skills, developing foundational knowledge necessary for success in the workplace, and making the transition from school to careers, including college, training, and employment.

NJ has yet to commit dollars or coordinate across agencies on career exploration.



POLICY



Career Education and Counseling Standards. NJ's administrative code establishes career education and counseling standards that require school boards to develop and implement a comprehensive and developmental system for delivering guidance and academic counseling for all students to facilitate career awareness, exploration, and preparation.

NJ has yet to establish career exploration requirements connected to high school and formally include middle school career exploration in state and federal accountability systems.



INFRASTRUCTURE



Online Career Exploration Resources. New Jersey financially supports New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator (NJCAN), an Internet-based career navigation system with a portal especially designed for middle school students. The Department of Education (NJDOE) provides Career Curriculum and Career Exploration resources on its website. The Department of Children and Families also maintains a Youth Resource Spot with career exploration resources.

NJ has yet to provide dynamic training opportunities to staff related to middle school career exploration and resources that emphasize best practices.



Full Report



NEW JERSEY • 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 does not have any publicly stated priorities.
Career Exploration Definition Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NJ <u>administrative code</u> defines career awareness, exploration, and preparation as instruction and programs that assist students in clarifying career goals, exploring career possibilities, developing employability skills, developing foundational knowledge necessary for success in the workplace, and making the transition from school to careers, including college, training, and employment.
Advocacy Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	The <u>New Jersey School Counselor Association</u> advocates for quality counseling programs in NJ. During the most recent session, the organization advocated for a <u>bill</u> to establish program requirements for school counselor certification, including training in the delivery of career planning services. The bill also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of school counselors to include career development for students and establishes a State School Counselor Liaison in the Department of Education (DOE).



NEW JERSEY • POLICY

Category	Status	Description
Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NJ's administrative code establishes <u>career education and counseling standards</u> that require school boards to develop and implement a comprehensive and developmental system for delivering guidance and academic counseling for all students to facilitate career awareness, exploration, and preparation.
Accountability Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NJ does not integrate career exploration into its <u>ESSA state plan</u> . However, NJ does leverage its <u>Perkins V Plan</u> to expand middle school career exploration programming as an innovation funding priority.
Student Requirements Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?	 Building Emerging Advanced	While NJ has standards for career education and counseling, there are no associated requirements for middle school students.
Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NJ uses Perkins V dollars to establish the <u>Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Grant</u> to cultivate the development of innovative career awareness and exploration programs focused on engaging career-focused instruction and unique experiences for students in the middle grades.



NEW JERSEY • INFRASTRUCTURE

Category	Status	Description
<p>Funding</p> <p>Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?</p>		<p>NJ financially supports New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator (NJCAN), an Internet-based career navigation system. The online system has a portal, specially designed for middle school students called NJCAN Junior. Additionally, NJ uses Perkins V dollars to fund a grant program designed to develop middle-grade career awareness and exploration programs.</p>
<p>Professional Development</p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p>		<p>NJ offers instructional certificates to authorize teachers to teach CTE programs of study but does not offer professional development specifically for middle school career exploration.</p>
<p>Material Supports</p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p>		<p>NJDOE provides a Career Curriculum and Career Exploration resources on its website. NJ's Department of Children and Families also maintains a Youth Resource Spot with career exploration resources.</p>
<p>Data Collection</p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p>		<p>While NJ collects data on CTE participation and work-based learning experiences, including career exploration, for high school students, the state does not have formal data-collection related to middle school career exploration.</p>
<p>CTSOs</p> <p>Does the state support participation in career and technical student organizations?</p>		<p>NJDOE supports CTSOs, including four that have middle school chapters: FBLA, FCCLA, HOSA, and TSA. The state details policies and procedures to provide programmatic and fiscal procedures for CTSO activities.</p>
<p>Organizations</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p>		<p>Junior Achievement of NJ offers career exploration programming for middle school students.</p>