

NORTH CAROLINA

 **State Highlight**

Focused Professional Development. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) hosts a variety of professional development opportunities for educators responsible for facilitating career development. These trainings are offered regularly through monthly virtual collaborations and lunch-and-learns, annual conferences, regional professional development, and webinars.



VISION



Senate Bill 193. NC's General Assembly is considering a bill requiring students to develop Career Development Plans.

Students@Work Month. Governor Cooper established an NC Job Ready workforce initiative and declared March Students@WorkSM Month. Throughout the month, businesses across the state will help 25,500 students learn first-hand about jobs and industries in their local communities and throughout North Carolina.

NC has yet to codify its definition of career exploration and commit dollars to career exploration.



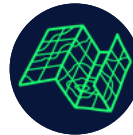
POLICY



Career Development Curriculum. NC's middle school and high school career development curriculum includes competencies in self-assessment, matching interests to career choices, career research, education and career awareness, career exploration, evaluation of career information, and creating a career plan. Additionally, middle and high school students must complete a Career Development Plan in 7th grade.

Perkins V State Plan. Middle school career exploration activities are formally included in North Carolina's Perkins V Plan as a component of Career Development Education.

CTE Grade Expansion Program. North Carolina established the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program to expand CTE programs to 6th and 7th-grade students.



INFRASTRUCTURE



NC Career Exploration Tool and Guide. The NC Community College System, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Commerce, and governor's office partnered to create NCcareers.org and an accompanying North Carolina Career Exploration Guide. The NC Career Exploration Guide is designed to help students, families, and educators plan their career. This guide complements the state's online tool, NCcareers.org, the state's central online resource for students, parents, educators, job seekers, and career counselors looking for high-quality job and career information.



Full Report



NORTH CAROLINA • 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 <u>Experience More Initiative</u> “focuses on scaling high-quality, work-based learning opportunities that connect young adults with careers in STEM-based industries.” This work aligns closely with Governor Cooper’s broader NC Job Ready workforce initiative and other efforts across the K-12 system and workforce solutions. Additionally, Governor Cooper has declared March as <u>Students@WorkSM Month</u> in NC. Throughout the month, businesses across the state will help 25,500 students learn first-hand about jobs and industries in their local communities and throughout NC. Most recently, <u>Senate Bill 193</u> is moving through the General Assembly to establish a requirement for students to develop a Career Development Plan to identify students' personal interests, aptitudes, and career interests to inform their career and academic planning.
Career Exploration Definition Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NC’s <u>CTE essential standards</u> specify that career exploration allows students to develop an in-depth understanding of the working world with an understanding of the importance of career discovery. Coursework and project-based learning support the discovery of various careers in numerous occupations and the educational foundation and prerequisite needed to succeed in a specific career pathway.
Advocacy Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?	 Building Emerging Advanced	<u>BEST NC</u> is a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of business leaders committed to improving NC’s education system through policy and advocacy. One of their priorities is for every student to graduate with relevant, globally competitive career and life skills.



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Category	Status	Description
Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NC's career development curriculum is part of the CTE Essential Standards and is designed to introduce students to the opportunity to understand and make connections between their interests, attitudes, values, personality, learning styles, skills, and career choices. Middle school and high school career development curricula include competencies in self-assessment, matching interests to career choices, exploring the world of work, career research, education and career awareness, career exploration evaluation of career information, and creating a career plan. Under Senate Bill 193, districts would be required to assist students with developing a career development plan and provide instruction on accessing the plan throughout the student's enrollment.
Accountability Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NC does not integrate career exploration into its ESSA state plan. However, middle school career exploration activities are formally included in NC's Perkins V Plan as a component of Career Development Education.
Student Requirements Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities?	 Building Emerging Advanced	Beginning in 2024-25, middle school students will be required to complete a career development plan in 7th grade; the plan must also be revised in 10th grade. The plan must include a self-assessment of the student's aptitudes, skills, values, personality, and career interests, exploration and identification of pathways for careers aligned with the student's self-assessment, alignment of academic courses and extracurricular activities with the student's identified career interests, and creation of a career portfolio.
Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools?	 Building Emerging Advanced	NC established the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program to expand CTE programs to 6th and 7th grade students.



NORTH CAROLINA • 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>NC uses Perkins V dollars to support middle school and high school career development curriculum, which includes competencies in self-assessment, matching interests to career choices, exploring the world of work, career research, education and career awareness, and career exploration, as well as evaluation of career information and creation of a career plan. These dollars also support CTSO participation.</p>
<p>Professional Development</p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p>		<p>NC DPI provides professional development and licensure training to K-12 CTE Career Development Coordinators (CDCs) on facilitating career development. NC DPI also offers a New CDC Induction, monthly collaboration sessions, lunch-and-learns, and annual conferences on career development. The DPI School Counseling Association provides training for school counselors, yearly conferences, and regional PD. CTE teachers, school counselors, and CDCs regularly participate in focused webinars to increase networking and learn about current trends and initiatives.</p>
<p>Material Supports</p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p>		<p>The NC Career Exploration Guide is designed to help students, families, and educators in student career planning. This guide complements NCcareers.org, the state's central online resource for students, parents, educators, job seekers, and career counselors looking for high-quality job and career information.</p>
<p>Data Collection</p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p>		<p>NC collects data on the number of students enrolled in career exploratory courses.</p>
<p>CTSOs</p> <p>Does the state support participation in career and technical student organizations?</p>		<p>NC supports CTSO participation, including five that have middle school chapters: FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, HOSA, and TSA. The state also outlines criteria to be recognized as a CTSO in NC.</p>
<p>Organizations</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p>		<p>Wake Forest University hosts a Summer Exploration Program, a hands-on STEM learning experience for middle school students. Additionally, the North Carolina Association for Career and Technical Education promotes CTE-quality programming in the state. The North Carolina Business Committee for Education provides work-based learning opportunities for students across the state.</p>