

WEST VIRGINIA

 **State Highlight**

Title 1 Dollars. West Virginia districts can access Title I dollars to support their implementation of the Personalized Education Plan (PEP) requirement, facilitating successful transitions from middle school to high school.



VISION



State Definition. West Virginia's State Board of Education rules define career exploration as the opportunity within the education program for students to conduct self-assessment, access career information, examine multiple career options, and initiate education planning based on a tentative career focus.

Office of Middle School CTE. The Office of Middle School CTE was created in response to legislation in 2020 that required Career and Technical Education courses to be taught in the middle schools.

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



POLICY



Personalized Career Portfolio. West Virginia requires students to take career exploration and career development courses in grades 6-8 and to document a personalized career portfolio transferable from middle school to high school.



INFRASTRUCTURE






Funding. West Virginia strategically leverages both state and federal funding to bolster career exploration for middle school students. Perkins V recipients in the state are mandated to allocate funds specifically for career exploration and development activities. Additionally, Title I dollars are utilized to support districts implementing the Personalized Education Plan requirement to facilitate successful transitions from middle to high school.

Training. West Virginia has offered both in-person and virtual options for teachers to be trained in the Discover Your Future curriculum and supports, which would allow them to hold the 7629 Career and Technical Education for Middle School advanced credential.





WEST VIRGINIA • VISION

| Category | Status | Description |
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| <p>Leadership</p> <p>Does the state leadership include career exploration as a valued or prioritized component of students' middle school experience?</p> |  | <p>Governor Justice proclaimed National Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, recognizing WV CTE programs and acknowledging that participating students experience meaningful academic and professional engagement that improves the quality of their education and increases their achievement levels. Former State Superintendent of Schools David L. Roach also stated that the department encourages CTE programs starting in middle school so younger learners gain rich and engaging instruction. State lawmakers supported expanding these programs to middle schools in a recent legislative session. This belief has been reaffirmed through State Superintendent of Schools Michelle Blatt. In 2020, House Bill 4790 was passed, which required CTE courses to be taught in middle schools. Clinton Burch, Technical Education Officer for the WVDE, has emphasized the growth and support of middle school CTE programming in response to this bill. The Office of Middle School CTE was also created in response to this work, appointing several full-time employees.</p> |
| <p>Career Exploration Definition</p> <p>Does the state formally define career exploration for middle school students?</p> |  | <p>WV's State Board of Education <u>rules</u> define career exploration as the opportunity within the education program for students to conduct self-assessment, access career information, examine multiple career options, and initiate education planning based on a tentative career focus.</p> |
| <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that are advocating for middle school career exploration?</p> |  | <p>The <u>West Virginia Manufacturers Association Education Foundation (WVMAEF)</u> focuses on career exploration in the field of manufacturing. They emphasize fostering robust partnerships between manufacturers and educators, aiming to raise awareness starting from the middle grades. STEAM TAC Middle School Immersion is focused on middle school career explorations with a concentration in STEAM-related fields and initiatives. The <u>West Virginia Public Education Collaborative (WVPECs)</u> connects with middle schools through their Speaker Series, facilitating interactions with industry leaders across the state. Additionally, <u>Mountain State</u> advocates for career exploration in the middle grades.</p> |



WEST VIRGINIA • POLICY

| Category | Status | Description |
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| Standards Does the state have policies that establish standard practices for career exploration in middle schools? | | WV's College and Career Readiness Dispositions and Standards for Student Success for Middle-Level Programming contain standards for career exploration and planning that will familiarize students with various careers so they understand what they entail and what types of learning will prepare them for those careers. In addition, WV's CTE Middle School Programming Course Standards require that students learn to make career-informed decisions and manage personal career plans, explore the scope of career opportunities and the requirements for education and training, and work with counselors to complete personal education plans incorporating career interests, pathways, and postsecondary possibilities. The state also mandates school counselors to develop a Comprehensive School Counseling Program , which requires counselors to detail their schools' Personalized Education Plan Process. |
| Accountability Does the state integrate career exploration into their accountability systems? | | WV does not integrate career exploration into its ESSA state plan. However, WV's Perkins V Plan does require Perkins V dollars to be used for middle school career awareness and hands-on exploration. |
| Student Requirements Does the state have policies that require middle school students to complete career exploration activities? | | WV regulations require students to document a personalized career portfolio that is transportable throughout the student's middle and high school career. Students must also take a career exploration course as part of the state's middle school programming requirements. |
| Incentives Does the state have policies that incentivize career exploration in middle schools? | | CTE participants are recognized in the middle grades, contributing to the county's allocation of Perkins V dollars. WVDE rewards students through state dollars based on participation in state-approved programs connected to policy 2520.13 . There are also competitive grants available to middle schools in partnership with Tourism and STEAM-based initiatives. |



WEST VIRGINIA • INFRASTRUCTURE

| Category | Status | Description |
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| <p>Funding</p> <p>Does the state use state or federal funding sources to support career exploration for middle school students?</p> | | <p>WV strategically leverages state and federal funding to bolster career exploration for middle school students. Perkins V recipients are mandated to allocate funds for career exploration and development activities. Title I dollars support districts in implementing the PEP requirement, facilitating a successful transition from middle to high school. Counties also can utilize Perkins V and state allocations to support further and expand CTE opportunities for students in grades 5-8.</p> |
| <p>Professional Development</p> <p>Does the state support the training of school counselors (and other school staff) in career exploration?</p> | | <p>The state offers in-person and virtual options for teachers to be trained in the Discover Your Future curriculum and receive the support necessary to hold the 7629 CTE For Middle School advanced credential. The WVDE also previously held a joint event for counselors interested in CTE exploration and attended the counselor's annual conference to discuss career exploration tracks available to students across the state. The WVDE works closely with the WV Higher Education Policy Commission to provide career exploration training to school counselors.</p> |
| <p>Material Supports</p> <p>Does the state provide material supports on the implementation of middle school career exploration?</p> | | <p>WVDE's website has resources to support counties in developing their comprehensive middle school career exploration experience. The West Virginia School Counseling Model provides a framework of components that all school counseling programs should exhibit. WVDE also partners with Classroom 2 Career Portal, a state-wide system to track and manage students' work-based learning activities, such as clinicals, internships, and apprenticeships. WV offers online and on-site technical assistance utilizing instructional coaches.</p> |
| <p>Data Collection</p> <p>Does the state collect data on middle school career exploration opportunities in the state?</p> | | <p>WV utilizes their data collection system to identify middle school career exploration participants and determine their positive placement within high school CTE programs.</p> |
| <p>CTSOs</p> <p>Does the state support participation in career and technical student organizations?</p> | | <p>WV supports CTSOs, five of which have middle school chapters: FBLA, FFA, HOSA, PLTW, and TSA. The state is also part of the development/pilot with National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) to focus on the middle grades.</p> |
| <p>Organizations</p> <p>Are there organizations within the state that support career exploration in middle schools?</p> | | <p>Pathways to the Future offers a Middle School Career Clusters Exploration Guide, which can be viewed or downloaded from their website. This program focuses on work-based learning and is supported by partners such as the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services, WVDE, and Workforce West Virginia. College for West Virginia has career planning tools on its online platform.</p> |