

Next Level Programs of Study Planning Guide

The **Governor's Workforce Cabinet's Office of Career and Technical Education** is fully launching new career and technical education courses for the 2022-2023 school year. This initiative, called **Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS)**, will improve the consistency, quality, and intentionality of CTE instruction across Indiana.

The **Next Level Programs of Study Planning Guide** is designed to help schools and career centers take full advantage of the benefits available with the newly redesigned CTE structure. Included in the planning guide are the following sections:

- **Page 1** - Comparison chart of current CTE system vs. NLPS on several key factors
- **Page 2** – Overview of the course structure utilized for NLPS and its benefits
- **Page 3-5** – Rubric to assist schools/career centers with determining what pathways to offer
- **Page 6** – Scheduling options for NLPS
- **Pages 7/8** – Additional scheduling options and considerations

Questions regarding NLPS can be directed to CTE@gov.IN.gov or may be answered in the [NLPS FAQ Document](#).

Comparing Previously Existing CTE Courses to Next Level Program of Study Courses

Previously Existing CTE Courses	Characteristic	NLPS Courses
The course structure varies widely. Most of the advanced courses can be offered from 1-3 credits per semester for 2 semesters. Other courses are 2 credit, 2 semester courses.	Course Structure	The Principles, Concentrator A and Concentrator B courses are all 2 credit, 2 semester courses. Capstone courses are available for 1-3 credits per semester for 2 semesters.
CTE Concentrators receive between 300-900 hours of instruction depending on the location of the program. This variability makes it difficult to identify which competencies have been mastered.	CTE Concentrator Consistency	All CTE concentrators will receive approximately 450 hours of instruction after completing the Principles, Concentrator A, and Concentrator B courses. This ensures that all concentrators master the same core competencies.
Course competencies were developed by secondary entities without consideration for postsecondary dual credit opportunities. This approach has led to students earning a significant number of dual credits that do not apply to certificate and degree requirements.	Dual Credit Intentionality	NLPS course competencies have been directly aligned to postsecondary courses required for certificates and degrees whenever possible. This ensures dual credits earned through a NLPS count towards certificate and degree requirements, saving students both time and money.
Courses primarily prepared students for low or semi-skill occupations. Opportunities to earn dual credits were often limited and lacked a focus on credential attainment while in high school.	Program Quality	NLPS help students to prepare for mid-skill occupations and provide greater benefits to students through increased opportunities to earn dual credits, obtain postsecondary credentials while in high school, and participate in work-based learning experiences.

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NLPS Course Structure Details

The NLPS course structure serves as the key framework for schools and career centers to deliver the benefits available through the CTE redesign. The course structure was designed in collaboration with a working group of high school principals and CTE directors that offer CTE programs through a variety of scheduling options.

A simplified explanation of the course structure is that the 6 credits of content included in the current Level I course have been divided out into three 2-credit courses: Principles, Concentrator A, and Concentrator B. This structure was modeled after other popular CTE programs, such as Engineering and Biomedical Sciences. These programs begin with a foundational course and gradually increase depth of content and occupational specificity.

Current Course Structure



Next Level Program of Study



This design provides the flexibility needed to offer the programs of study at a comprehensive high school or a career center by allowing schools to offer up to six credits in a pathway per school year. **This is made possible by allowing any required pre-requisites to be implemented as co-requisites.**

Other benefits of the new NLPS course structure include the following:

- Ability to earn CTE Concentrator Status in one year if participating in a multi-period training program that allows the student to complete the Principles, Concentrator A, and Concentrator B courses.
- All NLPS follow the same 4-course structure. This creates greater consistency and expectations across all CTE pathways.
- NLPS more clearly define the courses and credit needed for the Technical Honors Diploma.
- Most advance courses (Concentrator A and Concentrator B courses) are each aligned to 6 college credit hours. *Increasing the number of dual credit opportunities is a point of emphasis in NLPS, but students do not have to earn dual credits to be a CTE Concentrator.*
- The Capstone course includes time for embedded work-based learning experiences.

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This section of the planning guide (Pages 3-5) is a rubric that outlines the various components of a high-quality CTE program and will help determine current areas of strength and areas that may require additional attention or support. The section is divided into two parts:

- **Essential Components** - A school or career center should be in the yellow or green categories for each of these components to proceed with offering the program of study.
- **Quality Components** - A school or career center should focus on these components to help continually improve student outcomes in a program of study.

The rubric is intended for use when preparing to convert a current program of study to a NLPS or to help determine if it is appropriate to offer a new program of study.

Part I – NLPS Essential Components			
Size, Scope and Quality Elements	Red	Yellow	Green
Self-Assessment: How well is the current pathway meeting the needs of the student?	Low enrollments, poor student performance, few credentials earned, and poor post-program placement	Adequate enrollments, average student performance, some credentials earned, and average post-program placement	High enrollments, above average student performance, several credentials earned, and high post-program placement
Labor Market Alignment: How do course enrollments align with regional demand for pathway-specific occupations?	Low demand and low enrollment; or low demand and high enrollment	High demand and low enrollment; or low demand and low enrollment (<i>but with emerging demand</i>)	High demand and high enrollment
Sequencing: How much of the program of study can the school offer?	Cannot offer the entire CTE Concentrator Sequence & no alternatives for completing	Can only offer the CTE Concentrator Sequence	Can offer credential completion and/or at least 2 credits of capstone
Qualified Instructor: Is the instructor licensed and able to be credentialed for dual credit?	No instructor or an available instructor does not meet assignment codes	Instructor meets assignment code/credentialed for some dual credit courses	Instructor is fully credentialed to offer dual credit
Facilities and Equipment: Are the facilities and equipment that are available to the school sufficient to meet the course competencies?	Not able to meet hands-on instruction requirements for each student	Able to sufficiently meet hands-on instruction requirements for each student	Able to provide high levels of hands-on practice for each student and meets dual credit requirements and/or industry standards

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Going forward, all CTE programs will be monitored based upon their performance on the Measures of Program Quality. This will allow the Office of CTE to identify areas of growth and provide targeted support to help advance learning outcomes for students.

The following NLPS Quality Components relate directly to the **Perkins V Measures of Program Quality**:

- **Dual Credits** - The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained at least 9 postsecondary credits in the relevant program of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment or another credit transfer agreement.
- **Credentials Earned** - The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.
- **Work-Based Learning** - The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in at least 75 hours of a work-based learning experience.

Part II – NLPS Quality Components (Measures of Program Quality)			
Size, Scope and Quality Elements	Red	Yellow	Green
College Credit: What is the potential for the school to offer college credit for the coursework?	Not feasible to offer dual credit	Dual credit can only be offered through dual enrollment	Dual credit can be offered through the concentrator courses
Student Outcomes: What will students be able to earn through the course in terms of dual credits and credentials?	Students have limited dual credit opportunities and cannot earn Graduation Pathways eligible industry certifications	Students can earn at least 9 college credits in a pathway or a Graduation Pathways eligible industry certification	Students can earn a postsecondary certificate; or at least 9 dual credits and a Graduation Pathways eligible industry certification
WBL Opportunities: What level of WBL experiences are available to students and how many?	Can only offer awareness or exploration WBL experiences or can only provide a few students with preparation or training WBL experiences	Can offer 75 hours of preparation or training WBL experiences for a majority of students	Can offer 75 hours of preparation or training WBL experiences for most, if not all, students

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These additional components will help enhance a student's experience with NLPS courses to be better prepared for additional postsecondary education and training and/or quality employment.

Part II – NLPS Quality Components (Additional Criteria)			
Size, Scope and Quality Elements	Red	Yellow	Green
<u>Employer Engagement:</u> Who will serve on an advisory board?	Very difficult to find employers, higher ed institutions and community groups to serve on your advisory board	Limited to moderate involvement from local employers, higher ed institutions and community groups on your advisory board	A diverse group of local employers, higher ed institutions and community groups actively participate on your advisory board
<u>Equity and Access:</u> Are special population students equitably represented in enrollment and performance?	Admission policies create discrepancies in enrollment and a lack of support leads to poor performance	No major gaps in enrollments and performance	Equitable representation in all CTE programs and all student outcomes are earned at a comparable rate
<u>Career Development:</u> What level of career guidance can the school provide?	School staff have minimal knowledge of what the program of study offers	School staff have some knowledge of what the program of study offers, students are advised solely on interests or for exploration	School staff and faculty have a strong understanding of what the program of study provides, and students are aware of the college and employment opportunities
<u>Sustainability/Continuous Improvement:</u> Will the program of study be adequately funded and are strategies for continual improvement in place?	Additional CTE tuition support goes to the general fund and is used to fund other priorities. Little to no monitoring of student outcomes	School utilizes CTE tuition support to ensure that the program has adequate supplies and continually monitors student outcomes with a focus toward improvement	School utilizes multiple funding streams to ensure not only adequate supplies but also current equipment that meets industry standards and an established process for ongoing improvement

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NLPS Scheduling Flexibility

The design of NLPS provides schools with a great deal of flexibility to offer the programs of study in different ways:

- Students may complete up to 6 credits within a single program of study each school year.
- Schools have the flexibility to offer one (2 credits), two (4 credits), or three (6 credits) courses per year depending on what their master schedule allows.

Exploratory Courses	■
Concentrator Courses	■
Capstone Course	■

Below are some examples of typical configurations that schools will use to offer NLPS:

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
1 Course Per Year	Principles	Concentrator A	Concentrator B	Capstone (2 cr.)
Best for: Agriculture Business Engineering Biomedical IT	<p><u>Advantage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commands less time out of a student's schedule each year <p><u>Disadvantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching capstone may be difficult if pathway isn't started freshman year • Freshmen may not be ready or eligible for dual credits • Students are not likely to complete the Technical Certificate (TC)/Certificate of Graduation (CG) • Students have less time to fit in exploratory courses and may not have identified a pathway by 9th grade (if Principles is started freshman year) 			
2 Courses Per Year	PCC or Intro Courses	PCC / Intro or Start NLPS early	Principles Concentrator A	Concentrator B Capstone (2 cr.)
Best for: Any pathway	<p><u>Advantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows the opportunity to take PCC and/or Intro courses • Provides an extended block of time for lab and hands-on activities • Takes advantage of the flexibility in a student's junior and senior year schedule <p><u>Disadvantage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not allow for completion of the TC/CG 			
3 Courses Per Year	PCC or Intro	PCC or Intro	Principles Concentrator A & B	Capstone (6 cr.)
Best for: Trade type programs with more hands-on learning	<p><u>Advantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to earn Concentrator Status in one year • Able to complete the entire NLPS, including all the technical courses required for the TC/CG <p><u>Disadvantage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollments may be limited due to teacher schedule • Commands a large portion of a student schedule 			
Combination*	PCC or Intro	Principles	Concentrator A & B	Capstone (6 cr.)
Best for: Any pathway	<p><u>Advantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fits into a single teacher's schedule if only one section of each course • Provides exploration & still able to complete the entire program of study <p><u>Disadvantage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May limit number of sections that can be offered by a single teacher 			
*Other combinations may be used as long as a student does not exceed 6 credits in the NLPS per year.				

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Additional Options within NLPS

The Technical Skill Development (TSD) course allows students to have additional practice time or to complete a WBL experience while co-enrolled in a Concentrator A or Concentrator B course. TSD is funded at \$300, and the credits would count as part of a student's 6-credit yearly maximum within a program of study, but they do not count toward Concentrator Status. The course must be used with a multi-period block that includes a Concentrator A or B course. See examples below:

1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	Notes
Principles	Concentrator A TSD	Concentrator B Capstone (2 Cr.)	<i>This example applies when offering 2 credits per semester.</i>
Principles Concentrator A TSD	Concentrator B Capstone (4 Cr.)		<i>Offering 3 credits per semester.</i>
Principles	Concentrator A Concentrator B TSD	Capstone (6 Cr.)	<i>The TSD course can be used at a career center in place of the Principles course when taken at the home school.</i>

**The Technical Skills Development course can only be utilized once per NLPS pathway.*

Many Programs of Study may also be customized by choosing from one of multiple course options available within a given pathway. See examples below:

Pathway	Options for Conc A	Options for Conc B	Options for Capstone
Agriscience	Animal Science Plant and Soil Science		
Digital Design		Graphic Design Interactive Media Professional Photography	
IT Operations			Cyber, Cloud, or IT Support Capstone

**Schools may choose to offer the WBL Capstone or the Entrepreneurship and New Ventures Capstone courses in place of the NLPS Capstone Course.*

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NLPS Planning for Alternative Schedules

Trimesters:

	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
2 credits	Principles	Principles	
4 credits	Principles	Principles Concentrator A	Concentrator A
6 credits	Principles Principles	Concentrator A Concentrator A	Concentrator B Concentrator B

Block 4:

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
2 credits	Principles	Principles		
4 credits	Principles	Principles	Concentrator A	Concentrator A
6 credits	Principles Principles	Concentrator A Concentrator B	Concentrator A Concentrator B	

**Depending on the program of study and prerequisites Concentrator A and Concentrator B may be taken in either order.*

**Schools may propose additional modifications to the course sequence through the program of study adoption process. For example, teaching part of the capstone course in place of the Concentrator B course. If approved, the modifications would still be eligible for funding and count towards concentrator status. Approval will be based on the ability of the student to still earn college credit or complete credentials.*

Questions pertaining to NLPS implementation can be directed to cte@gov.in.gov and an Office of CTE staff member will be available to address your inquiry. NLPS implementation Webinars and additional resources will also be available in the coming weeks. Information will be shared through the Office of CTE [bi-weekly update](#).

Additional Resources:

Find additional resources to support NLPS implementation @ in.gov/gwc/cte and clicking on the “Career Pathways and Programs of Study” page. Resources include the following:

- [2022-2023 Course Titles & Descriptions](#)
- [Next Level Programs of Study Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Indiana CTE Career Guide](#)
- [NLPS Master Pathways List](#)

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