



## **CTE “Back on Track”: Guidelines for Re-opening Facilities and Returning to In-person Instruction**

The following document contains specific guidance for schools and career centers regarding their CTE programs. As noted in the [IN-CLASS](#) guidance document shared by the Indiana Department of Education, guidance for CTE programs is being provided by the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and the Office of CTE. It is essential for the school community to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program. We encourage all school officials to review this guidance to ensure districts are implementing safe and effective CTE programs.

An earlier version of the document was released on June 9<sup>th</sup> to support sites that ran a summer bridge program during the month of July. **The document has been updated for the fall semester.** All content has been reviewed and updated where necessary to ensure that the guidance is both feasible and appropriate for the re-opening of schools for the fall semester of the 2020-2021 school year. **Additional updates to the guidance document will be provided as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve.**

To consider a wide range of perspectives, the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet formed a CTE “Back on Track” working group to help develop this guidance for reopening facilities and returning to in-person instruction. In addition to GWC and Indiana Office of CTE staff, the working group included the following individuals representing schools, career centers, and other state agencies:

**Steve Baker**, Principal  
Bluffton High School

**Dr. Patrick Biggerstaff**, Director of CTE, Vice President  
Area 31 Career Center, ACTE Administrative Div.

**Dr. Andrew Findlay**, Dean CTE Early College  
Vincennes University

**Jody French**, Principal  
Perry Central High School

**Greg Gastineau**, Board Member  
State Board of Education

**Dr. Gene Hack**, CTE Director, Past President  
C4 Columbus Area Career Connection, IACTED

**Tari Lambert**, Director of Transfer IN  
Commission for Higher Education

**Tim McRoberts**, Associate Executive Director,  
Indiana Association of School Principals

**Brian Murphy**, Executive Director  
State Board of Education

**Dr. Rebecca Rahschulte**, Vice President K-14  
Initiatives, Ivy Tech Community College

**Dr. Ken Sauer**, Sr. Associate Commissioner  
Commission for Higher Education

**Alan Taylor**, CTE Director, Cabinet Member  
Prosser Career Education Center, GWC

**Dan Ulrich**, Executive Director,  
Indiana Association of CTE Districts

**Matt Walsh**, Academics Specialist  
Indiana Department of Education

**Dr. Lindsey Weaver, M.D.**, Chief Medical Officer  
Indiana State Department of Health

More than 200,000 secondary students were enrolled in CTE programs of study across the state of Indiana during the 2019-2020 school year. Each program of study provides the opportunity for students to earn postsecondary and/or industry credentials and participate in work-based learning experiences. COVID-19 school closures during the 2019-2020 school year impacted the ability of CTE students to complete work-based learning and core content hours needed to earn required credentials in career fields.



Indiana Office of  
**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

Summer Bridge programs have been operating since July 6<sup>th</sup> at 22 different sites to provide students from over 20 different CTE programs an opportunity complete requirements that they were unable to complete during the spring. By all accounts, the turnout and participation in Summer Bridge programs has been greater than we could have hoped. Several sites have reported that students and instructors are excited to be back in the classroom and that students are making great progress toward completing certifications and dual credits.

It is possible that we may need to offer summer bridge programs again next summer, depending on the disruptions to in-person instruction that schools experience this year. While the results from summer bridge programs have been positive, summer programs have their limitations. Anything that can be done during the regular school year to limit disruptions to in-person instruction will enable schools and career centers to better serve all CTE students.

**Guiding Principles:**

The following guiding principles informed the Office of CTE's guidance for the summer bridge program and continues to inform guidance on re-opening facilities and returning to in-person instruction during the fall semester. The guiding principles demonstrate the unique nature of CTE courses/programs in relation to other core academic courses.

1. CTE courses/programs provide the opportunity for students to earn credentials, like postsecondary certificates and degrees and industry certifications. Maintaining credentialing throughout this time is critical for the benefit of students and employers. Without the ability to earn credentials, students may be limited to entry-level positions despite their advanced training or may need to repeat training.
2. CTE courses are best taught in a face-to-face manner where students have the opportunity to learn and practice skills in a hands-on manner. In fact, many courses have hands-on requirements that cannot be replicated or recreated in a virtual environment.
3. The overwhelming majority of CTE courses are eligible for dual credit, and therefore it is necessary that we align secondary CTE practices to postsecondary practices. Both Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University plan to open their CTE labs, with institutional health and safety protocols in place, to allow students to complete hands-on requirements. These lab requirements are applicable to dual credit courses.
4. Providing all students equitable access to high quality CTE programs of study that provide the opportunity to earn dual credit, industry certifications, and complete work-based learning has always been a priority for CTE programs and is even more important during this time.



## Considerations for Fall CTE Programs

Schools and administrators are facing a wide range of decisions during this time that are much broader than CTE programs. One of the most critical decisions facing schools is whether to return to in-person instruction, continue with remote learning, or implement a blended model. It is important that CTE leaders be involved in these discussions to help provide insights on how any decisions will impact CTE programs and students.

- **For those schools that are planning to return to full in-person instruction, the Office of CTE and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet encourage you to consider the bulleted, italicized items listed throughout the "Health Protocols for CTE Programs" and "Social Distancing Expectations and Considerations for CTE Programs" sections of this document.**
  - These items amend or update the Summer Bridge guidance for the fall semester.
  - State health officials have indicated that planning for potential future disruptions as a result of a second wave of COVID-19 and/or a potentially severe flu season is advisable. We recommend that schools and career centers start their CTE programs as close to their regularly scheduled start date as possible and review their syllabi to try and include as much lab time as possible early in the fall.
- **For those schools that have delayed a return to full in-person instruction, the Office of CTE and the GWC encourages schools and career centers to consider allowing CTE programs to re-open.**
  - Allowing CTE programs to re-open would enable students to meet hands-on requirements that are required to earn dual credits and industry certifications and provides students with maximum value.
  - If able to re-open, schools could choose to offer CTE programs through an alternative schedule that would allow them to operate under the same health and safety protocols that all participating sites are currently following for the Summer Bridge program. The guidelines for summer bridge programs meet or exceed all current requirements of Indiana's "Back on Track" plan.
  - Schools may submit a [CTE Nonstandard Course Waiver](#) for course requirements if an alternative schedule may not be able to meet the hands-on, in-person requirements of CTE courses.
- **The Office of CTE recently released [detailed guidance](#) to provide clarification on the various course delivery models and to provide as much flexibility as possible for CTE funding while maintaining the integrity of CTE courses. This document was the result of a program-by-program review the Office committed to in the Summer Bridge Guidance. Some highlights of that guidance document include:**
  - The guidance defined four different course delivery models - classroom-based, virtual, blended (classroom/virtual), and online and the funding eligibility of each model.



Indiana Office of  
**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

- A list of all funded courses was provided with details regarding the percentage of time students are required to be engaged in hands-on activities through in-person instruction if offered in a blended model and which courses could be offered in a virtual format and still be eligible for full CTE funding. Although a course enrollment may not be eligible for funding, students may take any CTE course virtually or online for high school credit that counts toward concentrator status.
- Eligibility for funding will be determined by the course delivery model that the student is enrolled and participating in on the count day (September 18, 2020). The course delivery model will be designated on an individual student basis to support school's that are offering virtual options to students.
- The guidance also states that schools will not lose CTE funding if they are forced to close due to an executive order by the Governor or an order by the local department of health.
- Schools should consider how they may provide virtual or remote learning opportunities for students or instructors that are medically vulnerable this fall. Schools may need to make individual time in the lab or other accommodations available to these students in order to complete hands-on requirements or performance assessments.

### **Health Protocols for CTE Programs**

***\*Amendments and updates in this section are italicized.***

Students and employees should be trained to recognize symptoms of COVID-19 and to understand any required/recommended health protocols that have been implemented.

1. Students and instructors are expected to self-screen by answering the questions below or by following a locally developed self-screening procedure prior to attendance on a daily basis.
  - a. Have you had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
  - b. Are you currently ill? Do you have any symptoms of a cold, cough, or shortness of breath? Have you temporarily lost your sense of taste or smell?
  - c. Do you currently have a fever or have you had a fever within the past week?

ISDH recommends that before deciding to require temperature checks, schools should consider the fact that because body temperatures may be impacted by a number of factors, temperature checks will not eliminate the risks in buildings and/or on buses. In addition, temperature checks can be challenging and expensive to administer due to a lack of personnel and equipment.



Indiana Office of  
**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

2. Students and employees should be excluded from the school environment if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 that is not otherwise explained by other health conditions unrelated to COVID-19.
3. Once a student or an employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:

Untested – Persons who have excluded themselves or been excluded and have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 may return if the following three conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Tested Positive or Symptomatic - Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever; and
- Other symptoms have improved; and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared; **OR**
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

Tested Positive- Asymptomatic - Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone 10 calendar days without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

4. Schools should be prepared to respond to COVID-19 cases when they occur in their facilities. This will require a mandatory reporting system for all teachers, administrators, staff and students to report any documented positive cases of COVID-19 in their school. Schools should contact the local health department immediately. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, the district/school will work with the local health department to assess factors such as the likelihood of exposure to employees and students in the building, the number of cases in the community and other factors that will determine building closure.
  - *Because of the disparate impact that closing would have on CTE programs, schools are encouraged to consider allowing the CTE program to remain open under summer bridge guidelines if the cause of the closure is not directly connected to the CTE program.*
5. Staff and students are encouraged to wear a mask while in the classroom and in the lab. The minimum expectation is to follow similar precautionary measures that is required of the related



Indiana Office of  
**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

industry while in a lab setting. For example, cosmetology students must wear a mask at all times and only use equipment that can be sanitized between each use. Each program area should review industry specific health and safety protocols as part of the summer bridge program.

- *Governor Holcomb will sign an Executive Order mandating that masks be worn in indoor public places by individuals age 8 and older. The mask mandate will go into effect Monday, July 27, 2020. The mandate will require students in grade 3 and above, faculty and staff, volunteers and anyone else in schools. As long as the mandate remains in effect, the mask mandate will take precedent over other guidance or expectations.*

### **Social Distancing Expectations and Considerations for CTE Programs**

***\*Amendments and updates in this section are italicized.***

The procedures and practices that are listed below will apply to all locations offering a summer bridge program.

1. CTE programs must limit the number of students in a classroom at any one time to no more than 50% of the classroom capacity during the summer bridge program.
  - *This limitation on the number of students in a classroom is not feasible under a full return to in-person instruction. When exceeding 50% of classroom capacity, risk of spread may be mitigated by stronger precautionary measures like requiring students to wear a mask. Please see the added note regarding the mask mandate to item #6 from the Health Protocols section.*
2. Schools should attempt to designate a single point of entry and traffic path for each CTE course/program. This will help to prevent problems with students congregating, limit access to only specific parts of the building, and may limit the need to close the whole school in the event that a student or instructor tests positive for COVID-19.
3. Classroom and lab demonstrations must be done 1-on-1 or in small groups so that students are not within 6 feet of each other. Schools should use signage, tape marks on the floor or place a desk or table between the demonstration area and the students. If social distancing cannot be maintained during demonstrations then other safety precautions should be considered such as creating a plexi-glass barrier or finding alternative methods for demonstrations.
4. Sharing equipment and machinery should be avoided as much as possible. All shared equipment and machinery must be wiped with a cleaning solution before and after each use. Schools and career centers are strongly encouraged to sanitize equipment and machinery between each class session.
5. If possible, necessary supplies and materials should be laid out or distributed by one person to students to ensure that the materials and supplies are handled by as few people as possible. At



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**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

a minimum, students should maintain social distancing while gathering supplies and materials. Marking spots on the floor would help students maintain social distancing.

6. *Recent research has shown that Covid-19 transmission is most likely due to sustained interaction with an infected individual rather than by touch. For this reason, students should be encouraged to collaborate through virtual means as much as possible. If virtual collaboration is not possible then they must ensure social distancing. Having students face in the same direction, rather than across from each other, is one possible method.*
7. Students should have a staggered break schedule. An effort should be made to limit the number of students that are allowed to leave the classroom at any one time. Common areas such as snack machines or break areas should be closed or limited to one student at a time.
8. Janitorial services should distribute wastebaskets, tissues, and CDC-approved soap or hand-sanitizer to each classroom and throughout the hallways so that these materials can be used upon entry and exit into any discrete location and during transit between sites.
9. WBL and clinical placements that are required to complete a program for dual credit or to be eligible to take a certification exam should be allowed to resume beginning July 1, 2020, as long as a student has parent permission. Students are expected to complete a school's COVID-19 safety and protocol training or a more extensive employer-required training. Students must follow employer safety protocols and school policies. Any conflicting safety measures must be reviewed and agreed upon by the employer and program coordinator prior to student placement.
  - *The Office of CTE encourages all schools to reopen Work-Based Learning experiences as long as employers are willing to accept WBL students, the school (program coordinator) is able to verify that site locations are implementing adequate health and safety measures (comparable or greater than the school), and the student has the permission of their parent or guardian.*
  - *In the event of a closure, schools should consider allowing students to remain in their placements as long as the 3 criteria in the previous bullet point are met or continue working remotely if it is feasible and the employer agrees.*
  - *If circumstances arise during a placement that a school no longer feels that the placement is safe and can no longer support the placement, a student may continue as an employee as long as the employer, student, and parent/guardian sign a waiver that states that they understand that the student's employment is no longer considered part of a WBL program and all child labor laws are in full effect.*
10. School-based enterprises should not be opened to outside clients during summer school. Schools may appeal to the Office of CTE if this expectation makes it impossible to meet program requirements.



Indiana Office of  
**Career & Technical  
Education**

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET

- *CTE programs that operate school-based enterprises that serve outside clients should be sure to align their practices to the corporation's visitor policy.*

**Questions:**

Please direct any questions regarding this guidance to [CTE@gov.IN.gov](mailto:CTE@gov.IN.gov). The full guidance is available online [here](#).

This guidance is subject to change and will be updated as new information becomes available. Future updates will be provided via our regular CTE Updates, which can be subscribed to [here](#).

**Resources:**

[IDOE Indiana's Considerations for Learning and Safe Schools](#)

[CDC Considerations for Schools](#)

[CDC Decision Tree](#)

[CDC's Community Mitigation Strategies](#)

[High Quality CTE: Planning for a COVID-19 Impacted School Year](#)