



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:**

P-12 Education Committee  
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services  
Committee (ACCES)

**FROM:**

Ken Slentz

Kevin G. Smith

Two handwritten signatures. The first signature is "Ken Slentz". The second signature is "Kevin G. Smith". Both signatures are in black ink on white paper.

**SUBJECT:**

Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS)  
Learning Standards

**DATE:**

April 11, 2013

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

A large, handwritten signature that appears to read "John B. S. Jr.". Below the signature, the word "SUMMARY" is printed in capital letters.

### **Issue for Discussion**

How do the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Learning Standards provide the foundation for college and career readiness for all students?

### **Proposed Handling**

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the April 2013 meeting.

### **Procedural History**

The Board has requested additional information on the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Learning Standards and their relationship to the education of all students in New York.

### **Background Information**

**What are the CDOS Learning Standards and how do they function within the structure of the New York State Learning Standards?**

The purpose of the New York State Learning Standards is to guide instruction in NYS schools by outlining what students need to know and be able to do. The standards are divided into seven standards areas:

1. English Language Arts
2. Social Studies
3. The Arts
4. Languages other than English
5. Math, Science, and Technology
6. Health, Physical Education and Family and Consumer Sciences
7. Career Development and Occupational Studies.

The first six standards areas are discipline-specific; expectations for student attainment of those standards are entrusted to specific disciplines through mandates, Commissioner's Regulations, and associated policies. The CDOS standards are unique in that they were designed to be implemented across all subject areas. The CDOS standards serve to support the preceding six standards areas and serve as a delivery system for them. Academic skills are enhanced through applicability to the world of work.

There are a minimum of three CDOS standards all students are expected to achieve:

1. *Career Development*, which promotes the creation of individual student career plans beginning in elementary school and following the student to graduation and beyond.

For example, working in small groups 8<sup>th</sup> grade students explore career options through a variety of printed resources and actual work-site visits.

2. *Integrated Learning*, which is the basis for contextualized learning as academic concepts gain relevance when utilized to solve real-world problems.

For example, In a seventh grade interdisciplinary project, students design and build a model railroad village and do a research study of different architectural periods.

- 3a. *Universal Foundation Skills*, which are similar to the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) developed by the U.S. Department of Labor with input from business, education, and industry. The Universal Foundation Skills represent skill sets exhibited by a person who is prepared to live well, to work productively, and to participate effectively in civic life.

For example, a student in a high school accounting class must use data to manually complete a comparative income statement. The student then was asked to complete the statement using a spreadsheet software program.

and/or

- 3b. *Career Majors*, which permit students who choose a Career Major to acquire the career specific technical knowledge and skills necessary to progress toward gainful employment and success in postsecondary programs.

For example, an assignment was given seniors enrolled in a health careers exploration program. After reviewing codes of ethics from various sources, the students were asked to work in cooperative learning groups to develop a code of ethics for their class.

### **How are the CDOS Learning Standards implemented in career and technical education (CTE)?**

The CDOS standards are the instructional base for all career and technical education courses and programs in New York State. In 2001, the Regents approved a CTE policy that permitted students to pursue career and technical education through coursework that led to attainment of the CDOS standards and also offered credit for attainment of commencement-level academic standards. Program approval is the way the State Education Department ensures that local CTE programs meet the policy requirements approved by the Board of Regents. Prior to submitting an application to the Department, both a self-study and an external review committee will have reviewed the program. Reviewers confirm that CTE program content aligns with state CDOS standards, relevant state academic standards, and related business and industry standards. Most BOCES CTE programs have gone through the approval process and therefore have conducted a formal curriculum review to insure that the CDOS standards are met. There are 1,166 CTE programs currently approved.

Learning experiences designed to promote student attainment of the CDOS standards are authentic, project-based, and experiential in nature. Integration of content from other standards areas fosters concurrent acquisition of academic and career knowledge while connecting present learning to future goals. For example, in the Computer Systems and Network Administration program at the Cayuga Onondaga BOCES, a CTE teacher and an English teacher work collaboratively through a co-teaching model. Integrated ELA lessons focus on guided research, presentation skills, technical reading, and commencement-level writing within the context of a CTE program that concludes in national computer industry certification exams. Academic ELA content is approached through the context of technical computer systems and networking problems; academic and technical content are integrated to prepare students to succeed on technical assessments, which provide these students with industry-recognized credentials that are important to their futures.

## **How do the CDOS Learning Standards relate to national career development standards?**

National educational reform initiatives are focused on preparing students for their lives after high school. The goal is for students to leave high school both college- and career-ready. Through a multi-state-led initiative, the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) standards were developed to articulate career-readiness in sixteen national career clusters<sup>1</sup>.

The Common Career Technical Core is a set of rigorous high-quality CTE standards detailing what students should know and be able to do at the end of a program of study.<sup>2</sup> The CCTC was developed to align with other college- and career-ready standards, such as the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics, and with industry expectations in sixteen national career clusters. The CCTC also includes an overarching set of career ready practices addressing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions important to career readiness in any field.

There are commonalities between the New York State CDOS Learning Standards and the national Common Career Technical Core standards. For example, the CCTC Career Ready Practices focus on academic applications, critical and creative thinking, personal and professional ethics, communication, research, and use of technology. CDOS includes Universal Foundation Skills for applying academics to the work world, using critical and creative problem-solving, understanding personal characteristics and developing interpersonal skills, managing information and resources, and effectively using technology. Meaningful learning experiences designed to promote the achievement of commencement level CDOS standards involve students in activities that will also promote the attainment of national CCTC career-ready practices.

The NYS CDOS Learning Standards work in concert with the Common Core State Standards to provide a foundation for college and career readiness for all students. Additionally the CDOS Learning Standards, together with specific industry standards, are the recognized educational base for career and technical education programs that lead to a technical endorsement on the Regents diploma.

## **Next Steps**

Department staff will continue to provide guidance and technical assistance to school districts and BOCES to implement the Common Core State Standards as well as the CDOS Learning Standards. As schools align their courses and programs to the Common Core State Standards, CTE programs will be available as a valuable resource to improve student achievement and identify career pathways that will prepare students to be college and career ready.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.careertech.org/career-technical-education/cctc/info.html>

<sup>2</sup> National program of study is the equivalent of a CTE approved program in NYS