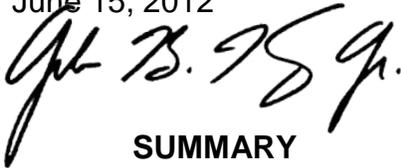




**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Ken Slentz  
**SUBJECT:** Content Panel on Strengthening the CTE Continuum  
**DATE:** June 15, 2012  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Discussion**

Does the Board of Regents wish to appoint a statewide content panel that will develop recommendations for strengthening the CTE K-12 learning continuum which is the instructional base for a CTE graduation pathway?

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

Review of Policy.

**Proposed Handling**

This question will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the June 2012 meeting.

**Background Information**

Career and technical education (CTE) is a kindergarten through adult program area of study that includes rigorous academic content closely aligned with career and technical subject matter that uses the State learning standards of career development and occupational studies as a framework (8 NYCRR §100.1(l)) The CTE K-12 learning continuum begins in elementary school with classroom activities intended for career awareness; proceeds through middle school with required coursework aimed at student career exploration; and progresses on to high school with the goal of student career development and planning in preparation for postsecondary education and the workplace. Ideally, the CTE continuum prepares individuals to become successful adults who are able to navigate the future education and training required of them.

Currently, the statewide delivery of the CTE learning continuum is uneven; district capacity to offer meaningful CTE experiences is varied; and gaps in opportunity exist. The first formal introduction to CTE is through middle level family and consumer sciences (Home and Career Skills) and technology, but courses in these two CTE content areas do not encompass all that CTE has to offer. Requiring instruction in only two of six CTE content areas limits students' CTE experience. Further, LEAs may not offer foundational CTE courses to bridge middle school instruction with approved CTE programs. For many, there is a gap in CTE courses available for grades 9 and 10. These are critical years for academic credit accumulation. Even in the most robust CTE programs, a gap exists in academic credit availability via CTE at these grade levels. Increasing the opportunities for earning graduation credits through CTE courses in grades 9 and 10 encourages student engagement and persistence to graduation. Finally, approved CTE programs, those able to offer integrated academic credits for graduation, are concentrated at grades 11 and 12 and most frequently in CTE high schools or BOCES. Currently, not all students who could benefit from approved CTE programs have access.

In February 2012, the Board discussed the formation of a content advisory panel to review the implications of CTE programs and technical assessments for accountability purposes. In March and April 2012, the Board revisited the idea of forming a content advisory panel and expanded the scope of its work. The Department recommended that the content panel's work include the following themes:

- Restructuring existing middle school CTE programs to prepare students earlier for fully integrated high school programs
- Expanding the number of integrated academic CTE credits for graduation to insure rigorous learning opportunities in CTE programs
- Establishing a CTE graduation pathway with the possibility of substituting a rigorous technical skills assessment for a required Regents exam

### **Recommendation**

That the Board of Regents direct the Department to appoint a statewide content panel of practitioners consisting of K-12 and higher education educators, business leaders, representatives from Big 5, small city, suburban and rural school districts, who will develop guidelines for strengthening the CTE K-12 learning continuum. The content panel will address the gaps seen in the CTE learning continuum statewide. The foundational work of the content panel will be to suggest methods for:

- Building upon the strengths of current CTE programs to create greater opportunities for a meaningful CTE graduation pathway that leads to college and career readiness.
- Creating CTE programs of study that begin in middle school and continue to high school solidifying the connections between grade levels and articulating a roadmap to college and career.
- Developing a grade 6 "Introduction to CTE" course encompassing the six CTE content areas (agriculture, business and marketing, family and

- consumer sciences, health occupations, technology, and trade and technical) to promote vertical alignment with high school programs of study.
- Developing greater opportunities for middle level CTE acceleration in grades 7 and 8 so more students enter high school with diploma credit.
  - Identifying courses for which an integrated design and delivery would be appropriate.
  - Linking existing LEA high school CTE courses to BOCES approved programs thus expanding opportunities.
  - Determining a methodology for defining the supply and demand of appropriately certified teachers.

### **Next Steps**

Should the Board of Regents direct the Department to appoint a statewide content panel of practitioners to develop guidelines for strengthening the CTE K-12 learning continuum, recommendations of the content panel will be reported to the Board between September and December 2012, as appropriate.

The Department will identify potential revisions in Commissioners Regulations needed to implement the recommendations of the content panel.