Middle School CTE Guidance Handbook

This Handbook is intended to serve as informal **guidance** for administrators, teachers, school counselors, and relevant support staff/decision makers. Please note, for specific regulations/requirements visit the Administrators Handbook. The link is found here:
http://coloradostateplan.com/administrator/administrators-handbook/

Considerations for opening new/updating existing Middle School CTE courses or program(s):
- Remember that CTE is NOT a class. CTE is a program. A CTE Program is a *series* of courses.
- A well rounded program would cover as many pathways within a cluster as feasible.
- High quality CTE course are tied to employability, technical, and academic skills.
- Begin with your 5(or 2)-year plan. Identify your program goals, and work backwards.
- Consult your advisory board. They should be integral in the creation of your 5(2) year plan.
  - Your advisory board can be a shared board between Middle School and High School/Postsecondary CTE programs
- Include school counselors, special populations facilitators, transition specialists, administration, building/district technology and facilities experts.
- Involve your high school partners to ensure vertical alignment between programs.
- Use ICAP + Economic Story/Growth to drive program creation (i.e. match local economic needs with local student aspirations paired with teacher's background).

Middle School Course Recommendation Matrix:
The Middle School Course Recommendation Matrix was created in an attempt to bring consistency to course titling and descriptions. The courses listed have been provided by high quality CTE programs across the state. Courses in the spreadsheet have the capability to align to multiple pathway/cluster areas. Please keep in mind that this list is not intended to limit any programming ideas, it is simply a list of recommendations.

Components of Middle School Course Recommendation Matrix:
- Course Title
- Course Description
- Career Cluster
- Industry Sector
- School Codes for the Exchange of Data (SCED)
  - These Codes are nationally normed and generic, however, they serve as a foundational tool for building quality course descriptions and titles. Column F includes the code most closely associated with the nationally normed SCED (School Codes for the Exchange of Data). The website is found here: https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011801.pdf
- CIP/Program Names
  - These codes are also generic. Please identify with the closest pathway/cluster that you feel is best.

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Specific Program Recommendations:

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) courses are aligned with an outside program that may or may not be included on the Middle School Course Spreadsheet. As a result, this guidebook does not give specific guidance on PLTW. For more information please reference this link: https://www.pltw.org/pltw-course-descriptions

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programs include courses from the Hospitality, Human Services, and Education career cluster. The Middle School Course Spreadsheet does not include all the courses that could be included in a middle school FCS program. To find a comprehensive list of middle school FCS options, please see the hyperlink contained in column F of the spreadsheet. The link is also found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwxwaTdQIJahYzVhYmJmZDAtMGFmYi00OTUxLTlmYmYtYTViNjI2YzllNDA2/view

Alternative Cooperative Education (ACE) is a new offering choice for Middle School CTE in Colorado as of the 2018-2019 school year. ACE courses and descriptions were pre-designed and posted on the ACE website for use in middle level programming. Courses should be implemented as developmentally appropriate for students. The ACE website is found here: http://coloradostateplan.com/educator/ace/

Agricultural Education: The initial course in a Middle School Agriculture Education program must be a survey based course of all pathways in the Agriculture/Natural Resources & Energy Cluster. After a student has completed this course they can then enroll in courses that are more pathway specific. Thus, a MS AG CTE program that is offering only one course must offer the Introduction to Agriculture Science course.

Combined Exploratory programs are designed to create comprehensive exploratory experiences for middle school students. It was previously known as the exploratory 'wheel'. When considering a Combined Exploratory program, it is best to have courses from _**at least 3 different Career Clusters**_. Any courses can be part of a Combined Exploratory program, however, care should be taken to align exploratory course to programs at the articulating high school.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years program aims to develop active learners and internationally minded young people who can empathize with others and pursue lives of purpose and meaning. Some CTE can overlap with IB programs. Learn more about IB here: https://www.ibo.org/programmes/middle-years-programme/what-is-the-myp/

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Recommendations for all Programs:
- When creating course names, avoid labeling them by grade level.
- Descriptions should include verbiage around industry, employability, and academic skills.
- ICAP should be integrated to all programs and courses.
- Course descriptions should begin with *"In this course, students (shall/will/may)…"*

FUNDING through Career and Technical Act (CTA)

The Career and Technical Act, formerly the Colorado Vocational Act of 1970, CRS 23-8-101, was adopted by the Colorado General Assembly to provide assistance to local school districts operating CTE programs approved by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. These funds are distributed as a reimbursement for what was spent on the CTE program the previous year.

Best Practices to Maximize CTA Reimbursement:
- Keep class sizes low (between 15 and 25 students).
- Spend money on the program for equipment and supplies.
- Have one teacher teach a lot of CTE course vs. have a lot of teachers teach a lot of courses. The percentage of a teacher's schedule is correlated to reimbursement.
- Low FTE + High Expense = Best Reimbursement

Middle School CTE Quality Program Indicators:

Industry Advisory Committees consult and support CTE programs as they develop curriculum and evaluate equipment. It is recommended that advisory committees meet at least 2 times per year (fall and spring). For more information about Industry Advisory Committee requirements, see the Advisory Committee Handbook.

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) enhance student learning through: contextual instruction, leadership and personal development, applied learning, and real world application. The national website for CTSO's can be found here: http://www.ctsos.org/ or check www.coloradostateplan.com for more about local organizations.

Current national CTSO's with established middle school pathways:
- *Business, Marketing, and Public Administration= FBLA*
- *Health Sciences, Criminal Justice, and Public Safety= HOSA*
- *Hospitality, Human Services, and Education= FCCLA*
- *STEM, Arts, Design, and IT= TSA*

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Teacher Credentials ensure highly qualified instructors. Take time to download the CIP Spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will help guide a director, coordinator, or new instructor to better understand credentialing requirements.

Teachers in specific programs must have the credential that matches what they teach. Teachers in a Combined Exploratory Program should have **any** CTE credential. This allows teachers and schools flexibility to include the exploration component even if there are limited teacher resources. Access the CIP Spreadsheet and other supports for credentialing here: http://coloradostateplan.com/administrator/credentialing/

There are several other indicators to consider when creating or updating Middle School CTE programs. Please consult the Administrator's Handbook to review those requirements.

**ALSO, stay apprised of current NEXT GEN CTE visioning via Perkins V re-authorization, see here: http://coloradostateplan.com/cte-strategic-vision/ **

Middle School CTE Website found here: www.coloradostateplan.com and http://coloradostateplan.com/educator/middle-school-cte/middle-school-cte-program-approval/

and

http://coloradostateplan.com/educator/cte-standards-program-approval/

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