



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

May 11, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chair
Senate Health Education and Labor Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member
Senate Health Education and Labor Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

The CCD Education Task Force is pleased that the Senate is working in a bipartisan fashion to reauthorize and improve the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) program offers the potential for students with disabilities to use high school toward preparation for the workforce by encouraging specific career pathways. While there is a paucity of research on the intersection of CTE programs and disability, studies that do exist have shown that providing career preparation and transition services as early as possible has the potential to provide a pivotal platform for students with disabilities to gain access to career pathways.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is the nation's largest coalition representing people with disabilities. The Education Task Force monitors federal legislation and regulations that address the educational needs of children with disabilities and their families, including the CTE Act, ESSA, and IDEA. The Education Task Force advocates for enhance opportunities for children under these laws.

To improve outcomes of individuals with disabilities and support their transition to career training and/or postsecondary education, CCD urges you to consider the following key principles as this important law moves forward in the process:

- Include in the purpose statement a clear goal of increasing employment of students with disabilities.
- Ensure the law includes and supports students with disabilities as a Special Population to be provided CTE services. This should begin with the Purposes statement, extend to any Findings, and be carried out throughout the law.
- Promote only provisions that support and reinforce full inclusion, participation, and reporting on the outcomes of students with disabilities in middle-school, high-school, and post-secondary career-training programs funded by the Act.
- Ensure sufficient funding levels are authorized, allocated at the state level, and permitted to support outreach and recruitment to students with disabilities to CTE programs and to disseminate information to students and parents about opportunities available to them through CTE, including through the Parental Assistance and Local Family Information Centers.
- Include explicit accountability outcomes for students with disabilities (disaggregated).

- Include students with disabilities in the State Education Agency and Local Education Agency outcomes measures.
- Update and align the law with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), especially as it relates to accommodations for students with disabilities to access CTE services in the least restrictive environment.
- Maintain Sec. 124 (b)(1) assessment of how the needs of special populations are being met.
- Ensure students with disabilities gain CTE experience through simulations, internships, apprenticeships and other evidence-based programs that employers, postsecondary and career programs can demonstrate lead to meaningful outcomes.
- Include special education, general education teachers and specialized instructional support personnel in any/all professional development to provide the knowledge and skills teachers need.
- Include evidence-based programs that help identify at-risk students with disabilities and help to divert them from the “pipe-line to prison.”
- Assure all pre-service and in-service CTE professional development programs for any personnel involved in the direct delivery of educational services includes training in the provision of accommodations and modifications [as appropriate] for students with disabilities, including the use of the principles of universal design for learning as defined in the Higher Education Act.

Thank you for considering these recommendations. Please let the Task Force know if you would like more information. We look forward to working with you to reauthorize this important law.

Sincerely,

The CCD Education Task Force Co-chairs:

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