

Questions for Nominee to the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board

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March 25, 2026 | 2026-R-0040

Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) ([CGS §§ 10-95i](#), [-95k](#) & [-95s](#))

[CTECS](#) operates 17 high schools, with an [enrollment](#) of more than 11,000 students, that offer a range of career and technical education programs in addition to the courses found at regular comprehensive high schools. It also operates two aviation mechanics and maintenance technician schools for adult learners (in [Hartford](#) and [Stratford](#)) and an education center for high school upperclassmen and adults (in [Bristol](#)). Through legislation, CTECS is now an independent state agency and is no longer part of the State Department of Education (SDE). The agency is led by an executive director, who is appointed by the governor.

The board advises the CTECS executive director and superintendent, the agency's educational head, on matters relating to vocational, technical, technological, and postsecondary education and training. Also, it must establish specific achievement goals for students at each grade level and measure the performance of each CTECS school. Every five years the board must adopt a long-range plan of CTECS's priorities and goals and submit the plan to the Education; Finance, Revenue and Bonding; and Appropriations committees. The law requires the board, every five years, to establish a schedule to evaluate and reauthorize the system's existing trade programs and consider adding new trade programs. The board must also maintain a rolling three-year capital improvement and equipment plan that must be annually submitted to the same three committees mentioned above.

In addition, the board must submit a biennial report to the Education Committee that includes an assessment of student outcomes and demographic information on CTECS applicants, enrolled students, and graduates.

Questions

1. One of the board's duties is to evaluate and reauthorize the system's existing trade programs. Do you believe there are programs that should be added? Are there some that should no longer be offered? How does the board coordinate the trade program offerings with the needs of the various industries seeking trained workers?
2. Work-based learning allows students using the skills they have learned at a technical high school to work for an employer and get paid during the student's trade instructional time. Are there more students seeking work-based learning opportunities than are currently available? What steps is CTECS taking to keep the program at full strength?
3. When students graduate from CTECS, they also earn a Connecticut Technical Education certificate, which can be in the form of a state occupational license or an industry recognized credential. What are some of the most successful licenses and credentials that are enabling the graduates to gain employment?
4. According to [SDE](#), there is currently a shortage of teachers across the state. The [CTECS staffing website](#) indicates you are currently looking to fill positions for six trade instructors and 10 academic instructors. Is CTECS having trouble filling positions? What steps can CTECS make to recruit more teachers into their system?
5. In 2024, CTECS released an action plan titled "CTECS Admissions Program – Ensuring 9-12 Student Applicant Equitable Access" as the result of the investigation and the ongoing discussions between CTECS and SDE. This plan included the implementation of a new admissions lottery system to select students. How has this transition gone? Do any improvements need to be made to the new system?
6. Application rates to CTECS schools have continued to be high, resulting in a large student waitlist. What steps should CTECS take to ensure all students who wish to enroll in their schools are given opportunities to pursue a technical education?
7. Recently, the Connecticut State Community College system and CTECS entered into a [partnership](#) designed to strengthen pathways from technical high schools to community college. The partnership is designed to seamlessly allow students to earn college credit while still in high school through dual enrollment courses or concurrent enrollment courses. How will this partnership benefit students and will it be available at all CTECS high schools? What other partnerships might CTECS enter into in the future?

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