

12 Essential Elements of a High-Quality CTE Program

Essential Element 1:

STUDENT-CENTERED DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Student-Centered Delivery of Services for all K–14+ college and career pathways incorporate the removal of institutional or systemic barriers that impede the progress of students in achieving their education and career goals. This includes a renewed commitment to offer an engaging learning experience and support the diversity of individual student needs while accommodating their multiple entry points as they progress along a continuum of education and training, or advance in a sector-specific occupation or industry.

CCCA Response:

CCCA is built on student interest by virtue of building its school around a CTE Pathway. Because students choose to enroll at CCCA we are taking the first step towards a student centered approach. While the school is built around a single industry sector our intention is to capitalize on student interest and be flexible enough to allow students to direct us on where they want to take that interest. Through one of most robust advisories any school could hope for, made up of leaders in their field, who understand that success in industry is not a narrow definition of skill attainment but it is a broader understanding of flexibility and innovation that ultimately leads to success. Our goal at CCCA is to first become partners with our students to understand their educational goals, then to be facilitators for them then giving them to resources and relationships we have built so that students can take control of their educational and career pathways.

CCCA's student pathways are based on student voice and choice. Career fairs where students select internship locations based on interest are then paired with reflective assignments built into their final portfolios. Students begin with foundational dual enrollment courses through American River College that also build in rigor. Ultimately, after the career exploration phase in a student's freshman and sophomore year students move into paid internships in their junior and senior years. The dual enrollment partnerships with both ARC and Sacramento State allow for a number of entry points throughout a student's 4 year high school career. Paid internships are supported with not just high school course work but also individualized advanced education classes that could occur on the college campus.

Essential Element 2:

EQUITY

Student Equity goes beyond the reduction of institutional barriers to create an environment of being fair, impartial and free from racism, bias, or favoritism, promote educational and employment attainment, and to eliminate the achievement gap for all students including, but not limited to, English language learners and students with disabilities in the K–14+ college and career pathway system.

CCCA Response:

CCCA recognizes one of the main barriers to delivering on the promise of equity is both proximity and program. To address proximity CCCA is intentionally located in the highest priority area of Sacramento. Within a five mile radius of the campus you have the 49th and 50th lowest median income neighborhoods out of the 50 largest in Sacramento. CCCA is working with a wide range of community support providers to ensure all students are gainfully employed or enrolled in a post secondary institution after graduation. CCCA's board of directors and employment practices have all demonstrated a commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. To address programmatic concerns, CCCA embeds early college credits into its schedule as well as internships and high quality connections with industry. This approach will not force students to choose between college at the expense of a career. This is further evidence of CCCA doing what it can to remove institutional barriers to bring high quality educational options to students and families that may not have that access currently.

Essential Element 3:**ACCESS**

***Access:** denotes a broader vision of equity ensuring that all students are provided ample opportunities to attain the necessary skills, education and training required to maximize their individual goals including a collective awareness of all the supports that are available to students both inside and out of class. Access also facilitates the elimination of the achievement gap by providing information on how to access programs, services, and rigorous coursework for all California students regardless of region, gender, socio-economic status, special needs, and/or English proficiency. Access also includes creating pathways with demonstrable careers for students.*

CCCA Response:

CCCA bridges this gap by bringing industry leaders directly into the classroom promoting an environment of collaboration and access. Individualized pathways based on students' voice and choice promote an environment of high interest career driven explorations that culminate in work readiness training led by industry partners. CCCA has a deep commitment to not only eliminating the achievement gap but also addressing generational poverty that has plagued our local community. This is done in part by creating a program that focuses on access and agency. Because of our robust industry advisory and relationships with post-secondary educational options coupled with a small school environment all students and families will have access to the pathway of their choosing.

Essential Element 4:**LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS**

Leadership at All Levels is required to achieve greater integration across systems and programs to ensure that the contexts for an engaging learning experience can occur and programs connect, so all students can reach across systems easily and succeed with their desired outcomes including employment, and employers have the workforce needed to thrive.

CCCA Response:

CCCA's board of directors represents the full scope of the construction industry, from the trades people on the job site to the executives leading their companies. The board represents both heavy civil to large commercial contractors. Numerous union apprenticeships and government agencies are also represented on the board. Each of these organizations have made commitments to not just exposing young people to career opportunities but also working with teachers through externships and class presentations. There is also a commitment to ultimately employ graduates of CCCA. Given that the entirety of the CCCA staff is focused on providing pathways to college and career, we are confident that our staff take on the leadership that is necessary to work across disciplines within the school and with industry partners to ensure students are at the center of the decision making process.

Essential Element 5:

HIGH-QUALITY, INTEGRATED CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

High-Quality, Integrated Curriculum and Instruction informed by labor market information, student interest, technology, industry standards, and real-world engagement through relevant work-based learning opportunities is essential to prepare students. Rigorous and aligned programs should be supported to guide students through relevant course sequences (i.e., both in-person and online) and work-based learning opportunities leading to a mastery of standards, high school graduation, and transition to postsecondary education, training, apprenticeship, and/or employment, as appropriate. Courses and programs may be designed to use cross-system strategies like dual enrollment and/or dual credit with community colleges and universities or other articulations to create a seamless student experience, and avoid unnecessary repeating of courses or other inefficient practices to facilitate "on-time" postsecondary graduation, where appropriate. Stackable badging and credentials can ensure frequency of assessment and value-added outcomes.

CCCA Response:

The CCCA course pathway includes a minimum of three college courses, foundational building trades skills, and three rounds of a career exploration. Ultimately, acting as a springboard into a pathway into any range of career opportunities that touch the construction trades.

According to data provided by the Sacramento Business Journal, the construction industry grew by nearly 12% in 2021 and accounts for over 76,000 jobs in the region. Construction jobs are up 40% in the past 5 years and 120% in 10 years, making it the strongest growing sector in the region. Unlike every major metropolitan area in the state, Sacramento does not have a school focused on construction trades. CCCA, at the request of industry and community leaders, has been designed deliberately to meet the need for a skilled, professional labor force while also providing a unique opportunity for students who can leave high school with a college degree and a career. Both our teachers and our students will have the benefit of regular contact with experts in the field. This close connection between the classroom and industry is an assurance that our students will always be accessing the most current industry aligned curriculum. Given the need for highly skilled workers CCCA will have no shortage of input and collaborative partners from industry to inform and shape our curriculum. As a school we intend to use the building trades sector as a way to develop an educational model that is not only informed by practices and trends in industry but also to merge that with the best practices in education. While we are excited at the prospect of bringing well trained individuals into the building trades industry we are equally excited to use the building trades as a platform to get students excited about learning.

Essential Element 6:**SKILLED INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP, INFORMED BY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Skilled Instruction and Educational Leadership, informed by Professional Learning, is the cornerstone of the public education system in California. The educational experience is only as strong as the capacity and investment made in faculty, educational leaders, and the other key field talent to provide in-class, online, or work-based learning opportunities as well as developing an awareness of student support services. California encourages the culture of innovation and entrepreneurialism in program instruction and design that leads to student success.

CCCA Response:

CCCA will make professional development a hallmark of its school. Because of our access to industry professionals we intend to encourage all of our teachers, core and CTE, to participate in externships in industry. This will help all of our core content teachers connect the curriculum to student interest in the building trades. We will take on readings of shared texts to develop a staff that has a shared understanding of our common goals. We believe being a small school will be an advantage when it comes to professional development. Whereas large comprehensive high schools struggle to get their large staff engaged in school wide PD we are confident that being a

small school will make whole school PD much less of a logistical challenge.

Essential Element 7:

CAREER EXPLORATION AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

*The strong presence of **Career Exploration and Student Supports** is an essential component for establishing a learning plan for all K–14+ students. This includes identifying appropriate foundational courses (i.e., using competency-based learning) and information about jobs, determining student progression in a single pathway or along multiple pathways or sequences of learning, or making available in-class and online course offerings and work-based learning opportunities. To complement their learning plan, students should also have access to comprehensive counseling, individualized supports along their journey (including, but not limited to, for students who are part-time, face barriers to learning, need academic or cultural supports, transportation, child care, or financial aid), or opportunities through student leadership development organizations to achieve their individual goals and aspirations, through a variety of transitions, in an ever-changing workforce.*

CCCA Response:

All students participate in a career exploration based on voice and choice. Additionally, students receive supplemental academic and career exploration support in the form of their advisory classes, their academic coaches, and their industry mentors. A partnership with Sacramento State's Office of Continuing Education provides additional opportunities for support for both graduates and community members looking to obtain work readiness skills.

Lastly, through the structure of CCCA, career readiness training occurs directly with employers in a student's junior and senior year. This model ensures students are receiving the most relevant and up to date training possible.

CCCA takes an expansive view of the Building Trades and Construction sector. We believe that students should have the opportunity to explore all sectors that intersect with the building trades, this would include the 4 pathways under BTC as well as Engineering and Architecture, Manufacturing and Production Design as well as others. We will rely on our extensive contacts with industry, connections with postsecondary institutions (community college and four year) to support our students long range planning. To assist our students in the short term, we have integrated into our model a wide array of internships. In a CCCA's student junior year they will have the opportunity to intern with different companies to give them the exposure necessary to make an informed choice as to where they might want to focus their search. Our Building Trades curriculum was selected in consultation with our industry partners. With the knowledge that if a student chooses they will be able to step off of the CCCA campus and into paid apprenticeship the day after graduation or they will have earned enough credits to be well on their way to an AA degree before finishing high school. Additionally to ensure students are getting the one on one support they need, CCCA will have a part time counselor in year one and full time counselor every

year after.

Essential Element 8:

APPROPRIATE USE OF DATA AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Appropriate Use of Data and Continuous Improvement should continue to drive CTE through relevant accountability that is outcomes-based, is supported both vertically and horizontally across systems, and ensures equity and access for all students. Continuous improvement ensures students can access the best pathways possible. Focusing on students' and employers' needs will allow for identification of capacity building, refinement of programs, and elimination of inefficiencies to meet the existing and emerging needs of regional economies. Through intentional sharing of specific data elements that are actionable across systems will help to showcase student attainment, including mastery of standards, and be informed by industry needs to achieve relevant system outcomes. Responsible data use is to inform practice and improve programs, not to track students.

CCCA Response:

iReady and the ASVAB provide annual student data points that allows for not only accountability but also opportunities for differentiated supplemental support. Because every student at CCCA will be enrolled in a CTE pathway, this will make it much easier for us to track student progress. As we use data on student performance it will be much easier for CCCA to make adjustments and pivot because we are smaller school. Schoolwide culture surveys, annual internship feedback forms, dual enrollment registration statistics and course and internship registrations will all be useful data that will inform our CTE pathway and the course offerings provided to students. Additionally, this information will help shape our dual enrollment course requests and internship partners.

Through our industry partners we will have access to all the relevant industry data. Because of our pipeline to industry and our ability to be nimble we can alter our course as needed to reflect changes in industry. Again taking advantage of CCCA's size when we sit down as a staff to review data we will all have a personal connection to each of the students we are supporting.

Lastly, the yearly calendar is intentionally designed to support the unique learning needs of students. CCCA may add up to 12 additional instructional days per semester for intersessions for a total of 188 instructional days. At this time, CCCA is reluctant to adopt a firm "one size fits all" program for intersession instructional days because we anticipate these days will be unique opportunities of learning time used to target students' specific needs. Intersession instructional days may include all or part of the following: intensive skill development in reading, writing, and math; job shadowing; interview and resume preparation; internships; college visits; higher order executive functioning support; electives, schoolwide CTE competitions; community service projects; craft professional guest teacher days; social-emotional curriculum and support; entrepreneurial lessons and presentations; peer mentoring and peer tutoring; and genius days where students explore a

passion and design a formal presentation to their peers.

Essential Element 9:

CROSS–SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

*Opportunities for strategic and intentional **Cross-System Alignment** should be informed by the ongoing analysis of student data, and alignment of data definitions across systems to provide, for example, deliberate sector-based programs, deployment of technical field assistance using a regional distribution, or evidence-based practices and processes to optimize pathway success and upward mobility opportunities for all participants.*

CCCA Response:

CCCA board of directors is composed of a range of industry leaders. This coupled with the advisors to the board who include a national CTE teacher of the year and a director of a similar dual enrollment trades focused high school ensure that evidenced based best practices are in place from the start. Additionally, the projected schoolwide goals reflect a commitment to data driven high standards grounded in educational best practices.

CCCA will be unique in that all students will participate in a CTE pathway. This will allow us to have a comprehensive data set to view student progress in their pathway as well as in their academic core classes. While our model will place students in the Residential and Commercial Construction Pathway because of the flexibility of our school, the robustness of our industry partners, connections to postsecondary and internships built into the schedule, students are assured to not be locked in to a particular pathway. Additionally we will take advantage of being a small school, this will allow us to build substantive relationships with students, getting to know their interests, goals and aspirations. With knowledge of our students, the individual attention they will receive and the robustness of our resources and connections we are confident CCCA students will be able to chart of course that suits their college and career goals.

Essential Element 10:

INTENTIONAL RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING (PROMOTION, OUTREACH, AND COMMUNICATION)

Intentional Recruitment and Marketing (Promotion, Outreach, and Communication) should reflect an understanding of students' and employers' needs, be consistent in its messaging to stakeholders across all segments, and use tools and reports as a platform to display the added value of high–quality K–14+ college and career pathway programs.

CCCA Response:

At the time of writing CCCA is a year away from opening our efforts are currently focused on developing and framing our brand to launch our marketing and outreach campaign. To support us in this work we are working with Larson Communication, the Smidt Foundation and Jane Einhorn (a respected Sacramento marketing and PR specialist). We will begin the roll out of this campaign in the fall of 2022. We will structure our campaign to broadly appeal to two audiences. One being parents and guardians and the other the 8th graders considering applying. In addition to using social media we will continue to hold our youth engagement activities that are well attended, being a countywide charter, we will be able to expand our reach across the region though we will reserve our most intense recruiting efforts for the North Sacramento Region that is our home.

Essential Element 11:**SUSTAINED INVESTMENTS AND FUNDING
THROUGH MUTUAL AGREEMENTS**

Sustained Investments and Funding through Mutual Agreements must be present to encourage regional alliances along with industry sector strategies, especially with a focus on current and/or emerging high-skill, high-wage, and/or high-demand occupations. This includes but is not limited to Kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12) Education, Adult Education, Higher Education, Labor, Economic Development Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Development Boards, career advisory boards, and regional industry alliances aligned by sector that lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate, postsecondary training, apprenticeship, and/or employment.

CCCA Response: CCCA is fortunate to have among its industry partners some of the largest and most successful construction companies in the country let alone, Northern California. This includes executives within the building trades unions and representation from postsecondary education all serving on the CCCA board of directors. All our commercial partners have committed both time and money to supporting CCCA. To date, CCCA has raised \$1.4 million in donations more than a year before the school has its first student. They are doing this because they are deeply aware of not only the need for CCCA but also the potential within the model. In addition to generous financial contributions CCCA has given the recipients countless hours of volunteer time. These partners are deeply invested in seeing CCCA being a success.

Essential Element 12:**STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY**

Strong Partnerships with Industry and appropriate employers must be developed to inform and improve CTE program design, instruction and work-based learning activities; as well as, ensure that career pathway programs in all grade levels, organizations and apprenticeship programs continue to meet the workforce demands.

CCCA Response:

The CCCA board of directors and industry partnerships represents an unprecedented commitment with industry and community. These partners have made substantial contributions to the CCCA pathway and program based on their diverse experiences working within the industry sector and their collaboration with other K-12 institutions.