

Arizona Career and Technical Education Skill Standards Assessment System Overview

Why is this system being established?

The Arizona Joint Technological Education District (JTED) legislation HB 2700, enacted in 2006 Arizona Legislative session requires that CTE programs funded for JTEDS lead to industry certification for students by spring 2008.

The Carl D. Perkins Act of 2007 and the US Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, also require that CTE programs at secondary and postsecondary lead to industry certifications. The US Department of Education also requires states to identify in their State Plans how they will begin to address assessment for 2007-08.

There were 5946 JTED courses submitted to the Arizona Department of Education, Career and Technical Education, for approval for the 2007-08 school year. These address many of the 71 occupational programs/options that have been identified using Arizona Labor Market Information under the auspices of the Department of Economic Security Research and Administration. The occupations have been identified using several criteria, which were previously approved by the State Board of Career and Technical Education. Not only are job openings used as the criteria, but also the levels of O*NET skill requirements (usually requiring some postsecondary education), and livable wages are key elements of the formula.

How is the Assessment System being funded?

Two types of federal funds are presently being used to create the system. The first is the Carl D. Perkins Funds Statewide Funding and the Incentive Grant from the Department of Labor, that Arizona has received this year and will receive again next year. The Incentive Grant funding is based on the Workforce Investment Act System, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education all achieving their federal performance measures. A plan for the use of the funds was submitted to the federal government that was approved last year. The new proposal will address expansion and similar efforts. Career and Technical Education will continue to use this funding as a major source of establishing the Assessment System, which will serve both CTE and WIA clients.

What will the Arizona Assessment System achieve?

The Arizona Assessment System will address the 71 occupational programs/options and others as they come into being. The first 43 occupational programs/options will be addressed by spring 2008. These will include the programs/options that address most of the JTED programs and the largest other CTE programs at the secondary level.

Assessments will be developed as item banks to be delivered online for all secondary comprehensive and JTED CTE students. Postsecondary assessments may need to be developed in those situations where there are no existing assessments. In addition, WIA One-Stop sites will also have the end of program assessments available for students who are completing programs under their authorization.

Assessments will contain criterion-referenced and written performance items, based on the industry validated standards and measurements. Information about what items were missed, how well the student completed the assessment, and other information will be available “real time” for teachers and the students taking the assessment. Also, this information will be provided to the instructor in the same fashion.

Who will be involved in the development of the Arizona Assessment System?

The Arizona Department of Education is partnering with Arizona State University to house the Assessment Center.

The Assessment System structure will include three other groups that will be instrumental in establishing the standards, measurements, and processes for the assessments. These are:

- ***The Arizona Skill Standards Commission***
- ***The Stakeholders Committee***
- ***The Industry and Business Associations and***
- ***Validation Committees*** for each of the 71 occupational programs/options

The Arizona Skill Standards Commission

Membership: Major Arizona business representatives (anticipated that 12-20 members)

- Those who have a need for a skilled workforce
- CEOs, VPs over the main artery of business (production, manufacturing, sales, health care, etc.)

Other Arizona leaders

- Key legislators
- State Superintendent
- President or designee of the State Board for Career and Technical Education
- Others as needed who leaders for business growth and economic efforts in Arizona

Nominations for these individuals are being developed and will be provided to the State Superintendent for Public Instruction and the State Board of Career and Technical Education for their review. Terms of office, etc, have yet to be determined. All major areas of Arizona Business need to be represented, however.

Duties:

Act as a conduit to industry and business in Arizona to establish the “value added” from the Arizona Skill Standards Commission Certificates.

Assert a public relations strategy to recognize and validate the Certificates and to bring public recognition for the students who complete the standards and gain the credential.

Preside over credentialing of secondary, postsecondary, and adults who complete the assessments satisfactorily.

Provide input for what businesses need to be involved, the credentialing process, the standards, the levels of certificates to be awarded, number of times the students may sit for the assessment, portions of the assessment, etc...

Provide leadership to bring the business community to recognize the certificates and for allowing for advanced entry into many occupations.

Preside over the standards and assessment process to provide certificates to individuals who have satisfactorily completed the assessment.

Provide regular updates on the progress of the System to the State Director for Career and Technical Education, and the State Board of Career and Technical Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

The Stakeholders Committee

Membership:

The membership will include representatives of those who use the system. The Committee will represent all groups of stakeholders in the system. Nominations have been made by local CTE Directors, JTEDS, Community Colleges, and Associations and potential members of the committee have been identified for organizational meeting to be held July 13, 2007.

Groups to be represented include:

- JTED Superintendents
- Local CTE Directors
- Teacher Representatives from major program areas
- Postsecondary Occupational Deans
- One-Stop and DES Representatives for WIA System
- ADE CTE Representatives
- ASU Workforce Education and Development Office
- Others as needed

Duties:

Assist with the development of the processes and administration of the process

Assist with the validation and piloting of testing processes

Assist with the implementation processes to be used

Review processes and procedures to be used with schools and others to ensure usability
Assist with decision making process with the Arizona Skill Standards Commission
Meet jointly with the Arizona Skill Standards Commission, Associations, and others as needed

Industry and Business Associations and Validation Committees

Industry and Business Associations

Who will be involved?

Each of the 43 occupational programs/options being developed this year has several business and industry organizations that may be involved in the process. These may be groups that regulate their professions or trade, or who have an interest in the processes that are being developed for certifying individuals who complete CTE programs.

The Associations will include Trade groups, professional associations, unions, state certifying groups, and others.

What they will contribute to the process:

The associations will be asked to be part of the validation processes for the standards, the measurements, and the item banks being developed.

The associations will be asked to assist in providing validation panels of individuals who are incumbent workers in a specific occupational option.

The associations will also be asked to review the standards, measurements, and item banks as they are developed, after each validation team session has taken place.

The associations will also be asked to endorse the standards, measurements, and assessments.

They will be asked to assist with the presentation of these results to the Skill Standards Commission for their approval for certificates to be provided to students based on the assessments established.

Validation Committees

Who will be involved?

Each of the 43 occupational programs/options being considered this year will have an industry validation committee. Each committee will be composed of at least 10 incumbent workers who have been in the occupation being addressed for at least two years or a supervisor who was an incumbent worker. Two to three educators from the

occupational option will also be included. Effort will be made to ensure that various parts of the state are represented.

Duties:

Each industry validation committee will review the current Arizona Standards and Measurements, if they exist. They will also review additional standards as needed or provide additional standards and measurements as are pertinent to their current occupational duties.

The industry validation committee will meet to review standards, then develop measurements, and finally provide input for the items for assessment.

As the assessments are piloted, the industry validation committee will review the results and provide input as to what ways the assessment may be changed and address the items their industry holds to be critical and frequently used.

They will assist in bringing the final products to the Skill Standards Commission for final approval.

If national assessments are available and Arizona has permission to use these and the related data, the industry committee will first review along with Association input, before these assessments are presented to the Skill Standards Commission.

These groups will provide invaluable input to the assessment processes to ensure valid and reliable processes.

What is the role of Arizona State University, Workforce Education and Development Office in the partnership with Arizona Department of Education, Career and Technical Education Section?

ASU's role

ASU will house the CTE Assessment Center. They will provide the core of the system to establish the assessments, based on Arizona State CTE Standards and Measurements, as validated by Arizona business and industry committees.

ASU, in partnership with ADE-CTE, will establish the scope of the assessments for the first year, utilize input from the Stakeholders Committee, and work with subcontractors to ensure the system's success.

The major subcontractor for this process is VTECS, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This is a consortium of approximately 20 states, including Arizona. VTECS has had a many, many years of experience in developing standards and measurements with industry and in the development of item banks, performance assessment, and processes related to all phases of such a system.

Through this affiliation, Arizona along with eight other states will share development of assessments, provide assessments that each has developed to decrease the costs and also increase content validity and reliability.

VTECS will do the following for Arizona:

- Research what other states have in standards and measurements that will fill gaps for Arizona.
- Provide information about national sets of standards and assessments that may be available to Arizona.
- Develop a protocol for Arizona to establish the system, based on previous experiences.
- Provide the linkage to the online capabilities for the system.
- Provide the assistance required to establish the assessment items as required.
- Assist with the validation and assessment processes to ensure face and content validity and reliability.
- Assist Arizona through technical assistance and professional development of ensuring that Arizona professionals will have the ability to maintain and move ahead with the system.

Arizona Department of Education, Career and Technical Education Section

What is ADE-CTE's role with the Assessment System?

Provide the overall direction and leadership for the system through planning and leading each portion of the system.