

JUMP START 2.0

Draft Blueprint

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HISTORY OF JUMP START

Louisiana's children are smart and capable. And our great state is rich in economic opportunities for our children - from helping to unleash our untapped natural resources, to ensuring Louisianans are healthy, to developing cutting-edge technology. Through career and technical education (CTE), Louisiana's education system aims to bridge children's capabilities with the economy's potential.

In 2014, our state launched a new vision for CTE through the original [Jump Start Blueprint](#). Progress since then has been impressive. Louisiana has grown the number of industry-based credentials (IBCs) awarded annually from 17,885 in 2014 to over 90,000 in 2018. Of those IBCs earned last year, over 600 were statewide advanced credentials, up from 95 in 2014.¹ Further, there has been immense growth in the attainment of Career Diplomas. Prior to Jump Start, fewer than two percent of students graduated with a Career Diploma. Today, more than one in five students graduates with a Career Diploma and Jump Start credentials.

Many innovations have enabled these outcomes. [Jump Start Summers](#) enables school systems to provide students the opportunity to experience the workplace while earning credentials, credit hours, and in some cases, stipends. The Louisiana Department of Education recently launched [Quest for Success](#), a homegrown and student-centered career readiness course. Louisiana's

[STEM Pathways Initiative](#) bridges academic and career courses through rigorous integrated pathways. And another homegrown initiative, the [CTE Leadership Academy](#), has led to significant investment in CTE leaders across the state. Jump Start has catalyzed incredible opportunities for our children.



¹ Statewide advanced credentials are in some cases the equivalent of an Associate's Degree, aligned with high-wage, high-growth industries in our State, as identified by the Workforce Commission.

THE NEED TO EVOLVE JUMP START

With the first graduating cohort of Jump Start students in 2018 and broader changes afoot in the CTE landscape, BESE called on the Department to take a closer look at Jump Start outcomes. Through a thorough review of Jump Start, the Department found significant room for improvement.² Louisiana is not fully preparing all students for their next step, a stigma around CTE remains, and the complexity of this work makes creating opportunities for children difficult.

Students are not fully prepared for their next step

Ultimately, high-quality K-12 CTE experiences are designed to prepare students for their next steps after high school. Jump Start does not yet fully achieve this goal. Of the 8,736 students who graduated with a Jump Start career diploma in 2018, only 61 percent graduated with a statewide credential.³ Almost two-fifths graduated with only regional credentials, potentially limiting their employment opportunities after graduation. Further, [a recent report](#) examined the top 15 IBCs earned in each of our Jump Start regions. In the region with the closest alignment, only three of those top 15 credentials were aligned with high-wage, high-growth jobs. The Department has also heard concern from stakeholders, including parents, that too many students are completing ACT WorkKeys assessments - measures of workplace readiness - without also earning rigorous credentials to prepare them for work.

CTE stigma persists

Despite best efforts, a stigma remains attached to CTE. The Jump Start career diploma is not viewed as an equivalent to the TOPS University diploma. Forty-two percent of respondents to the Jump Start Survey agreed that 'there is a stigma about Jump Start among administrators, teachers, counselors, or parents'. The Department heard through consultation that Jump Start pathways remain a second-best, 'easier' option for too many students. Twenty percent of counselors who responded to our survey said they 'hesitate to place students in Jump Start Courses or pathways.' Yet only 57 percent of responding counselors 'seek to place college-bound students' in Jump Start courses or pathways. A stigma persists.

"Parents (and many educators)... are often unwilling to explore other options."

-CTE Leader

Complexity makes it hard to improve

High-quality CTE is complex work. Yet aspects of Jump Start add to that complexity. There are 51 unique Jump Start pathways, compared to 16 'career clusters' recognized at a federal level. The requirements of Jump Start pathways and credentials are not always easy to understand. In fact, only 54 percent of respondents to our Jump Start Survey - including CTE Leaders, administrators, counselors, and administrators - rated their knowledge of Jump Start pathways as 'High' or 'Very High'. This challenge extends to funding. Only twenty-two percent of survey respondents rated their knowledge of Jump Start funding sources as 'High' or 'Very High'. And it is challenging to access other essential Jump Start information. Only forty-four percent of survey respondents rated their knowledge of 'workforce needs in [their] region' as 'High' or 'Very High'. Throughout the consultation process, educators and administrators asked for guidance and clarification on existing policies, terms, certification requirements, and funding sources. This complexity limits opportunities.

"Sometimes figuring out the options for students is so complex that it is easy to overlook certain options."

-Counselor

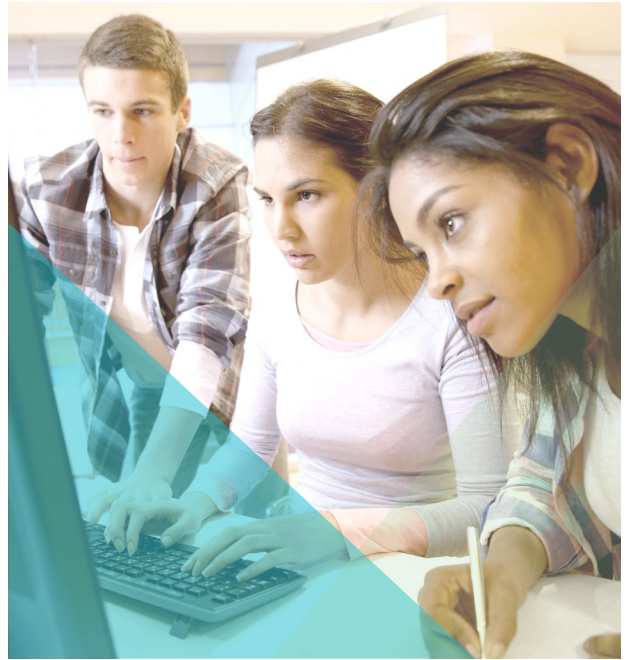
² The consultation process included an economist's report; and input from hundreds of stakeholders through interviews, meetings, and the [Jump Start Survey](#). Appendix A summarizes the consultation process.

³ Statewide credentials are identified by the Workforce Investment Council as being related to 'high-demand' job sectors (i.e., job sectors with significant employment opportunities and high wages). Statewide basic credentials indicate a student has attained a basic proficiency with an industry-valued skill set.

JUMP START 2.0 BLUEPRINT

To address these challenges, and kickstart a new era of career education in Louisiana, the Department is sharing a new vision for CTE: the Jump Start 2.0 Blueprint. In this new era,

- 1 every Jump Start Career Diploma student graduates having demonstrated success in the workplace, preparing them to work in a high-wage, high-growth industry;
- 2 every Louisianan knows and values the Jump Start Career Diploma path as fluently as the TOPS University path; and
- 3 community leaders create systems that bridge education and employment, without state intervention, throughout Louisiana.



1 Every Jump Start Career Diploma student graduates having demonstrated success in the workplace, preparing them to work in a high-wage, high-growth industry.

In the future, the Department will ensure that all Jump Start Career Diploma students are truly prepared for their next step. This calls for the following evolutions in high school CTE experiences:

- **Increasing access to high-quality workplace-based learning.** All Career Diploma students will have access to high-quality workplace-based learning experiences through capstone courses to be included in every Jump Start pathway. These courses will see students leaving the classroom to gain real-world experience in the workplace, and using those experiences to shape their future path. The Department will seek to maximize funding availability for these experiences through Supplemental Course Academy and Direct Student Services funds, among others. Additionally, all **students will have access to a high-quality career exploration** and soft skills experience, like Quest for Success.
- **Focusing on the most valuable credential opportunities.** To further support students in focusing on their next steps, the Department will remove complementary credentials from regional graduation pathways. Students are currently spending valuable time earning credentials that do not align with their chosen career paths. **The Department also calls for a review of the state's credential lists** to ensure that schools are offering students the best options through statewide and regional IBCs; and that these IBCs should be rewarded commensurately in the accountability system.
- **Better aligning pathways to high-wage, high-demand career clusters.** To further streamline student access to high wage, high demand career pathways, the Department will consolidate the existing 51 unique Jump Start pathways to align, where possible, with the existing sixteen Carl D. Perkins 'Career Clusters'. This will make Jump Start pathways better-recognized outside of the K-12 system, while also reducing complexity for school systems and students. Where appropriate, the Department will also build alignment between these pathways and post-secondary training opportunities.

In sum, it is time to evolve the Jump Start Career Diploma to focus on true career preparation for students. Louisiana must ensure students graduate with real-world experience, rigorous and valued credentials, and a plan for the future.

2 Every Louisianan knows and values the Jump Start Career Diploma path as fluently as the TOPS University path.

Moving forward, the Department will work to reduce the stigma associated with CTE so that the TOPS Tech pathway sits alongside, rather than below, the TOPS University pathway in the minds of Louisianans. It is time to celebrate CTE achievements—and the students achieving them—the same way as academic achievements. The Department will do this by:

- **Actively celebrating success.** The Department will **award a Jump Start Diploma Student of the Year award**, as part of the annual Student of the Year awards program. A **new annual IBC results celebration**, akin to the annual release of Advanced Placement results, will highlight outstanding credential attainment. And the Department will **actively support schools and school systems** in highlighting local examples of success.
- **Launching a new, interactive Jump Start website.** The Jump Start website will be re-designed to provide educators, students, families, and business leaders with easy access to information on Jump Start and the graduation pathways in their area.
- **Bolstering CTE professional development.** The Department will invest in CTE leaders through the continuation of the CTE Leadership Academy, and in school counselors and CTE educators through enhanced training.

Elevating the TOPS Tech diploma pathway calls for the earnest celebration of success, easy access to knowledge, and thoughtful investment in those closest to the work.

3 Community leaders create systems that bridge education and employment, without state intervention, throughout Louisiana.

Since the inception of Jump Start, the Department has seen many examples of inspiring, locally-led, pathways from high school to employment. This requires collaboration and joint decision-making across education, post-secondary, industry, and economic development organizations. Moving forward, the Department will work to create the conditions and structures necessary for successful community-based CTE partnerships, by:

- **Streamlining governance.** It is time to replace Jump Start Regional Teams with Carl D. Perkins Regional Teams. Originally created to develop Jump Start regional pathways, Jump Start Regional Teams have served an important purpose. However, they are no longer functioning in all parts of the state, and sometimes duplicate other governance bodies.
- **Piloting new Jump Start governance structures.** To actively seed local leadership, the Department will call on willing and interested school systems, or coalitions of neighboring school systems, to pilot a new Jump Start governance structure that bolsters local CTE ownership. Pilot programs will commit to:
 - » employing a local CTE leader to oversee all CTE programming;
 - » increasing transparency of CTE resources; and
 - » developing local advisory councils, with LDOE support, to make data- and feedback-driven decisions on Jump Start pathways, and create dynamic plans that leverage multiple funding sources to create those pathways.
- **Supporting new models that expand beyond grade 12.** Across the state, examples of efforts to extend Jump Start experiences beyond the 12th grade are emerging. The Department will seek to create conditions that support coalitions of schools, post-secondary educators, industry and economic development, to create such opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

The Department is seeking feedback on the future of Jump Start outlined in this blueprint from all stakeholders with a vested interest in CTE in Louisiana. Through to March 15, we will receive feedback through [this survey](#). After that date, the blueprint will be updated and shared with all stakeholders.

Any changes to Jump Start necessary to realize the final blueprint will be implemented with sensitivity to the needs and commitments of students, schools, and school systems. Where feasible and reasonable, some changes may be implemented as early as the 2019-2020 school year.



APPENDIX A: THE JUMP START 2.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

To define a new vision for career education, the Department has undertaken an extensive consultation process. Since September 2018, Department staff have traveled across the state to speak with students, school systems, CTE leaders, counselors - those closest to the day to day of this work. We have heard about the needs of Louisiana's employers through the Louisiana Workforce Commission, economic development organizations, including Louisiana Economic Development, and local Workforce Development Boards. And we have met with higher education stakeholders, including the Board of Regents and Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

We did not limit our engagement to face to face discussions. Through our [Jump Start Survey](#), we heard from over 630 teachers, counselors, CTE leaders, school leaders, special populations leadership, district leaders and other stakeholders. This survey provided quantitative and qualitative insights on the challenges and strengths of Jump Start today, along with helpful ideas for the future. A summary of Survey results can be found through the link.

Other States have made significant progress in creating CTE opportunities for students. We spoke with CTE leaders from other States, including Tennessee and Colorado to learn more about their approaches.

This has been a dynamic process. At the [Jump Start Convention](#), our State's annual convening of CTE stakeholders, we presented the case for Jump Start 2.0 and sought feedback on our working ideas. Over 200 Jump Start stakeholders took part in the session and provided their feedback through the discussion itself and an interactive survey after the session.

We are tremendously grateful to those who have taken part in this consultation process. Your critiques have been constructive, your ideas innovative and thoughtful, and your energy and enthusiasm for this work inspiring.

Of course, this process is not yet complete. The Department is excited to hear further perspectives in response to this draft Blueprint.