

Newsletter

Using Compass Before and After Your Employer Events

Compass can help both you and your students as you prepare for employer events and seek out connections afterwards.

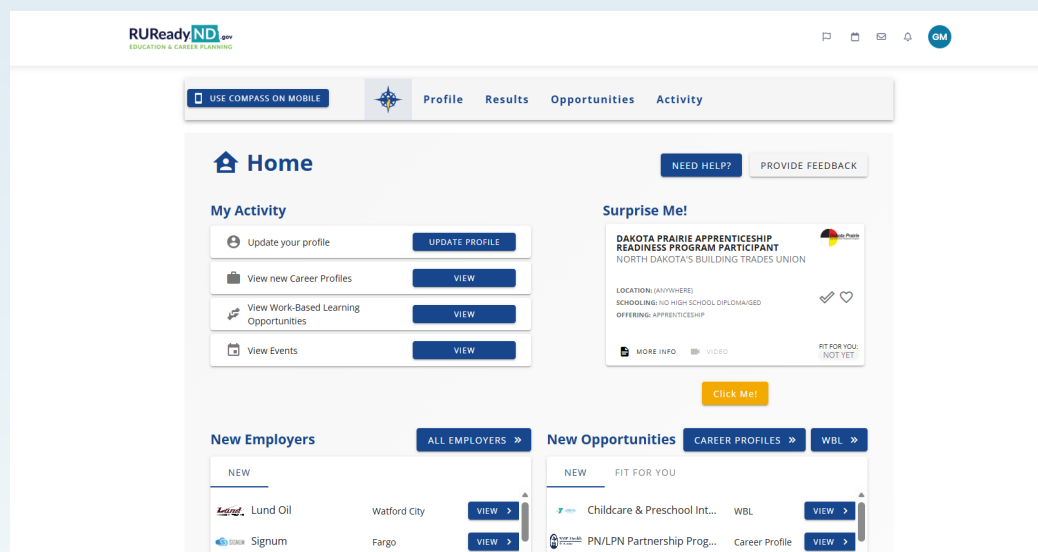
First, you can **schedule your employer events directly in Compass**. Our Employer Connections Database makes it easy for employers to designate the types of events they are interested in and which schools they want to work with. You can then reach out to those employers and invite them to your events. Whether it's a career fair, guest speaker opportunity, classroom visit, field trip, or company site tour, you can find the employers interested in connecting with your students.

Second, upcoming events are a great time to reach out to employers, thank them for connecting, and **encourage them to update their Compass accounts** because your students want to engage. Let them know that students would love to see new work-based learning opportunities or more Career Profiles.

Third, encourage your students to **spend a few minutes in Compass prior to an upcoming event**. They can research an employer before a classroom visit and prepare questions. They can look up employers who will be at a Career Fair, pick a few they are most interested in, and be sure to stop by their booths. They can also research careers before a company site visit and ask for more details while on a tour.

Finally, remind students to use Compass after an event to **connect with employers**. They can mark interest in Career Profiles, apply for a work-based learning opportunity, reach out for more information, or dig into company profiles to learn more.

As a reminder, school professionals in North Dakota access Compass through the [RUPrimaryND.gov Professional Center](https://RUPrimaryND.gov). If you need assistance accessing or creating a professional account, contact Laura Glasser, career resource manager at NDCTE at leglasser@nd.gov. You can also reach [Golden Path Solutions](https://GoldenPathSolutions.net) at info@goldenpath.net.



Dates of Interest

December 15, 2025
FFA LDE Day

February 2026
CTE Month

February 9-10, 2026
DECA Collegiate State Conference

February 22-23, 2026
FBLA Collegiate State Conference

March 1-3, 2026
DECA State Conference

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New National Study Highlights the Economic Value and Workforce Impact of Family and Consumer Sciences

-Ann Dietchman, Family and Consumer Sciences Supervisor

In fall 2024, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) commissioned a national economic impact study to better understand and quantify the value of the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) field in today's society. Conducted by an independent economic research firm, the study draws on national occupational and industry data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, and other authoritative sources.

Measuring the economic footprint of FCS has long been a challenge. Because FCS is not a single, isolated industry sector but a broad, multidisciplinary field, its influence is interwoven across many aspects of daily life and the economy. This study provides the first comprehensive, data-driven analysis of the size, scope, and significance of the FCS profession.

The **Family and Consumer Sciences Industry Economic Impact Study identifies 351 occupations across 215 industries** that draw upon FCS knowledge and skill sets. Together, these occupations generate a remarkable **\$753 billion in direct economic output each year**, underscoring the extensive reach and relevance of the field. The report offers a unified data framework to help policymakers, educators, funders, and industry partners better understand FCS's essential role in workforce development, community wellbeing, and the strength of the U.S. economy.

FCS directly influences the daily decisions that shape personal, family, and community success—how families eat and budget, how they care for children and elders, how they build healthy lifestyles, and how they create safe and stable homes. This study affirms that the impact of FCS extends far beyond personal benefit: it fuels economic growth, sustains essential industries, and prepares communities to meet today's most pressing challenges.

Key Takeaways from the Study

- **\$753 billion** in annual economic contribution from FCS-related occupations.
- **Over 1 million high school students** are currently enrolled in FCS courses nationwide.
- **Lower unemployment rate** among FCS degree holders (1.9%) compared to the national average (2.1%).

More than 350 occupations in 215 industries are connected to FCS knowledge and skills—making it one of the broadest career preparation fields in the U.S.

These findings represent just a portion of the study's comprehensive analysis, which elevates the visibility, relevance, and economic value of Family and Consumer Sciences in today's world. The data reinforces what educators, professionals, and communities have long understood: **FCS is foundational to individual wellbeing, workforce readiness, and a thriving economy.**

****Data and findings referenced in this article are sourced from the 2024 American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) Family and Consumer Sciences Industry Economic Impact Study.**

CTSO Perspective



Hello, my name is Deegan Kirschenmann and I am the SkillsUSA North Dakota State President. I have been in SkillsUSA for 2 years, and I have grown so much in those 2 years. Before I joined SkillsUSA I wasn't very outgoing. I would never dare to speak in front of people, or try to lead something I wasn't very familiar with. My first year in SkillsUSA I took a huge step out of my comfort zone and went to the Mid-America Leadership Conference. After that experience I decided I was going to step out of my comfort zone more, because of what I achieved at Mid-America. I learned that I could do the things I was terrified to do, and I found out I was good at them too. SkillsUSA showed me that I can be the leader I always wanted to be and that it's good to try something you are scared to do.



Why CTE?

Through CTE, students gain technical, academic and employability skills like communication and problem solving, apply their learning in the real world and explore careers while planning for their futures.



THROUGHOUT

Marco reviews his individual learning plan twice a year with his school counselor and family, refining his plans and adding completed courses, projects and experiences to his portfolio.

Benefits for Students

- Students can explore a range of careers as they're forming their vocational identity.¹
- CTE has positive impacts on academic achievement and high school completion.²
- Students are more likely to enroll in two-year colleges and just as likely to enroll in four-year colleges as their peers.³
- CTE is positively linked to postsecondary persistence and degree attainment.⁴
- Students who take CTE courses have higher employment rates after high school.⁵

GRADE 11

Marco takes a course in media production and shadows a manager at a local news station.

GRADE 12

Marco takes a dual-credit course in digital animation, earns an Adobe certification and has a six-week internship at a video production company. He plans to attend college in the fall to study graphic design and animation.

GRADE 7

Marco completes several assessments of his career skills and interests and hears from guest speakers in different industries.

GRADE 8

Marco takes a semester-long career awareness course where he researches careers and interviews adults about their jobs. His class visits the high school to learn about its CTE programs.

In Action: Exploring Careers Through CTE

Follow Marco as he moves through a pathway that includes CTE coursework, career awareness and planning, work-based learning, industry credentials, early postsecondary credit and more.

GRADE 10

Marco takes an introductory CTE course in arts, entertainment and design and joins a related career and technical student organization (CTSO).

GRADE 9

Marco spends a semester rotating through different CTE areas.

Benefits for Employers and Communities

- The nation faces a projected deficit of 6 million workers by 2032 in health care, utilities and other CTE-related industries.⁶
- Employers in high-demand industries report hiring people because of their CTE experience.⁷
- CTE programs contribute significantly to the economies of states and local communities.⁸

Learn more at
ACTEonline.org/CTE-101

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NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

North Dakota ACTE - Award Winner Spotlight Danielle Lubke, Counseling and Career Development Professional Award

- How long have you been teaching in CTE?
 - ◇ This year is year 14.
- Can you talk a bit about a program / initiative that you are most proud of?
 - ◇ I would say there are two. The first one is increasing the number of dual credit classes students are taking at my school. When I started there would be maybe 2-3 classes. This semester I have 21 students taking 37 classes. One year I had 4 students graduate with a Liberal Arts transfer degree from NDSCS along with their High School Diploma. My other initiative would be Our Day of Caring. Which is a community service project that grades 7-12 participate in. Usually in the fall or spring we go out in the community of Hankinson to local business's and do various projects. Our community gives so much to our school this is an opportunity for us to give back to them. Some of the projects have included: cleaning up at the veterans memorial and nursing home, painting benches for the park board, helped organize books at the library and many other projects.
- Why did you join NDACTE?
 - ◇ Being part of NDACTE gives me the chance to collaborate and network with other professionals, advocate for career development, and bring back new ideas and resources to support my students
- What advice do you have for new CTE teachers or NDACTE members?
 - ◇ For new CTE teachers build relationships with your students, notice the little things and acknowledge them that goes a long ways with students. Make sure to take care of yourself and re-charge your batteries you can't take care of other people if you don't take care of yourself. NDACTE members get involved!!!!



Time to update your NDACTE Membership Information

NDACTE members, please take a moment to review your member profile information, including your email, address and Techniques preferences. Use your camera to link to the page or from the [ACTE homepage](#), choose login (top right corner), and enter your username and password (contact ACTE membership services at e-mail below if you need help). Once logged in, you will see the option to update your profile including email, address and your Techniques subscription preferences. Members who opt out of receiving Techniques in the mail will continue to have access to the full PDF edition of each Techniques issue. If you have any questions, please contact memberservices@acteonline.org.



Travel & Entertainment Discounts for NDACTE Members!

Don't forget to take advantage of our new NDACTE Member Deals program — your new portal to travel savings and unforgettable entertainment experiences! As an ACTE member, you now have access to discounts on theme parks, movie tickets, hotels, rental cars and more. To start exploring your perks, log in to your member profile from the ACTE homepage and click the Member Deals icon.

NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

2026 CTE for All Mentorship Program—APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN through January 11

Apply now for ACTE's CTE for All Mentorship Program — designed to help members grow, lead and thrive through meaningful professional relationships. Whether you're seeking guidance or ready to mentor, this program fosters a welcoming CTE community, supports career development, builds professional networks and encourages lifelong learning. The 2026 CTE for All Mentorship Application is open for both mentors and mentees. Take the next step in your journey — applications are due **Jan. 11!**



Learn more and apply here: [CTE for All Mentorship Program](#)

NETWORK . COLLABORATE . LEARN . GROW . BUILD . IMPACT

NEXTLEVEL

POSTSECONDARY CTE LEADERS

Sponsored by [ECMC Foundation](#) Powered by [ACTE](#)

Elevate Your Impact: Apply for NextLevel Postsecondary CTE Fellowship

Ready to shape the future of postsecondary CTE? Apply now for the 2026 NextLevel Postsecondary CTE Leadership Fellowship — a powerful, yearlong experience that builds leadership skills, expands your net-

work and boosts your impact. Fellows gain immersive training, personalized mentorship and opportunities for national advocacy. Applications are due **Dec. 15**, and your journey begins Jan. 28. Learn more about program expectations, benefits and costs, and take your next step toward transformative leadership. [Learn more](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CTE PROFESSIONALS:

ACTE's National Policy Seminar: Celebrating 100 Years of CTE Advocacy

March 22-25 - National Policy Summit, Crystal Gateway Marriott Arlington, Virginia [NPS 2026 - ACTE Online](#)

Join career and technical education (CTE) professionals from across the nation at ACTE's National Policy Seminar (NPS), March 22–25, in Arlington, Virginia. Together, we'll shape the future of CTE, advocate for strong programs and celebrate a century of CTE advocacy. At NPS, you will:

- Hear directly from policy experts and national education leaders on emerging issues.
- Work with your peers to influence federal CTE priorities and funding initiatives.
- Strengthen your advocacy toolkit with practical strategies you can take back to your home communities.
- Participate in Capitol Hill visits to elevate the voices of your students and programs.
- Honor 100 years of ACTE with special events and commemorations.

Secure your spot and take advantage of early bird rates when you register by Feb. 18. [Learn more](#).

April 29-May 1, 2026 - ACET's Work Based Learning Conference, Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, Rhode Island [ACTE's Work-based Learning Conference - ACTE Online](#) - February 13 – Early bird rates end

ACTE Region V Conference

April 8–11, 2026 in Salt Lake City, Utah

In Utah, we don't shy away from the climb — we embrace it. CTE educators lead the way, taking bold steps to try new tools, strategies, and technologies in the classroom. Like scaling a new peak, there's risk and uncertainty — but also growth. Each challenge met, each lesson learned, helps our students climb higher toward success in the real world. Utah ACTE is thrilled to welcome you to the **ACTE Region V Conference**.

Location: [Little American Hotel](#)

500 Main St.

Salt Lake City, UT 84101

\$199 + Tax per night

[Region V Early Bird Registration Rates \(through Feb. 15\)](#)

Member: \$450

Nonmember: \$500

State Director's Column

-Wayde Sick, Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education



A Year in Review

As we wrap up 2025, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who contributes to Career and Technical Education across our state. Your commitment and dedication ensure that North Dakota students receive a high-quality, hands-on learning experience that prepares them for success. Through strong partnerships with local communities and industry, our students gain access to meaningful oppor-

tunities that help them explore careers aligned with their interests and strengths.

I also want to express my gratitude to our CTE staff for their unwavering support of local programs throughout the year. Together, we have achieved significant milestones and celebrated many successes, including:

- Of the thirteen new and expanding Career and Technology Center Capital Projects, all are open and operational.
- 26 new CTE programs started, with multiple expansions.
- A successful agency move from the State Capitol to the Hughes Education Center.
- 55th Annual North Dakota Career and Technical Education Professional Development Council was held, hosting over 500 attendees.
- Adoption of the modernized Career Ready Practices.
- Completion of 10 Team Vision Visits, with many individual program visits.
- Approving a modernization funding policy, which reduces red tape and is outcomes focused.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you all. I look forward to what 2026 has to offer.

For any questions, please feel free to contact me at wasick@nd.gov.

Wayde Sick

State CTE Director

Assistant Director's Corner

-John Gruenberg, Assistant State Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education

December Reflections: Wrapping Up Vision Visits Across North Dakota

Closing Out the First Half of the Year

As we wrap up 2025, I'm proud to share that Team Vision Visits for the fall cycle are officially complete. From Fargo to Grafton, from Minot to New Town, our team has traveled thousands of miles across North Dakota to sit with educators, walk labs, hear student stories, and see firsthand the work happening every day to strengthen Career and Technical Education.

Each community brought forward unique strengths, creative solutions, and a deep commitment to helping students discover their pathways. These visits are never just checkpoints—they are conversations, moments of alignment, and opportunities for shared vision. Thank you to every educator, counselor, administrator, and partner who welcomed us into your schools.



From the Road: Our Statewide Journey

Throughout September, October, and November, Vision Visit Teams traveled to districts and CTE centers across the state, including:

- Fargo Public Schools & Cass County CTC
- Turtle Mountain Community High School
- Four Winds Community High School
- NDSCS Wahpeton
- Minot Public Schools & Minot Area Workforce Academy
- Richardton–Taylor Public School
- Napoleon Public School
- Washburn Public School
- North Valley Area CTC & Grafton High School
- Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (New Town)

Each stop reinforced the same message:

ND CTE is strong, growing, and deeply aligned to the needs of our learners and our workforce.

Reports Are on the Way

With the visit cycle complete, our team is now transitioning into the next phase—**finalizing and delivering Vision Visit Reports** to each corresponding school.

These reports reflect months of observation, scoring, narrative writing, and alignment to Standards 1–10. Schools can expect their finalized documents soon as we complete our internal quality checks and statewide consistency review.

Thank you for your patience as we work to deliver reports that are thoughtful, accurate, and actionable.

Assistant Director's Corner

-John Gruenberg, Assistant State Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education

Mileage Snapshot: Bismarck to Each Vision Visit Location

Below is an approximate mileage overview from Bismarck to each school or center visited this fall. These estimates help give a sense of the scope—and the roads traveled—by our Vision Visit teams.

- **Fargo / Cass County CTC** – 190 miles
- **Turtle Mountain Community High School (Belcourt)** – 140 miles
- **Four Winds Community High School (Fort Totten)** – 100 miles
- **NDSCS Wahpeton** – 200 miles
- **Minot Public Schools & Minot Area Workforce Academy** – 110 miles
- **Richardton–Taylor Public School** – 95 miles
- **Napoleon Public School** – 75 miles
- **Washburn Public School** – 40 miles
- **North Valley Area CTC (Grafton)** – 215 miles
- **Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College – New Town** – 135 miles

Each mile traveled represents a meaningful conversation and a commitment to improving opportunities for students across the state.

What's Next: ND CTE Career Cluster Updates

Coming in early 2026, ND CTE is working on an **updated Career Cluster and subcluster frameworks**, aligned with:

- Advance CTE national frameworks
- North Dakota workforce trends and in-demand occupations
- Strengthened pathways and sequencing

Improved clarity for programs of study

These updates will support clearer alignment, easier program planning, and stronger connections between middle school, high school, and postsecondary CTE.

Stay tuned—more information will be shared in January!

Closing Thoughts

The work happening across North Dakota is inspiring. Our educators, administrators, and industry partners continue to demonstrate why ND CTE remains a model of excellence.

Thank you for the miles, the conversations, the observations, and the warm welcomes.

Level Up with ND CTE!

John Gruenberg

Assistant State Director ND CTE



Citations

¹ Callahan, J., Ito, M., Campbell Rea, S., & Wortman, A. (2019). *Influences on occupational identity in adolescence: A review of research and programs*. Connected Learning Alliance. Retrieved from https://clalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Influences_on_Occupational_Identity_Adolescence.pdf

² Lindsay, J., Hughes, K., Dougherty, S. M., Reese, K., & Joshi, M. (2024). *What we know about the impact of career and technical education: A systematic review of the research*. Career and Technical Education Research Network. Retrieved from <https://cteresearchnetwork.org/resources/2024-systematic-review>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Blagg, K. (2025, July 24). *Which college and career readiness standards best align with positive outcomes after high school?* Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/which-college-and-career-readiness-standards-best-align-positive-outcomes>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Lightcast. (2024). *The rising storm building a future-ready workforce to withstand the looming labor shortage*. Retrieved from https://www.datocms-assets.com/62658/1726526804-the_rising_storm_lightcast_final.pdf

⁷ Advance CTE. (2021, October). *Shifting the skills conversation: Employer attitudes and outcomes of career technical education*. Retrieved from <https://careertech.org/resource/shifting-the-skills-conversation-employer-attitudes-and-outcomes-of-career-technical-education>

⁸ ACTE. (2023, January). *Investing in CTE yields big returns*. Retrieved from https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ACTE_InvestingInCTE_Jan2023.pdf