

Newsletter

RUReady QuickStart: 45 Minute Virtual Workshop

-Laura Glasser, Career Resource Manager

Looking to bring career exploration and planning into your classroom? All North Dakota students in grades 6–12 have access to **RUReady.ND.gov**, the state's education and career planning platform, and education professionals have access to professional accounts and resources! RUReady offers lesson plans and materials that help students connect what they are learning in class to their future careers.

This 45-minute virtual workshop will provide a practical introduction to RUReady. You'll learn how students log in, explore resources for your subject area, and access reports that provide insights into your students' education and career plans. You'll leave with ready-to-use ideas for your classroom!

The workshop is offered two times with identical content - sign up for just one. Hosted live on Microsoft Teams, each session includes time for questions. No previous experience with RUReady is required!

[Register today!](#)

Have questions about RUReady.ND.gov or the workshop? Contact Laura Glasser at leglasser@nd.gov or 701-328-9733.

Dates of Interest

November 4, 2025
Napolean Public School Vision Visit

November 6, 2025
Washburn Public School Vision Visit

November 12-14, 2025
North Valley Area CTC Vision Visit

November 16-17, 2025
FCCLA Winter Leadership

November 18-19, 2025
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College Vision Visit

December 15, 2025
FFA LDE Day

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If You Build It, They Will Come: Proactively Growing North Dakota's IT Pipeline

-Brad Hoffarth, Information Technology Supervisor

The classic movie line, "If you build it, they will come," offers an appealing vision. While North Dakota has a growing demand for skilled IT workers, merely *having* strong programs isn't enough; we must proactively remove the intimidation factor that prevents many students from entering these fields. Concepts like coding, networking, and cybersecurity can feel overwhelming to students entering high school. Our strategy must focus on dropping those barriers and reaching students early.

1. Dropping Barriers: Leverage National Clubs

One of the most effective ways schools can drop these barriers is through structured after-school clubs with a clear focus on computing. These clubs offer a low-pressure, high-engagement entry point to complex topics.

We highly recommend leveraging national affiliations whose sole purpose is to promote computer science with young people. Great examples include:

Girls Who Code
Hack Club
Code Club

The IT Club
Cyber.org
CodeHS

2. Setting the Hook Early: Learning from Youth Sports

Just like successful youth sports, such as hockey or soccer, programs need to "set the hook early." Successful athletes often start playing well before they reach high school. A club sends a flyer home to a 1st grader inviting them to try a new activity for free or a nominal fee.

Why can't our computer science programs apply the same formula? We need to reach younger students. Consider initiatives like:

- Starting a before or after-school coding club for middle schoolers.
- Establishing a summer camp that introduces elementary students to basic IT skills or cybersecurity principles.

3. Mobilizing Resources: Funding for Program Promotion

Running camps and after-school programs involve costs, but funding these projects is achievable through collaboration:

- Industry Volunteers: Computer science professionals are often passionate about giving back and understand the urgent need to fill future positions. They are often willing to donate time to work with young people.
- Local Business Support: Businesses that employ IT or computer science staff are keenly aware of the talent shortage. They can be invaluable partners, potentially funding projects, donating used equipment, or sponsoring employee time to help run your club or camp.
- Colleges and Universities: Local higher education institutions are excellent resources, as the young students you train are their potential future students. They can provide instructional help and may have used equipment that can be donated or sold at a reasonable price.
- Grants: Actively seek out grants available for STEM initiatives. These include direct funding grants and highly beneficial matching-fund grants that amplify dollars contributed by local businesses.

By actively engaging students early and mobilizing community resources, we can remove the intimidation factor, create exciting pathways, and ensure North Dakota builds the strong IT talent pipeline it needs.

North Dakota TSA: Momentum is Building!

-Brad Hoffarth, TSA State Advisor

We are thrilled to share the excitement surrounding the **Technology Student Association (TSA)** in North Dakota! We saw fantastic growth at the State Conference last year, and the energy among our students is truly invigorating. Yes, we often hear, "TSA, like at the airport?" and that's a great conversation starter! But the reality is, TSA is where students explore the future of technology and engineering.

Officer Team: Collaboration Under Pressure

It is an absolute pleasure to work alongside the NDTSA State Officers. Watching six high school students from across the state connect, learn each other's strengths, and then successfully collaborate to execute a professional conference in less than four months is incredibly impressive. Their dedication is a driving force behind our success.

Conference Highlights: Expanding Skills and Horizons

The State Conference offered six dynamic breakout sessions designed to deepen technical skills and broaden student interests:

- **Storytelling & Writing:** Professional children's author Duane Zeigler shared tips on story generation and writing craft.
- **Forensic Science:** Forensic investigator Dana Rustebakke provided specialized training on forensic science techniques.
- **Problem-Solving Mastery:** Clayton Mannie, a Valley City State Assistant Instructor, shared essential tips and tricks for success in competitive problem-solving events.

Podcast Development: Paul McDonald (co-host of the *Toast and Jam Podcast*) taught students how to develop a compelling story, find interesting podcast guests, and craft questions that build a narrative.

The State Officers also led impactful sessions on the benefits of running for office and showcased the state initiative supporting the American Cancer Society, discussing fundraising ideas and promoting the annual Pin Contest.

It will take a lot of people to put together a successful conference and I appreciate all the support. Big thank you to the NDTSA Officer Team, Cindy, McKenzie, Jenna and Lila in the CTE office and Clayton Mannie at VCSU.

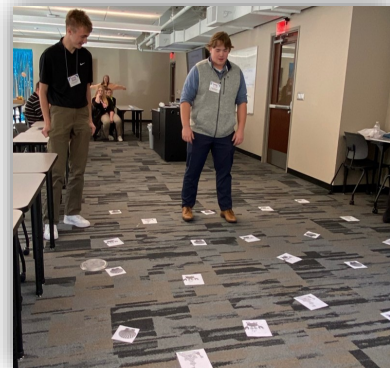
Top 10 Reasons to Start or Restart Your TSA Chapter!

If you're looking for a way to maximize your students' potential, TSA is the answer. Here are 10 compelling reasons to get involved:

1. Develop Leadership Opportunities in your school and community.
2. Give students who excel with STEM a place to belong.
3. Promote problem solvers, because the world needs more!
4. Reinforce skills developed directly in your CTE classroom.
5. Build deeper connections with students outside the traditional classroom setting.
6. Develop crucial Professional skills like presenting and teamwork.
7. Networking with peers, industry professionals, and college representatives.
8. Showcase student technical skills through hands-on competitions.
9. Provide valuable Hands-on opportunities in technology and engineering.
10. Students get to hang out with the coolest TSA Advisor (YOU)!

Save the Date: Upcoming Conferences

State TSA Conference	March 8-10, 2026	Bismarck State College, NECE Building
National TSA Conference	June 22-26, 2026	Washington D.C, Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center



Preparing Students for the FAFSA with EVERFI

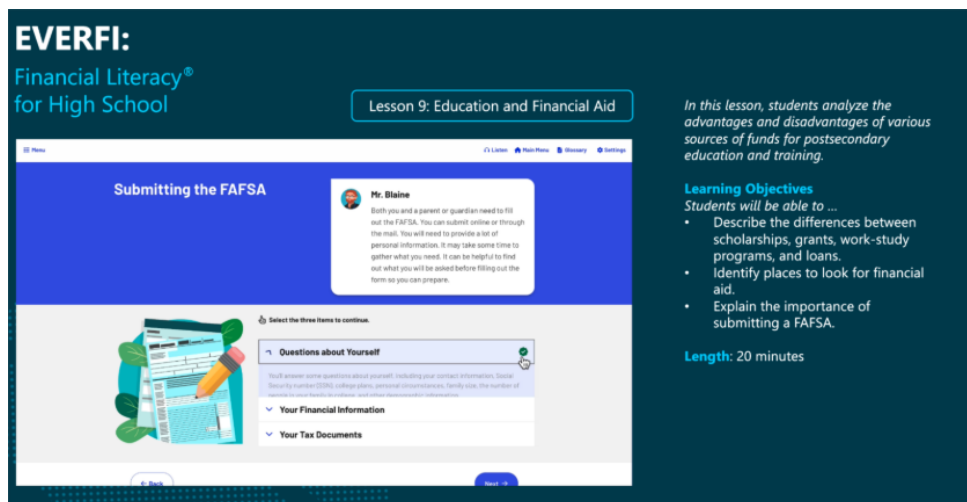
The 2026-27 FAFSA is open! Are students and families prepared? Early completion of the FAFSA ensures priority consideration for students to maximize their financial aid for grants, scholarships, and loans.

To support students and families with the FAFSA completion process and understanding their return on investment for higher education, Everfi has included two lessons in [Everfi: Financial Literacy](#)

addressing these topics. These lessons are 15-20 minutes each and include:

- Understanding Your Higher Education's ROI- differentiate net cost vs. true cost
- Higher Education and Financial Aid-- Sample FAFSA completion!

Want to discuss how to share this program with educators, students, and families? Reach out - *let's chat!*



NDACTE Benefit Highlight

Career Protection for ACTE Members

Educators face many challenges in schools these days, but inadequate professional liability protection doesn't need to be one of them. ACTE's Members Insurance Program offers affordable professional liability insurance for educators in any school setting. The Educators Professional Liability Plan for employed educators provides \$1 million in liability protection starting at \$108 a year and features:

- Broad coverage for a range of exposures associated with your professional duties if your school won't or can't adequately defend you.
- All defense costs paid in addition to the liability limit if you end up in court.
- Job protection benefits if you're subject to a job action such as demotion, transfer, reassignment or dismissal.

ACTE Benefits Webinar Series

Discover the full value of your ACTE membership through our **2025–2026 Benefits Webinar Series!** From September through May, this series highlights resources, tools, and opportunities designed to support your professional growth and strengthen your impact in career and technical education.

Sessions run monthly from September 2025 through May 2026

30 minutes each – flexible and focused

Join us to learn, connect, and unlock everything ACTE membership has to offer!

[Intro to ACTE Benefit Webinar Series Video](#) (less than 3 min.)

[ACTE Benefit Webinar Series](#) (schedule & registration links)

November Supporting CTE Administrators: Leadership Resources and Planning Ahead Tuesday, Nov 4, 2025
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM EST

NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

North Dakota ACTE - Award Winner Spotlight Eric Ripley, Administrator of the Year



- How long have you been teaching in CTE?
 - ◇ I am starting my 27th year within CTE, spending 10 in the classroom and the past 17 as the CTE Director.
- Can you talk a bit about a program / initiative that you are most proud of?
 - ◇ We are very proud of the opening of the Career Impact Academy, our new CTE center serving the students of Grand Forks and surrounding communities. The facility is a true community effort with 99 industry partners to date that have contributed financially to the project. The ability to expand and strengthen the access and availability of CTE courses for our region's students has been tremendous.
- Why did you join NDACTE?
 - ◇ As a professional, I believe strongly in belonging to the professional organizations that are advocating, supporting, and representing my field. I have greatly appreciated and valued my ongoing membership to NDACTE / ACTE for the work both organizations do to elevate CTE for staff and students. Through my involvement within NDACTE / ACTE, I have been provided the ability to gain valuable professional development, ability to be actively involved through committees and leadership positions, and have a voice in the organization's efforts to advance CTE within the state, region, and at the national level.
- What advice do you have for new CTE teachers or NDACTE members?
 - ◇ As a new CTE teacher, I would highly recommend the establishment of one's own professional learning network, which is a key benefit from one's involvement within NDACTE. The opportunity to network and collaborate with other NDACTE professionals across the state can provide great support in ideas, initiatives, and best practices, especially for a new CTE instructor. NDACTE is here to support you!
- Anything else you would like to add?
 - ◇ I am very honored to be recognized by NDACTE for this award, it is greatly appreciated!

NDACTE Awards New Professional Travel Stipend Recipients:

Each year, North Dakota Association for Career and Technical Education sets aside funds to assist in national conference first time attendee's expenditures (maximum of \$500). To be eligible, applicants must be a current NDACTE member and a first-time attendee to any ACTE national conference. This year's recipient winners are Julie Termine from Burk Central and Rick Whitney.

Julie indicated she would like to attend the ACTE VISION Conference to further her CTE and experience content in the business field.

Rick indicated that he is new to career development and would like to learn new and upcoming strategies for career exploration and ways to engage younger students. By attending ACTE VISION Conference he would be expanding his own knowledge base.

Congratulations and thank you for your commitment to make a real difference in students' success!

State Director's Column

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

State Board for Career and Technical Education Approves New Funding Policy for Secondary CTE Programs

At its October 27th meeting, the North Dakota State Board for Career and Technical Education approved a new funding policy for secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, set to take effect July 1, 2026. The new policy reflects a major step forward in ensuring equitable, transparent, and outcome-focused funding for CTE programs across the state.

Developed by the Board's Funding Subcommittee, the policy is built on six guiding principles designed to strengthen North Dakota's CTE system

- Ensure equitable access to high-quality CTE programs statewide.
- Ensure program quality through consistent oversight and evaluation.
- Incentivize high-quality performance among local recipients.
- Simplify funding structures to make them easier for stakeholders to understand.
- Reduce administrative burden on both local programs and Department staff.
- Focus on outputs rather than inputs, rewarding results that align with student and workforce outcomes.

The policy also supports the Board-adopted Student Outcome Goals, which focus on preparing North Dakota students for success in college, careers, and life.

Program Approval and Accountability

CTE programs will continue to be evaluated based on size, scope, and quality, as outlined in the state's Perkins V plan. Department program supervisors will review Vision Visit results and documentation submitted annually to determine program eligibility. Only programs meeting these standards will be approved for funding.

Funding Structure

Beginning in 2026-27 school year, funding allocations for eligible school districts and CTE centers will include two major components:

Base Allocation: Distributed proportionally based on each program's full-time equivalent (FTE) involvement.

Performance Allocation: Awarded to programs meeting key student success targets, including CTE concentrator completion and participation in work-based learning experiences.

For Career and Technical Education Centers, funding will also consider the number of member districts served, programs offered, total student enrollment, and a flat-rate operational allocation to support center management.

Support for Program Growth

To encourage innovation and expansion, the policy outlines dedicated funding for new, expanding, transferring, and reinstated programs. These programs will receive support based on their growth activities, prior performance, or anticipated impact, ensuring that new opportunities for students are adequately resourced.

Funding for existing, new, transferring, expanding, or reinstated programs remains contingent on the availability of sufficient funds.

Fiscal Transparency and Accountability

Each eligible recipient will be required to submit an Annual Expenditure Report detailing the use of CTE funds. The Department will conduct annual desk audits of 10% of programs to ensure proper fiscal stewardship. Programs that fail to submit required reports or demonstrate compliance may lose funding eligibility in the following year.

Looking Ahead

The State Board has directed the Department to continue to work on this policy, to fund programs that are considered high cost and lead to in-demand careers at a higher rate. This work will begin immediately.

Preliminary funding estimates will be shared no later than March, with final allocations communicated by May 31. Adjustments may occur annually to reflect available resources and legislative actions.

This comprehensive policy represents a significant modernization of North Dakota's approach to funding secondary CTE. By aligning resources with outcomes, the Department and State Board aim to ensure that every CTE dollar drives meaningful results for students and the state's workforce.

For more information, and to review the Board's Student Outcome Goals, click [here](#).

Please contact me wasick@nd.gov if you have any questions.



Assistant Director's Corner

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

ND CTE Vision Visits

From the Road

Over the past several weeks, I've had the opportunity to travel across North Dakota to meet with CTE teachers, administrators, and community partners during our Team Vision Visits. Each stop reaffirmed what makes our system strong—people who care deeply about helping students connect their education to real life. Whether it is in a welding lab, a health sciences classroom, or a business education suite, the energy around hands-on, career-connected learning is alive and well.



These visits remind me how far we've come in aligning programs to workforce needs and how much potential still exists as we continue strengthening pathways, facilities, and partnerships. The themes below reflect what we're seeing statewide—not just isolated successes, but a collective movement to level up CTE in North Dakota.

Strengthened Pathways and Alignment

Across the state, schools are doing an excellent job of building course sequences that allow students to complete at least two CTE credits within a plan of study. There's clear evidence that dual credit and articulation agreements are connecting students to postsecondary opportunities earlier and more intentionally.

Industry-Relevant Labs and Equipment

Programs are prioritizing modern, safe, and career-aligned lab environments. Whether it's advanced manufacturing, construction, health sciences, or technology, the focus is on equipping students with tools that reflect what they'll encounter in industry.

Expanding Work-Based Learning (WBL)

Work-based learning continues to grow in quality and reach. Schools and centers are formalizing processes for internships, clinicals, and apprenticeships with clear expectations for both students and employers. The emphasis is shifting from just finding placements to ensuring every experience is structured, supervised, and tied directly to program competencies.

Stronger Partnerships and Regional Collaboration

Industry partners continue to be key to our success. From advisory meetings to project sponsorships, employers are helping shape curriculum and program decisions. Collaboration among schools, colleges, and businesses is not just happening—it's becoming our norm.

These Vision Visits are about more than compliance—they're about connection. Every classroom, school, and CTE Center I walk into shows the pride and purpose behind CTE in North Dakota. Our work matters, and it's making a difference. Thank you to every teacher, counselor, and administrator who continues to champion ND CTE.

Together, we're ensuring every learner finds their place, their pathway, and their purpose. Level Up with ND CTE!

John Gruenberg

Assistant State Director ND CTE