

EXECUTIVE ORDER 25-16

WHEREAS, my administration is committed to improving both educational and employment outcomes for Missouri students, and career and technical education plays a major role in ensuring Missouri's workforce is learning the skills and tools necessary to meet the employment demands of the future; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education in Missouri serves students in junior high through postsecondary grade levels, focusing on Agriculture, Business, Health Sciences, Skilled Technical Sciences, and Technology and Engineering, among others; and

WHEREAS, skilled workers in these specified employment fields and others are already deemed high-need, and economic and employment projections only anticipate this demand growing in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, Missouri's career and technical education infrastructure consists of 444 comprehensive high schools, 57 career centers, 12 community college districts, and one state technical college, in addition to a robust four-year institution network; and

WHEREAS, with guidance from the Missouri General Assembly and elected leaders, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has developed many new tools and programs to improve career and technical education, including Missouri Connections, WorKeys partnerships, youth apprenticeship programs, career counseling, and the Missouri CTE Certificate for high school graduates, but knowledge and utilization of existing programming is insufficient and can be improved; and

WHEREAS, Missouri has made great progress in updating, expanding, and improving physical career and technical education infrastructure and capacity in recent years; and

WHEREAS, still more can be done to better coordinate, communicate, and update educational programming to increase awareness and utilization of career and technical education opportunities for Missouri students and families as well as employers seeking skilled workers; and

WHEREAS, increased engagement with key career and technical education stakeholders and partners has the potential to greatly improve career and technical education program awareness and participation, as well as employment opportunities for Missouri's future workforce.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MIKE KEHOE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of Missouri, do hereby charge the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, with the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development as a principal partner, with improving existing career and technical education delivery systems in Missouri. This charge will formally be known as the Governor's Workforce of the Future Challenge and shall be carried out as follows:

I. Directive to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall engage key stakeholders to update and improve career and technical education delivery systems in Missouri. The focus of this work shall be on marked improvements to career and technical education attainment and increasing utilization through existing programming.

Recommendations for fundamental and long-term changes should also be considered.

II. Objectives and Guiding Principles:

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall work with stakeholders across the state to accomplish the following goals:

- a. Increase partnerships and awareness of career and technical education opportunities for both students and potential employers.
 1. Incentivize secondary and postsecondary training partnerships that lead to employment after training is complete or seamless continuous training at the postsecondary level.
 2. Provide resources for parents of elementary and secondary students to increase awareness of emerging industries and associated job opportunities and counter outdated misconceptions surrounding various occupations.
 3. Solidify business and industry endorsement of the Missouri CTE certificate and encourage business and industry to provide advanced employment opportunities for students who earn various training credentials.
- b. Continue career and technical education program development and expansion, emphasizing that career counseling should begin early, ideally before junior high, in a student's academic career.

1. Enhance career advising efforts by expanding school counselor support systems.
 2. Strengthen career advising efforts at the elementary and middle school levels.
 3. Develop instructional resources that support the development of employability skills that are in high demand.
 4. Provide support to elementary and middle schools to create age-appropriate courses that help students explore career pathways and develop fundamental technical, critical thinking, and soft skills.
 5. Address the skills gap by incentivizing the creation of work-based learning opportunities and the creation of innovative programs that respond to high demand occupations at the local level.
- c. Increase Missouri Connections utilization in K-12 and postsecondary educational institutions.
 - d. In coordination with the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, increase WorkKeys implementation in Missouri high schools to ensure every county is a certified work ready county and promote and expand youth apprenticeship opportunities in both K-12 and postsecondary educational settings.
 - e. Improve collaboration among regional job centers, registered youth apprenticeship consultants, and career advisors.
 - f. Conduct a comprehensive review of career and technical education programs across the state to assess deficiencies and identify resources that could be better utilized toward modern programs.
 - g. Identify and eliminate burdensome regulations that hinder career and technical education instruction capacity and student utilization. This should include making it easier for interested industry experts to provide career and technical education instruction by removing unnecessary and specific higher education credentials and qualifications.

III. Stakeholder Engagement:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall engage stakeholders, including at least those listed below, to ensure the success of this challenge, as well as solicit feedback on how the career and technical education landscape in Missouri can be improved:

- a. Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development
- b. K-12 schools
- c. Career and Technical Education institutions
- d. Business and industry partners (including those in agriculture)
- e. Economic development partners
- f. Missouri institutions of higher education (including universities and community colleges)
- g. Apprenticeship facilitators and consultants
- h. Career counseling experts
- i. Missouri's Career and Technical Education Advisory Council

The first stakeholder meeting shall be convened by the Governor's Office, in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, no later than May 1, 2025.

IV. Duration and Reporting:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall submit an annual report to the Governor by September 30 of each year summarizing efforts that have been made in the current year, progress towards the overarching goals of this challenge, feedback from external stakeholders, and policy recommendations. The order shall remain in effect until December 31, 2028, unless otherwise dissolved by subsequent executive action.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Missouri, in the City of Jefferson, on this 28th day of January, 2025.

MIKE KEHOE
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

DENNY HOSKINS
SECRETARY OF STATE