



# Industry Credentials: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF  
INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS  
AND CAREER TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION

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# What are industry credentials?



**NRF FOUNDATION**  
**RISE UP**

 **Microsoft**

**External validation of the skills and competencies learned and mastered**

Inherent in industry credentials are:

- ▶ The identification of knowledge
- ▶ The identification of skills
- ▶ The identification of abilities
- ▶ Which are required within specific sectors and industries

**ESB**  
Entrepreneurship  
and Small Business



**CERTIPORT**  
A PEARSON VUE BUSINESS

  
**CISCO**

**Always FoodSafe**  
ncco group



**CTECS**  
Career and Technical Education  
Consortium of States

**CareerSafe**

**ServSafe**  
National Restaurant Association

**AUTODESK.**

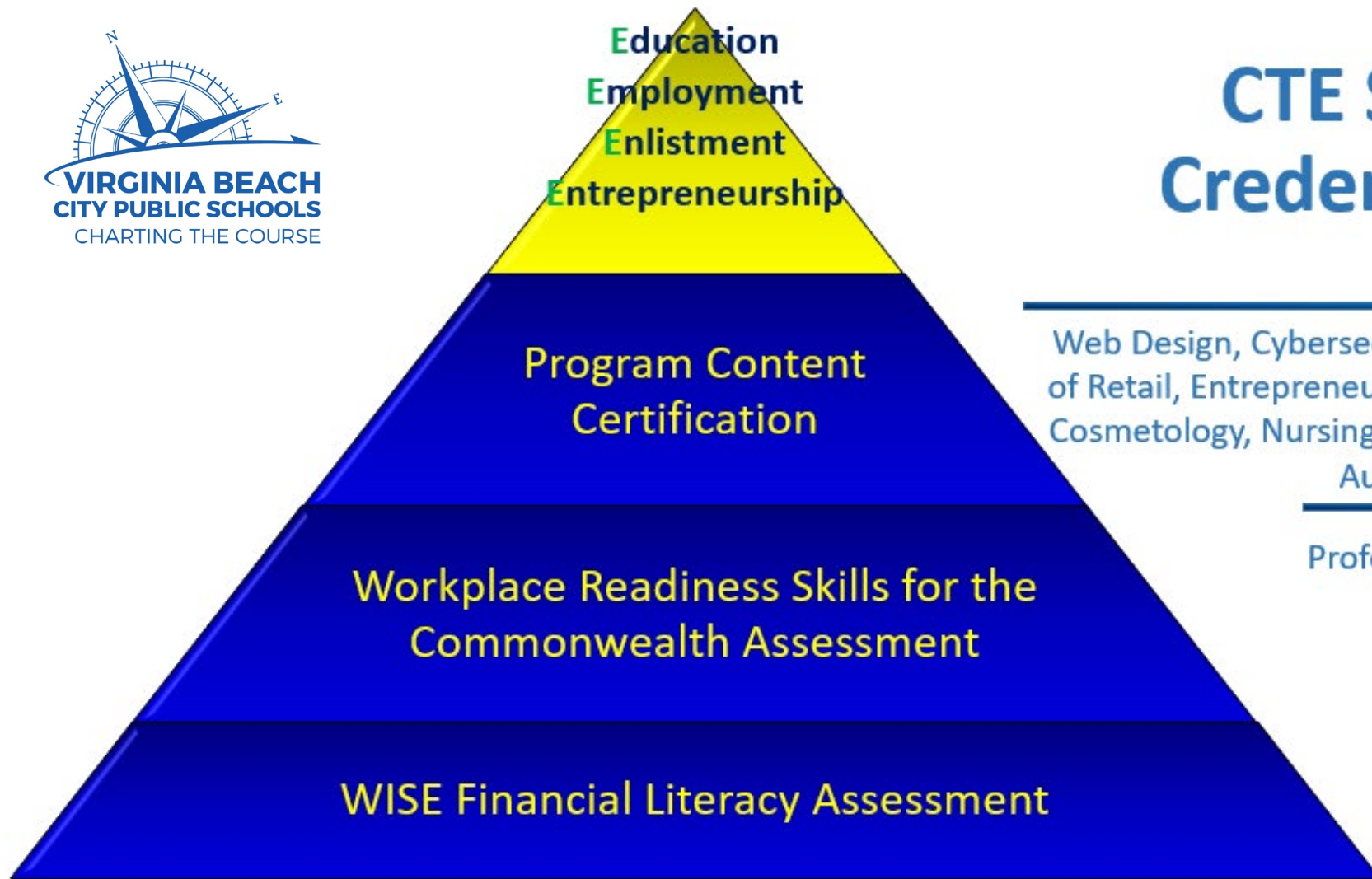
**NOCTI**

  
**SolidWorks**

**w!se** | Financial Literacy  
CERTIFICATION



# CTE Stackable Credential Model



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Web Design, Cybersecurity, CISCO, AutoDesk, Business of Retail, Entrepreneurship & Small Business, ServSafe, Cosmetology, Nursing, Dental Assisting, State Licenses, Automotive Service Excellence, etc.

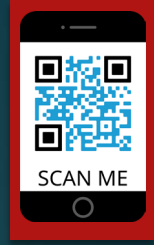
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Professional Qualities & People Skills,  
Professional Knowledge & Skills,  
Technology & Knowledge Skills

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Money Management, Banks &  
Banking Insurance &  
Investing. Credit

# The Changing Job Market



## Shift in Economy:

- ▶ From good production to a focus on high-quality skills

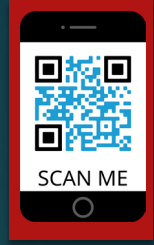
## Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs:

- ▶ Closing the middle-skills gap is essential for US economic competitiveness
- ▶ Millions of job postings remain unfilled due to a lack of skilled workers
- ▶ Growing need for credentials beyond high school



# THE GOOD:

## Benefits of CTE & Industry Credentialing



**Portable:** Globally recognized industry credentials serve as a stamp on a passport. The globally recognized skill has been validated.



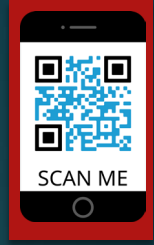
**Stackable:** Students can earn as many stackable and portable credentials as they want (if available in their program area)



**Zero cost to students:** All students in a CTE program have access to free industry credentials and training; saving \$\$\$\$

# THE GOOD:

## Benefits of CTE & Industry Credentialing



**Student Engagement:** CTE can increase student motivation, attendance, and graduation rates (93% vs 82% without CTE)



**Skills Alignment:** Credentials align with workforce needs, enhancing job prospects (94.4%)

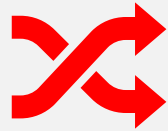


**Economic Advantage:** Credentials can increase starting salaries by 5-25%: Industry certifications provide essential skills for high-paying, middle-skill jobs

# THE BAD: Challenges and Limitations



**Value Confusion:** Uncertainty about the value of credentials – which are the credentials of value?



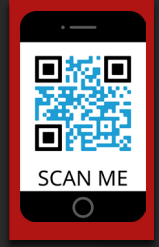
**Misconceptions:** CTE is often perceived as less rigorous than 'core' education; which leads to low-paying, undesirable jobs. compared to a 4-year degree



**Qualified Teachers/Retention:** CTE teachers are listed as #6 in Virginia's critical shortage teaching area

# THE UGLY:

## Misconceptions & Systematic Issues



### STIGMA:

CTE IS OFTEN UNFAIRLY ASSOCIATED WITH LOW EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND AS A PATH FOR LOW-PERFORMING OR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS



### ACCOUNTABILITY PRESSURE:

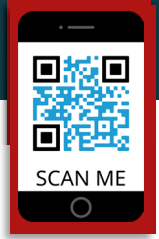
PRESSURE ON CORE ACADEMICS, TO INCREASE STANDARDIZED TESTING SCORES = REMEDIATION AND LESS TIME IN SCHEDULE FOR CTE



### CHECKING THE GRADUATION

**BOX:** WHEN SCHOOLS PROVIDE A LAST-MINUTE CAREER CERTIFICATION SO THAT A STUDENT CAN 'WALK' THE GRADUATION STAGE, CTE IS UNDERMINED





Education  
Employment  
Enlistment  
Entrepreneurship

Program Content  
Certification

Workplace Readiness Skills for the  
Commonwealth Assessment

WISE Financial Literacy Assessment

## CTE Stackable Credential Model

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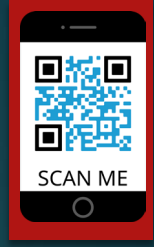
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# Future Directions:



**Increase Awareness:** Better inform students, parents, and employers about the value of CTE and industry certifications.



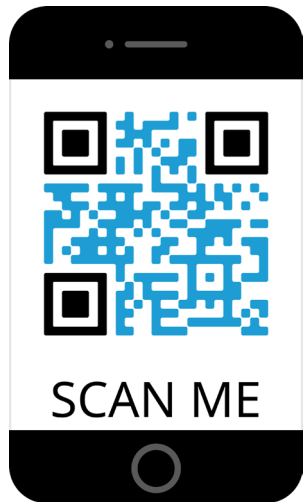
**Address Stigma:** Work to dispel misconceptions and improve the reputation of CTE.



**Need for Research:** More studies are needed on the impact of industry credentials.



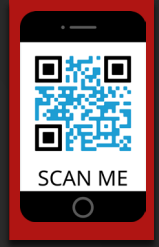
**Policy Alignment:** Ensure CTE programs are aligned with current workforce needs, and valuable



# Questions

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### 'JUST ANOTHER TEST':

INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS SEEN BY SOME AS JUST ANOTHER SOL – TEACHERS AND STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE