

#NPSCTE26



March 22–25

Crystal Gateway Marriott
Arlington, Virginia

With time to meet with legislators on Capitol Hill

2026 National Policy Seminar Agenda

Celebrating 100 Years of CTE Advocacy!

Sunday, March 22

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Alexandria

State Association Leadership Training (SALT)

Separate Registration Required

Join ACTE for a full-day leadership training designed for current and emerging state association leaders. This interactive session focuses on essential leadership and association management skills aligned with ACTE's Quality Association Standards. Topics include governance, membership, finances, communications, and public policy. Participants will gain practical strategies to strengthen their state associations. Ideal for executive directors, board members, and committee leaders.

3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Arlington Foyer

Onsite Registration

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Salons D-G

First Timer's Q and A

If this is your first time at NPS, or you have questions about the conference or Hill visits, stop by this informal question and answer session with ACTE's policy staff. We'll provide you with all the information you need to navigate the environment on Capitol Hill and make the most of your interactions with policymakers. *Please note: This is a discussion session only, there will be no formal presentation during this time.*

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Sky View

CTE Administrators Reception

Presented by the ACTE Administration Division

Monday, March 23

7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Arlington Foyer

Onsite Registration

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
Arlington Foyer

Continental Breakfast
Generously Sponsored by ICEV



8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Salons 3-6



Storytelling as CTE Advocacy: Capturing a Century on Film
Generously Sponsored by Profitable Association, Inc. (PAI)

We will kick off this year's National Policy Seminar with opening remarks from ACTE President Robert Torres and ACTE Executive Director LeAnn Curry, then have a special preview of ACTE's centennial documentary on the history and future of CTE. David Baker, the director of the documentary and an independent writer and filmmaker and creative director at Oregon State University, will then share more about the piece and how storytelling can serve as a powerful tool for CTE advocacy.

Robert Torres; President; ACTE
Advik Bajpai; Iowa Technology Student Association
LeAnn Curry; Executive Director; ACTE
Julia Kendrick; Senior Director of Communications; ACTE
David Baker; Writer, Filmmaker & Creative Director; Oregon State University

9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Salons 3-6

Looking Back, Looking Ahead: 100 Years of CTE Advocacy in Action

This panel will feature a lineup of veteran CTE advocates who have significant experience working at the national level in support of CTE. They will discuss historical trends in CTE advocacy and policy, how perceptions of CTE have changed over the years, and how the evolving landscape should shape our advocacy efforts now and in the future.

Stephen DeWitt; Deputy Executive Director; ACTE
Hans Meeder; former Hill staff and Administration official
Jane Oates; former Hill staff and Administration official
Karishma Merchant; Associate Vice President of Policy & Advocacy; Jobs for the Future
Moderator: *Alisha Hyslop; Chief Policy, Research & Content Officer; ACTE*

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Salons 3-6

Overview of Key Federal Legislative Issues

ACTE policy staff will provide an in-depth overview of the federal policy environment and a legislative update. They will cover the congressional agenda for the year, the status of current legislation, and key advocacy messages for Capitol Hill visits.

*Alisha Hyslop; Chief Policy, Research and Content Officer; ACTE
Jimmy Koch; Government Relations Manager; ACTE*

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch (on your own)

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Salons 3-6

Perkins Reauthorization Priorities

This session will provide a deep dive into the latest federal conversations on the potential reauthorization of the Perkins Act, including a full review of ACTE and Advance CTE's joint priorities for any congressional action to prepare you for conversations with policymakers on Capitol Hill.

*Alisha Hyslop; Chief Policy, Research & Content Officer; ACTE
Catherine Imperatore; Research & Content Director; ACTE
Steve Voytek; Senior Policy Advisor; Foresight Law + Policy*

2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Salons 3-6

Where is the Action? The Intersections of Federal and State Policy

State and federal policy, particularly on education and workforce development programs, are inextricably linked. Federal action, or inaction as is often the case of late, drive state policymaking – and state policy actions also draw attention and create momentum at the federal level for more widespread support. We've seen a significant uptick in state policy focusing on CTE in recent years. The session will explore how state leaders are approaching education and workforce issues, how changes at the federal level impact state actions, and how CTE advocates can work effectively at the state level to drive policy.

*Tom Keily; Policy Director; Education Commission of the States
Autumn Rivera; Senior Policy Specialist; National Conference of State Legislatures
Paolo DeMaria; President and CEO; National Association of State Boards of Education
Moderator: Kate Kreamer; Executive Director; Advance CTE*

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Arlington Foyer

Refreshment Break

Generously Sponsored by Forrest T. Jones & Company (FTJ)



4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Advocacy Breakouts

These breakout sessions will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about specific advocacy strategies, resources and activities that can help support CTE at the local, state and federal levels.

Salon 1

Crafting the CTE Narrative: Tips & Tools for Modern Advocacy

In an era of shifting narratives about education and evolving perceptions of CTE, proactive storytelling is essential to effective advocacy. In this session, Dr. Mark Covelle will share how Middle Bucks Institute of Technology built a structured storytelling culture that mobilizes students and staff, leveraging social media platforms, multimedia interns, and student influencers to move from relative obscurity to a recognized leader in CTE storytelling. Participants will leave with practical, replicable tools and implementation frameworks they can use immediately to strengthen local advocacy, elevate authentic student voice, and confidently shape their own narrative.

Mark Covelle; Administrative Director; Middle Bucks Institute of Technology (MBIT)

Jeanise Dimitri; MBIT PR & Community Engagement Coordinator

Natalie Horvath; MBIT Media Associate

Maddie Kaufman; MBIT Media Associate

Salons D-G

The Power of Data-driven Storytelling

Advocacy and recruitment tools that combine information about CTE with data on participation and outcomes can be powerful ways to communicate about your programs. Join ACTE staff to discuss the building blocks of fact sheets, infographics and other resources that use data to tell the story of CTE. You'll see concrete examples of how to translate quantitative facts into visuals that resonate with policymakers and other key audiences.

Catherine Imperatore; Research & Content Director, ACTE

Ashley Weaver; Senior Graphic Designer; ACTE

Salon 2

The State Level Story: How to Build Relationships and Increase Support for CTE in Your State

With so much CTE-related policy activity at the state level, effective strategies for reaching state policymakers with the CTE story are critical. This session will feature experienced state-level advocates who will share their insights on building relationships and making an impact in support of CTE, including concrete examples that you can take back to your states and apply immediately!

Robin Painovich; Executive Director; Career & Technical Association of Texas

Dee Smith; Executive Director; Ohio ACTE

Alexandria

The Power of Advocacy in Agricultural Education

Advocacy is essential to the growth, sustainability, and success of agricultural education programs. This workshop explores the importance of advocating for agricultural education at the local, state, and national levels and the critical role educators play in shaping public understanding and policy support.

5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Salons 3-6

State Planning Time

Work with others from your state to finalize Hill visit logistics and details. Leave-behind folders will be distributed during this time, and ACTE Public Policy staff will be available to answer any remaining questions. Larger state delegations will meet in the rooms listed below, all other states will be in the general session room.

Georgia – Salon 1

Indiana – McLean

Minnesota – Rosslyn

Missouri – Salons D-G

North Carolina – Fairfax Boardroom

Ohio – Salon 2

Oklahoma – Alexandria

Tuesday, March 24

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Capitol Hill Panel

106 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Staff working on CTE issues for key committees, Caucuses and Members of Congress will share the latest news from Capitol Hill and their outlook for the rest of this congressional session.

Alicia Porile; Legislative Assistant; Sen. Blunt-Rochester (D-DE)

Ben Picciano; Legislative Assistant; Rep. John Mannion (D-NY)

Isabel Soto; Professional Staff Member; House Education and Workforce Committee Majority Staff

10:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Capitol Hill Visits

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.



Capitol Hill Reception

385 Russell Senate Office Building

The evening reception will feature CTE students as they share the leadership and skill-building opportunities they gain through high-quality CTE and participation in their respective student organizations. *Generously Sponsored by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), Big Picture Learning and the following Career and Technical Student Organizations:*

- *Business Professionals of America (BPA)*
- *DECA*
- *Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)*
- *Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)*
- *HOSA-Future Health Professionals National*
- *FFA Organization*
- *SkillsUSA*
- *Technology Student Association (TSA)*

Wednesday, March 25

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.



Continental Breakfast

Generously Sponsored by the National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3)

8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.
Salons 3-6

Executive Branch Updates: The Latest on Regulatory and Administration Activity

Hear from representatives of federal agencies about the Administration activities that have the potential to impact CTE programs around the country.

Adam Flynn-Tabloff; Director – Policy, Research, and Evaluation; U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Jake Easter; Policy Advisor for AI Education and Workforce; White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Salons 3-6

Implementing Federal Policy

This panel will provide insights include key policy issues that have moved into the implementation phase, particularly items included in

2025's One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Information will be provided on the latest on Workforce Pell and other federal financial aid changes, school voucher programs and more!

Emmanuel Guillory; Senior Director of Government Relations; American Council on Education

Caroline Treschitta; Senior Government Affairs Manager; National Skills Coalition

Sara Plasencia; Senior Policy Advisor; Learning Policy Institute