**Section 256.100 Purpose and Scope**

a) This Part governs the State's K-12 program of career and technical education (CTE) so that the Illinois CTE system will provide skills and knowledge necessary for life-long career success for students in their communities by fostering pathways that:

1) Align to current and projected future industry and community needs.

2) Support students in navigating and completing a personalized pathway based on their interests and goals.

3) Combine rigorous classroom and career-connected learning opportunities to build students' technical and essential employability skills.

4) Integrate academic and technical knowledge and skills through alignment with the State standards or competencies.

5) Identify equity gaps in CTE access and outcomes across groups and provide targeted supports, with a focus on meeting the needs of members in special populations to close those gaps.

6) Incorporate multiple entry and exit points to progressively advance through higher levels of education, training, and employment success.

b) In accordance with the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) guidelines, K-12 CTE systems in Illinois shall develop the academic knowledge and technical and essential employability skills of secondary education students who elect to enroll in CTE programs and programs of study by:

1) developing challenging academic and technical standards and assisting students in meeting the Illinois Learning Standards, including preparation for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations in current or emerging professions;

2) promoting the development of services and activities that integrate rigorous and challenging academic and career and technical instruction, and that link secondary education and postsecondary education for participating CTE students;

3) increasing State and local flexibility in providing services and activities designed to develop, implement, and improve career and technical education;

4) conducting and disseminating national research and distributing information on best practices that improve career and technical education programs and programs of study, services, and activities;

5) providing technical assistance that:

A) promotes leadership, initial preparation, and professional learning at the State and local levels; and

B) improves the quality of CTE teachers or faculty, administrators, and counselors;

6) supporting partnerships among secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, baccalaureate degree granting institutions, area CTE schools, local workforce investment boards, employers, and intermediaries;

7) providing K-12 learners with opportunities to develop, in conjunction with other education and training programs, the knowledge and skills needed to keep the United States and Illinois competitive; and

8) increasing the employment opportunities for members of special populations, including, but not limited to, people who are individuals with disabilities, individuals from economically disadvantaged families, youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system, and homeless individuals.

c) This Part covers CTE programs administered under authority of the federal Perkins V and the Illinois School Code and Vocational Education Act.