



Issues Update

December 1, 2015

Issues Update is a report from the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) written by Executive Director Michael R. Stone and presented on its website, www.kacteonline.org. As needed, *Issues Update* will report on state and federal Career and Technical Education (CTE) policy and legislative developments. KACTE and Stone can be reached at kmstone@mis.net or 502-223-1823.

Advocacy Needed to Support CTE in 2016 Budget Session

What are Governor-Elect Matt Bevin's plans for Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Kentucky? Although he has not offered a post-election policy statement on the issue, nor yet addressed the Executive Branch budget to be submitted to the Kentucky General Assembly in January, insight may come from his responses to a Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) questionnaire, which was posted on the KACTE website, www.kacteonline.org along with the responses from the two other gubernatorial candidates. The complete, unedited responses may be found in the *Issues* section of the website.

Governor-Elect Bevin's responses regarding CTE were much more detailed than those of his opponents. His first response regarding the value of CTE in Kentucky summarized much of the provided answers: "Growing our economy requires a skilled workforce. CTE provides real-world training for high-skilled, high-demand jobs. Expanding CTE opportunities prepares more students for successful careers and grows better paying jobs in numerous fields. There are currently unfilled jobs in the state due to a lack of skilled workers, a problem that can be solved by making CTE an integral part of our education system. More CTE opportunities increases the number of students who are career and college ready, making CTE imperative in creating economic prosperity in Kentucky."

THE DETAILS OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM INCENTIVES were not provided, but he wrote: "As Governor, I will incentivize and support an education system that results in a highly employable workforce. This includes integrating more CTE courses into secondary education and increasing well-structured vocational training programs to develop workers with the technical and life skills necessary to contribute to and thrive in a strong economy."

He sees CTE as a part of economic development: "There is a strong correlation between education, a highly skilled workforce, and economic stability within a state. More highly skilled workers means we attract higher value jobs, in turn, decreasing unemployment and increasing wealth creation. Further, CTE gives working adults the ability to be retrained for new careers when certain industries and markets suffer. This allows them to seek higher-skilled, better paying jobs, rather than being forced into unemployment."

He indicated his budget will reward those programs that are proving successful: "We need to begin by prioritizing funding based on outcomes. Again, we will analyze our current performance in workforce development and education so we know where we are using our resources efficiently in developing a high-qualified labor force. We will allow flourishing and emerging labor markets to guide our expenditures in secondary and postsecondary education, eliminating what is not working and expanding what is -- shifting revenue away from outdated, ineffective programs to upgrade and grow programs with proven outcomes.

"WE HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION to ensure that the education we provide to Kentucky's students prepares them with real-world skills," he responded. "All graduating students should be college and career ready -- we cannot afford to fail them in this. The state has a vested financial interest in graduating students who are college and career ready because it gives us a competitive edge over other states with whom we compete for jobs. Increasing and improving the skills of our labor force helps them qualify for jobs with higher incomes, and helps the state attract these higher paying jobs. It is in the best interest of both the state government and the individuals in the state for us to ensure postsecondary degrees and credentials are available to all students. We must also expand access to postsecondary credentials to working adults. Providing postsecondary educational options for working adults makes us more economically competitive and improves prosperity rates for Kentucky families."

With its proven record of success and its ability to help change lives and enhance economic development, Governor-Elect Bevin's responses indicate CTE has a strong future in Kentucky. The proof will unfold as his administration develops and works with the General Assembly to craft the 2016-18 biennial budget.

2016 Kentucky General Assembly Session

The Kentucky General Assembly will convene on Jan. 5, 2016, for its 60-day session. The most important aspect will be setting the 2016-2018 biennial budget that will begin on July 1, 2016. It will be the first budget passed

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under the administration of newly elected Gov. Matt Bevin. The major issue impacting the budget discussions will be addressing the unfunded liabilities in the Kentucky Teachers Retirement System and the retirement system for the rest of state employees. KACTE has written a position statement that will be shared with legislators. It is posted on the KACTE website in the *Issues* section. It stresses two points:

- Responsibility to fulfill the promise made to current and former teachers.
- How will quality teachers be recruited and retained without the existence of a retirement benefit package?

KACTE ALSO AUTHORED A POSITION STATEMENT on the need for additional funding of CTE in Kentucky. It can be found in the *Issues* section of the KACTE website. It, too, will be shared with legislators and supports the request of the Kentucky State Board of Education, which included more than \$41 million in additional funding for Career and Technical Education adopted at the Oct. 6, 2015, Board meeting. Included were:

- A \$30 million bond issue to upgrade equipment to support instruction linked to regional and state economic sectors. This requires about \$2.5 million in annual debt service.
- \$1 million to reimburse industry certification testing.
- \$6.3 million to enhance Locally Operated Centers.
- \$1 million to pilot four regional technical centers.
- \$3 million for professional development.

The budget request was sent to the Governor's office. Gov. Bevin will submit an Executive Branch budget proposal to the General Assembly in January. The State Board of Education acknowledged the importance of addressing the funding liabilities facing the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System, and it included a plea to retain the basic SEEK funding level. Additionally, it asked for funds to expand pre-school eligibility to 200 percent of the poverty level, develop new assessments in science and social studies and address enhancements to English/language arts and math assessments, increase SEEK transportation funding to 80 percent, and increase Education Recovery staff to support low-achieving schools.

Advocacy Needed; Tools Provided

KACTE members -- and all CTE professionals -- are urged to inform themselves of the budget issues confronting the 2016 Kentucky General Assembly and take action to urge legislative passage of the State Board of Education request for CTE funding. KACTE asks its members and all CTE professionals to use advocacy tools developed for the 2016 General Assembly session.

"Please share with faculty in their respective buildings as well as teachers in their respective regions, KACTE member or not," KACTE Legislative Liaison Dexter Knight, Principal, Jessamine Career Technology Center, said. "This affects all CTE professionals at all levels and schools regard-



Learning that works
for Kentucky

CTE Is Economic Development

- ★ 50 percent of employers surveyed by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce (July 2015) indicate trouble finding employees with soft skills (27 percent) or the right technical skills (23 percent).
- ★ According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 14 of the 20 fastest growing occupations (2012-22) are in construction, health care, and information technology CTE pathways; 19 of the 20 occupations with most new jobs (2012-22) are in business services, construction, health care, information technology, office services, retail sales, and transportation CTE pathways.
- ★ CTE pathways are prominent in the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board Sectors Strategy targets: automobile and aircraft manufacturing; transportation, distribution and logistics; business services/research and development; health care/social assistance; and energy creation/transmission.
- ★ Competitor states throughout the Southeast and Midwest, including new initiatives in Ohio and Tennessee, are investing in CTE to spur workforce development as a function of their economic development strategies.

CTE Is Learning that Works

- ★ 129,794 public high school students (68.5 percent of all students) enrolled in at least one CTE course. (Data from the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Career and Technical Education-OCTE)

- ★ 37,401 public high school students are CTE preparatory who have completed two credits in a CTE pathway and are enrolled in a third. (OCTE)
- ★ The graduation rate for CTE preparatory students is 97.7 percent, which is almost 10 percentage points higher than the 88.9 percent graduation rate of the overall student population. (OCTE)
- ★ CTE students enroll in postsecondary education at a higher percentage than the overall student population. (National Research Center for Career and Technical Education)

CTE Is a Doorway to Careers

- ★ CTE offers educational opportunity in approximately 160 career pathways in 16 career clusters. (OCTE)
- ★ 15,854 public high school students earned Kentucky Occupational Skill Standard Assessment (KOSSA) certificates in 2015. (OCTE)
- ★ 10,009 industry certifications were awarded to public high school students in 2015. (OCTE)

**CTE Impacts
Everybody,
Everywhere,
Every Day,
PERIOD!**

Invest in CTE

Message prepared and presented by:

**Kentucky
ACTE**
Inspiring ♦ Advocating ♦ Leading

less of their affiliation with our professional association. We must ALL be active in the advocacy of CTE and the legislative process during this session especially. If we don't participate and advocate, we have no excuse for what happens to these important legislative items!"

In addition to the two position papers on retirement system stability and funding, KACTE created a rack card (pictured above) with three simple messages: *CTE Is Economic Development*, *CTE Is Learning that Works*, and *CTE Is a Doorway to Careers*. Each message is supported by documented facts. KACTE also will update the trifold data brochure released initially last year, and regular *Issues Updates* will be posted on the KACTE website. Quantities of the rack card and trifold are available from KACTE by calling 502-223-1823 or e-mailing kmstone@mis.net.

Federal Developments

Meanwhile CTE developments at the federal level continue the national momentum pushing CTE to higher visibility and increasing relevance:

- Congress approved a budget agreement with increases to domestic spending caps, opening a possibility to restore CTE *Perkins Act* funding to pre-budget cut levels.
- Congressional committees started discussion on reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.
- House and Senate conferees agreed on a framework for the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, to be called the *Every Student Success Act*.