



Issues Update

August 31, 2016

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 kmstone1951@gmail.com or 502-223-1823.

Significant Advocacy Items Continue Through Late Summer

It is the end of summer, and school is started. The U.S. Congress is on recess until after Labor Day. Nonetheless, there is legislative and advocacy news to report. But first, please reflect on this brief commentary.

Reaching Millennials and "Generation Z"

The often-heard comment is, "Young people don't want to work anymore." According to a human resources executive it may be that millennials -- the demographic born between 1982-2000, which will comprise 50 percent of the workforce by 2020 -- views work differently than previous generations rather than being lazy.

According to Michael Hyter, senior client partner and managing director with human resources firm Korn Ferry (quoted in the *Bloomberg HR Blog* on Aug. 17, 2016, by Laime Vaitkus), "Millennials require us to think of them as individuals, as opposed to members of a group. Have an eye towards understanding what motivates the individual, and you will eventually increase the level of engagement."

Hyter was speaking about the workplace, but logic leads to a conclusion the millennials are seeking the same individualized attention throughout their lives, including education. Expecting everyone in a classroom to perform the same tasks could cause some to tune out -- not because they are lazy or don't want to work, rather they want to understand how the lesson relates to them personally.

NOW, HERE'S THE KICKER. An extensive survey of the so-called "Generation Z" -- those born after 2000 -- supports a focus on individualized instruction in the classroom.

Anne Fisher, writing in *Fortune (on Line)* on Aug. 14, 2016, cited a survey by EY (formerly Ernst & Young, a auditing and consulting firm). Key results include:

- Generation Z wants to know how the individual fits in the larger world. In other words, what is the relevance of what they are doing on the job or what they are learning in school. "Just because" hasn't worked in a long time. It works even less now.
- Generation Z wants customized career paths. Dan Black, EY head of recruiting, was quoted, "Gen Z is used to having everything personalized just for them, from playlists to news feeds to product features of all kinds. They've grown up expecting that. So, to the extent that

you honestly can, emphasize that you're willing and able to develop a career path for them that builds on their particular strengths and helps them develop their interests."

- And this may be the shocker for the older generations complaining about youth not wanting to work. Generation Z responses to some survey questions indicate they are ambitious. In a business setting, they valued "opportunity for growth" as the number one priority.

Equality means everyone gets a fair chance, not that everything is the same. Career and Technical Education (CTE) prides itself on relevance and rigor. Many CTE educators know that students progress at their own pace through experiential learning. It appears to best educate the coming generations this is more of a factor than ever. So, freshen those lesson plans for the reality of the new generations.

Industry Certifications White Paper

Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) Legislative Liaison Dexter Knight, principal, Jessamine Career Technology Center, and KACTE Executive Director Michael R. Stone met with Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Hal Heiner and Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) Executive Director Melissa Aguilar on Aug. 31, to present a KACTE White Paper on Industry Certifications.

The paper stemmed from a previous meeting with Secretary Heiner who was seeking input on how to award grants to secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to improve instruction to meet workforce needs. Secretary Heiner and Gov. Matt Bevin requested \$100 million in bonding funds for CTE equipment and materials that the General Assembly approved in the 2016-18 biennial budget.

Although the original intent was to obtain teacher feedback on the industry certifications requested by employers and students, the analysis of three separate surveys indicated a lack of understanding about the specifics of industry certifications and their value to employers, students and the state's economy. Better data on employer needs regarding industry certifications was developed

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directly from employers by the KWIB, working in cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS).

KACTE's White Paper, *Industry Certifications: An Opportunity for CTE Educators*, provides a snapshot of teacher feedback on the subject. It presents a suggestion that a professional development outreach is needed to fully educate all CTE teachers and administrators about the value of industry certifications. The concluding paragraph:

"The evidence from KACTE's surveys and other references clearly indicates that furthering knowledge among all audiences of the benefits accruing from industry certifications presents an opportunity to enhance student achievement and contribute to a robust economy. This is another opportunity for CTE educators to make a real difference."

A PDF version of the paper may be found on the KACTE website, www.kacteonline.org, in the Issues Section.

In thanking KACTE for its efforts in presenting the White Paper, Secretary Heiner said the results supported his emphasis that, "Every high school student needs college or college. A high school diploma isn't enough." He elaborated that college could be either an academic degree or a credential. One or the other is needed for gainful employment.

Chamber Congressional Forum

The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce held a Congressional Forum at the Galt House Hotel and Suites in Louisville Aug. 29. Speakers included Jack Howard, Senior Vice President, Congressional and Public Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell; and U.S. Representatives Brett Guthrie, District 2; John Yarmuth, District 3; and Andy Barr, District 6.

With *HR. 5587*, the reauthorization of the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* ready for passage by the full House of Representatives, Senator McConnell was asked about the prospects for passage of *Perkins Act* reauthorization by the Senate during the current session. His response indicated it was not on his agenda. He did note the *Perkins Act* does not sunset, and that as long as Congress continues appropriations it will continue.

Representative Yarmuth was more general in comments, but supportive of educational programs that address employers' need for qualified workers. "To the extent we can, Congress should support it," he said.

Representative Guthrie helped craft *HR. 5587* as a member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, and he voted for the bill to be sent to the full House for passage. Representative Barr did not address education legislation, but supported the House Republican agenda for the next Congress in 2017.

Howard said he wanted to disabuse any notion that Congress is broken. In particular, he cited reauthorization of

the *Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act* (WIOA) and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) among the examples that Congress is addressing needed legislation. However, he did point out data showing increasing polarization between the political parties on many issues, which feeds the perception the system is broken.

Items of Note

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence on Aug. 18, released *Excellence with Equity: It's Everybody's Business*, a report from the Achievement Gap Study Group. The report concluded there must be more effort to close achievement gaps among students. A media advisory accompanying release of the report read, "Closing those gaps is more critical than ever given the increasing need for education or training after high school to ensure the future success of individual students and the state as a whole."

Almost 70 percent of Kentucky's students have at least one of the barriers contributing to the achievement gap: low family incomes, learning English, learning differences, or are African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American/Alaskan, or of two or more races.

THE KENTUCKY STATE BOARD of Education at its Aug. 3-4, meeting approved amendments to 705 KAR 4:231, General Program Standards for Secondary Career and Technical Education Programs. Mostly the amendments dealt with technical changes including CTE terminology, information and processes in Kentucky.

The State Board of Education also approved changes intended to streamline the Program Review process. Details of the changes can be found on the Kentucky Department of Education website, www.education.ky.gov, or from Associate Commissioner Amanda Ellis, amanda.ellis@education.ky.gov.

KENTUCKY WAS CITED as a state moving forward with alignment of CTE and registered apprenticeships in a report issued in July from the National Center for Innovation in CTE. The state's linkage with Adecco Employment Solutions to serve as a student's third-party employer of record allowed the TRACK (Tech-Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky) program to be implemented.

Typically, due to hiring age restrictions, apprenticeship programs are aligned with postsecondary education. The report identified six states, including Kentucky, with ongoing secondary alignment.

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT among CTE students has increased since the 1990s according to data released by the National Center for Education Statistics. Surveying the high school class of 2004, 91 percent of high school graduates with two-three CTE credits enrolled in postsecondary education within eight years of graduation.
