



Issues Update

January 18, 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 kmstone@mis.net or 502-223-1823.

General Assembly Session Begins; CTE Needs Your Support

The Kentucky General Assembly over the past few years has thrust challenges at Career and Technical Education (CTE). Passage of legislation to merge secondary CTE programs within the Department of Education, adoption of the Career Pathways Act, and increasing the age of mandatory school attendance are three examples. More are coming from the 2016 General Assembly session that began Jan. 5.

To date, CTE has succeeded in meeting the challenges. One statistic alone is symbolic of CTE's achievement: the graduation rate of CTE preparatory students, which comprise about one-half of each graduating class, was 97.6 percent in the most recently completed school year. That is 9 percentage points higher than the overall reported high school graduation rate. CTE engages students. CTE shows them the relevance of education. CTE works.

Challenges to come from this session are found in the many CTE-related bills filed by both House of Representative and Senate members. Some if passed, such as **SB1**, would impact all elementary and secondary education in the state. Others, such as **HB122** are more narrowly focused, requiring anyone scoring a 36 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Test Battery (ASVAB) to be declared career ready. Only one bill has seen action in the slow-moving session, **SB52**, which would spur veterans' ability to obtain a provisional teaching certificate. KACTE will maintain a list of CTE-related legislation in the Issues Update section of its website: www.kacteonline.org/issues.php.

CTE's Challenge to the General Assembly

CTE has one challenge for the 2016 Kentucky General Assembly: Increase the investment in CTE. KACTE urges the General Assembly to approve the State Board of Education's recommendations as an essential investment in the economic and societal future of the state. Such an investment has not been made in more than 10 years. An investment in CTE funding is needed urgently. Specifically KACTE advocates legislative passage of:

- 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.

CTE's Best Opportunity Needs Support

When was the last time the Kentucky State Board of Education advocated for CTE funding as a priority request in the state biennial budget? As stated by Kentucky's former CTE State Director Dale Winkler, CTE's time is now. If CTE doesn't receive adequate funding now, its ability to aid in economic development and continue achievements may be harmed. This chance may not come again.

CTE has supporters among the Kentucky General Assembly members, but they need help. They need to hear from their constituents with support for investment in CTE. They need all members of the General Assembly to hear from their constituents with support for investment in CTE.

The legislators need to hear from parents, community leaders, business people, teachers and administrators. As the slogan reads: **CTE Impacts Everybody, Everywhere, Every Day. PERIOD!**

- ➔ Do parents know that CTE is a doorway to a career?
- ➔ Do business people know that CTE is learning that works?
- ➔ Do community leaders know that CTE is economic development?
- ➔ Do your colleagues at school and across the state know this? Who can tell them better than you?

Tell Your Story; Use Tools Available

The essential messages are available on a rack card KACTE can provide, either by downloading and printing from the website or by contacting kmstone@mis.net. Other tools are the informational videos linked from the website (with one specifically targeting parents and non-educators), position statements, *Issue Updates*, and your personal testimonials. Speaking from your heart is effective advocacy.

You can speak at community forums, PTO meetings, civic organization meetings, and when you are chatting with someone at the grocery. You can reach out anywhere.

KACTE has advocacy guidelines posted on its website: www.kacteonline.org/advocacyGuide.php.

ACTE (the national Association for Career and Technical Education) provides an advocacy toolkit at: http://www.acteonline.org/advocacy/#_Vp1c0ChQkUU.

Please contact your legislators personally. Ask others to make calls and send e-mails to support CTE. It's your future. The time for action is now.