



# Issues Update

February 19, 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](http://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](mailto:kmstone@mis.net) or 502-223-1823.

## CTE Needs Support as General Assembly Reaches Mid-Point

Monitoring the activity of the 2016 Kentucky General Assembly session is marginally more exciting than watching paint dry. Governor Matt Bevin's budget proposal for the 2016-18 biennium stirred some talk, and the Senate's priority bill to reform education, **SB1**, has passed that chamber of the General Assembly. But it is clear the real action will follow the results of the March 8 special elections in four representative districts. A sweep by Republicans would tie the House membership at 50-50.

An active parlor game is what would happen then? Speaker of the House Greg Stumbo said nothing will change; Democrats will not have lost control of the House. House Minority Leader Jeff Hoover said there must be an equal sharing of power. There is speculation that a 50-50 result would spur some current Democrats to switch parties giving Republicans the majority, which many think is inevitable following the general elections in November. If the House were to be 50-50, it likely would result in gridlock and court challenges. Such is the nature of politics in Kentucky.

### **But what about the on-going need to govern?**

From what can be observed and perceived from the Governors speeches and actions, he is the ultimate CEO. Directing state government like the businessman he is, he knows what he wants and sets the vision and goals. The details are for the appointed cabinet secretaries and their staffs to produce. He will hold them accountable.

The lack of detail in the budget is spurring the talk. The current Democratic-controlled Appropriations and Revenue Committee and various Budget Review Committees want to know specifics so they can craft the two-year spending plan. They are not projecting trust in the Governor. Some Republicans also are uneasy passing a budget without details, but mostly are silent in deference to a governor of their own party.

Meanwhile, the 2016 Kentucky General Assembly session is at the mid-point. Adjournment must take place by April 15, and the most important job is to pass a budget. Being forced to call an expensive special session to finalize the budget would not be a good start for a new, fiscally conservative administration.

So we wait and watch.

**CTE DOES HAVE SUPPORT.** At the February 16 meeting of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

(KWIB), Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Hal Heiner said a goal is to "scale up" CTE. He added that the governor and lieutenant governor support the goal. He noted employers say they have jobs but cannot find workers to fill the jobs. He wants an employer-led collaborative to recommend needed education and training.

Secretary Heiner voiced similar statements in a February 2 meeting with KACTE Legislative Liaison Dexter Knight, Principal, Jessamine Career Technology Center, and KACTE Executive Director Mike Stone. As a result of the meeting, KACTE is surveying teachers, administrators and employers to develop a list of industry certifications most needed across Kentucky. Responses to three questions can be sent to Stone at [kmstone1951@gmail.com](mailto:kmstone1951@gmail.com).

- What industry certifications are most valued by employers in your area?
- What industry certifications are most needed to be offered through your school to serve your area's employers?
- What industry certifications are most in demand among your students?

KACTE will deliver the results directly to Secretary Heiner.

**ONE SOURCE OF POTENTIAL NEW FUNDING** for CTE is a \$100 million bond issue proposed in the Governor's budget for workforce development, which will be administered through Secretary Heiner's cabinet. A decision on use of almost \$60 million in Kentucky Lottery proceeds previously supporting general fund expenditures will be directed to workforce education scholarships. Again, the decision on how the funds will be used is with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

The ability of KACTE to provide timely and detailed information to Secretary Heiner may have an impact on those decisions. KACTE is asking its members and other CTE professionals across the state to respond to the survey.

**KACTE ADVOCACY ACTION** -- *Response to the survey request is one way to support CTE. The administration and legislators also need data and information on CTE's achievements. Some of the statewide data may be found on the KACTE website at [www.kacteonline.org/issues.php](http://www.kacteonline.org/issues.php). Localizing the data for your representative and senator is very helpful. Providing personal anecdotes of success puts a face on CTE and can be very impactful.*

# KACTE Monitoring Biennial Budget, SB1, Federal Issues

Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt, Ph.D., at the KWIB meeting echoed comments he has said previously in support of CTE: "CTE has got to be a critical component of education in Kentucky." He added the Department of Education needs the business community "to say these are the jobs we need." He suggested graduation should not be the goal, rather employability should be the goal.

Following a presentation by Interim Associate Commissioner for the Office of Career and Technical Education Laura Arnold, the KWIB voted to implement a committee to provide recommendations on criteria to establish a list of valid industry certifications needed in Kentucky. The information KACTE is gathering from its survey for Secretary Heiner can be funneled into that effort.

## 2016-18 Biennial Budget

While the budget Gov. Bevin proposed holds public K-12 education free of the overall cuts imposed on the state government in general, it lumps Area Technology Centers (ATCs) into the Department of Education bureaucracy, which subjects it to the budget reduction. The ATCs are a vital part of K-12 education, and the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) and others will stress this point to the General Assembly in an effort to avoid a reduction that would result in the loss of teachers in a system already understaffed. Building a world-class, economically competitive workforce requires a quality education system, and budget cuts to ATCs would hamper the delivery of quality CTE.

Although the state Board of Education recommended increased funding for locally operated Career Technology Centers (ATCs are state operated, CTCs are locally controlled), they were not provided additional funds. The Governor's proposal did outline steps to preserve and sustain the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System. In his budget address, he said the number objective of the 2016-18 state budget is to preserve the pension systems.

Recent legislative testimony and other public statements highlight the potential impact on education if the Governor's proposed budget is enacted. Commissioner Pruitt, while praising the preservation of the SEEK funding for basic K-12 education, said the cuts to the Department would end up in local cuts to support services, textbooks and other areas. Kentucky's public higher education leaders voiced similar dire predictions for their institutions, suggesting there could be significant tuition increases to offset the cuts. KCTCS President Jay Box, Ph.D., said at a House hearing on the budget the proposed cuts could result in an 8.8 percent tuition increase by 2017 and cause the elimination of 61 programs and 539 staff.

The House Appropriations and Revenue Committee is preparing its adjustments to the Governor's proposal. A final executive branch budget, **HB303**, likely will not be approved until after the March 8 special elections to fill the four vacant representative seats. Then the process will move

to the Senate, which will input its changes and pass its version by early April. A conference committee will negotiate the final document, which must be passed by April 15.

## Senate Bill 1

The Senate's education reform bill, **SB1**, which indicates its priority status, passed the Senate on February 15. Its future is uncertain, again tied to the results of the March 8 special elections.

KACTE met with Sen. Mike Wilson, Senate Education Committee chair, who was the lead sponsor of **SB1**. His concentration for the 2016 session is passage of the bill, which is a wide-ranging change to several areas of education. He believes **SB1** will be beneficial to CTE, incorporating CTE into the state education accountability system and rewarding schools for industry certifications attained or stackable credentials. A summary of **SB1** is posted on the KACTE website (<http://www.kacteonline.org/archives.php>) along with summaries of other legislation that could impact CTE. You can read the entire bill at <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/16RS/SB1.htm>.

Some have voiced concerns over **SB1**. Senate Democrats are concerned it will politicize educational policy in Kentucky. Some education officials are concerned that removal of minimum course requirements will result in CTE program closures. Elimination of program reviews in high schools could negatively impact CTE because that process ensures programs are in place. These officials note Commissioner Pruitt already has indicated the program review process will be examined for possible changes. **SB1** mandates that the Department of Education pay for industry certifications, which could become a \$20 million unfunded mandate.

KACTE also met with Representative Derrick Graham, who chairs the House Education Committee. He was non-committal regarding **SB1**. Representative Graham said his concerns for the 2016 session are to address the achievement gap among student demographics, teacher retirement, and governance of postsecondary education, particularly training for boards of trustees.

## Federal

KACTE officers will participate in the annual ACTE National Policy Seminar in Washington February 29-March 2. While in Washington, meetings will be held with Kentucky's legislators or their staff. KACTE will meet personally with Representatives Brett Guthrie, John Yarmuth and Andy Barr. Representatives Guthrie and Barr are members of the House Education and Workforce Committee, which is scheduled to take up reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act this year. In addition to supporting Perkins reauthorization, KACTE will be urging Congress to provide adequate funding for Perkins Act