



Issues Update

February 27, 2017

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.

Restructuring Education Moves Forward with SB1

With 12 days left in the 2017 Kentucky General Assembly session, the most significant legislation affecting education in Kentucky passed the Senate 35-0 and awaits action in the House. **Senate Bill 1**, according to its principal sponsor, Senate Education Committee Chair Mike Wilson, "is a good bill based on a lot of collaboration."

When presenting the bill before the Senate Education Committee on Feb. 14, Wilson cited contributions from Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt, Ph.D., the Kentucky Education Association, the Kentucky superintendents association, the Kentucky School Boards Association, the governor's office, and Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Hal Heiner. He said all were on board in supporting the bill. He added an e-mail was sent to all certified teachers, which generated a "lot of feedback."

Prior to debate, the Senate Education Committee adopted a committee substitute that changed several sections from the original bill language; changes that were suggested by the contributors Wilson cited. The controversial proposal to allow a Career and Technical Education (CTE) class (or two other classes) to count for the high school arts and humanities graduation requirement was eliminated. **SB1** now requires completion of two courses in sequence before the Kentucky Department of Education can pay for the industry certification test in that pathway. It establishes "postsecondary readiness" as a single accountability goal replacing college and career readiness. Many of the criteria contained in the dual measures of college and career readiness comprise the criteria for postsecondary readiness.

THE MAIN GOAL is to return control of education to the local level, Wilson explained. He said the federal government's adoption of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* allows **SB1** to go forward. He is confident **SB1** purges the language of the previous *No Child Left Behind* federal legislation. Current standards will remain in place until local boards impose new standards, which will be rolled out "in a staggered fashion." Eventually, the Common Core State Standards will be repealed, he said.

As Sen. Wilson explained in a meeting with KACTE, local control will be the determinant of which industry certifications will be recognized for meeting postsecondary readiness. That includes whether the Kentucky Occupational

Commentary: Has Equality Come to CTE?

College and Career Readiness -- and the half bonus point schools receive in the state's accountability system for a student achieving both college and career readiness -- likely are going away. While KACTE and CTE professionals and advocates hailed that "CTE counts!" when the current accountability system was enacted, what is coming may be more profound.

Has CTE truly arrived as a recognized, equal part of a comprehensive educational system?

The new term contained in **Senate Bill 1** that passed the Kentucky Senate and now awaits House action is "postsecondary readiness." The goal is all high school students achieving postsecondary readiness. The criteria to obtain that status includes many of the measures currently under the separate categories of college and career readiness -- and any criterion can earn the designation: passing the ACT or a recognized college entrance exam, a recognized industry certification, an earned credential, articulated credit, and college credit obtained through dual credit.

It may not be as dramatic or as monumental, but a single designation to indicate a high school student is ready to move to the next level of life removes a "separate but equal" stigma from Career and Technical Education. This builds further urgency and momentum for true academic integration and a focus on career pathways, which are for ALL students.

Every career has a pathway. It is high time for schools to help each student identify his or her pathway and provide the opportunity to succeed. As mentors for future generations, adults owe them nothing less.

-Michael R. Stone, KACTE Executive Director

Skill Standards Assessments (KOSSA) will be part of the process. Because **SB1** contained no mention of KOSSA, some observers expressed concerned KOSSA was being

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eliminated. KOSSA is being maintained by the Kentucky Department of Education, Associate Commissioner Laura Arnold advised KACTE Legislative Liaison Dexter Knight. As several teachers pointed out, in some pathways there are no or minimal recognized industry certifications. KOSSA is all that exist for students to prove their skills.

Wilson said it will be up to the local Workforce Innovations Board to survey their employers and determine what are the appropriate assessments for the skills students need in their industry. Whether that is a recognized industry certification or KOSSA exam, the local Workforce Innovations Board will make the recommendation for inclusion on the state-approved list.

It is anticipated the House will move favorably on **SB1**, but there may be some amendments that would require negotiations between the House and the Senate. It is believed Gov. Matt Bevin is supportive of the concepts embodied in **SB1** and will sign the final bill into law.

Other Legislative Items

SB1 may have the most impact, but there are other education and CTE-related bills moving through the Kentucky General Assembly.

- **SB117**, establishing alternative certifications for teachers, passed the Senate 35-0 and awaits House action.
- **SB153** adds performance measures such as student success and course completion to the funding formula for postsecondary education; passed the Senate 36-1 and awaits House action.
- **SB159**, requiring a student pass a civics test as a high school graduation requirement, passed the Senate 37-1 and awaits House action.
- **HB231** cites as career ready a student who passes the Armed Services Vocational Test Battery with a qualifying score and enlists in the military; passed the House 93-0 and awaits Senate action.

Several other bills have been introduced but await action in either the House or the Senate. The most notable are three bills **HB103**, **SB70**, and **HB520** to allow for charter schools in Kentucky. **HB520**, filed earlier this week, was drafted by House Education Committee Chair John Carney and creates the mechanism for “public charter schools.” There has been no movement on **HB62** allowing KEES scholarships to be used for registered apprenticeship programs; **SB80** for alternative teaching certification; **SB106** to establish financial and civic literacy tests; **HB205** or **HB264**, both identifying a Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program; **HB454** directing local districts to develop an essential skills curriculum; or **HB523** establishing a digital learning and workforce development pilot program.

Allowing for the 10-day veto period, the General Assembly is set to adjourn on March 30.

Student Leadership Day

KACTE organized Career and Technical Education Student Organization (CTSO) Student Leadership Day on Feb. 14. Approximately 400 CTSO members visited Frankfort and participated in a citizenship program, toured the State Capitol, and met with more than 50 state legislators. It was the signature event of Kentucky’s celebration of Career and Technical Education Month® in February.

Lieutenant Governor Jenean Hampton spoke at the citizenship program and presented the 2017 KACTE Entrepreneurial Contest Awards. CTE Month was recognized with a gubernatorial proclamation, and resolutions saluting CTOS and CTE were introduced in both the Kentucky House and Senate. Lexie Grace Emmert, State Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) President, from Monroe County High School, addressed both the House and Senate Education Committees.

2018 CTOS Student Leadership Day tentatively is scheduled for Feb. 12-13.

Federal Initiatives

The *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* is the federal law that spurs CTE in the states. A model of federal-state cooperation, it sets national policy that the country needs the skills and careers prepared through CTE programs, but leaves most of the implementation to the states and local levels. The *Perkins Act* comes with the incentive of about \$1.1 billion in funds distributed to the states. Kentucky’s share is more than \$17 million.

The *Perkins Act* is due for reauthorization, and a bill, **HR5587**, passed the U.S. House of Representatives last year, but it died when Congress adjourned before Senate action. The new chair of the House Education Committee, Rep. Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, wrote in a Feb. 15 article that one of the first steps will be strengthening CTE, presumably through passage of Perkins reauthorization. New U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos responded to a written question affirming her support for Perkins reauthorization.

KACTE officials will visit the offices of Kentucky’s congressional delegation when they attend the Association for Career and Technical Education National Policy Seminar in Washington March 12-15. They will ask the state’s two senators and six representatives to support both *Perkins Act* reauthorization and adequate appropriations to support *Perkins Act* programs. There is concern among educational organizations that President Trump’s budget proposal will include cuts to education programs. Perkins funding has eroded in recent years due to budget sequestration.

Representatives Brett Guthrie, John Yarmuth, Hal Rogers, and Andy Barr are members of the Congressional CTE Caucus. KACTE will ask the others to join.