



# Issues Update

July 31, 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](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 [kmstone1951@gmail.com](mailto:kmstone1951@gmail.com) or 502-223-1823.

## Perkins Funding Level; Speakers Address CTE Status

The U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee rejected the Trump Administration's proposal to cut *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* funding by 15 percent and approved level funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriation bill. If approved by the full House and Senate, and signed by President Trump, Career and Technical Education programs will receive \$1.118 billion in federal support as it has the past several years. The House Appropriation Committee also approved \$7.4 million to fund national programs. Kentucky's fifth district representative, Hal Rogers, is a member of the Appropriations Committee. He was term limited from chairing the Committee in this session of Congress.

The House also passed unanimously on voice vote its version of Perkins Act reauthorization, **HR2353**, the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*. That measure awaits Senate Action.

### **CTE Receives Vocal Support at Annual CTE Summer Program**

Kentucky Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt, Ph.D., briefly addressed the attendees at the 2017 Kentucky CTE Summer Program in Louisville on July 24. He said the direction is to keep CTE moving forward. He explained the need to build partnerships for effective programs of studies that will provide kids with opportunity. There should be more pathways that build on existing initiatives such as *Tech-Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky* (TRACK), articulated credit and dual credit. There needs to be training and support for teachers.

Some initiatives he highlighted included revamping the New Teacher Institute for industry-based teachers; the *New Skills for Youth Initiative*, which he said will push Kentucky and the Department of Education to become more regionalized; and the new accountability system, which he hoped the state Board of Education would adopt at its Aug. 2 meeting. One of the accountability measures is establishing opportunity and access for students to receive a quality education. This measure cannot be met if the school does not provide CTE programs. There needs to be an emphasis on career counseling and career exploration, too.

continued on back

### **Commentary: Who Is Responsible?**

A June 9 posting on *AEIdeas*, an on-line publication of the business-led American Enterprise Institute, a Washington-based public policy think tank, posed the question: Who's responsible for workforce training? Author Andy Smarick noted the multiple interests and varying levels of support for education and training. Because there is "collective interest" in seeing that youth obtain basic skills, government funding of education is widely supported.

"But when it comes to who's on the hook for ensuring people are ready to work, there's far less clarity," Smarick wrote. "Is it the individual, the family, the high school, the community college, the four year college, the state government, the employers, civil society, labor unions? Does each have a different type of responsibility?"

Rep. Virginia Fox, who chairs the U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, supports career and technical training, but feels decisions and most funding are best left to the states. The National Governors' Association wants more federal funding and direction. Some argue for wider access to federal funds by private-sector providers. Some suggest employers should be doing more, but they are investing \$164 billion annually on education and training according to Smarick.

He closes by noting the European model of a joint cooperative among government, employers and organized labor. It is clear in the United States more needs to be done in light of skills gaps, accountability measures, and anecdotal reports of employees not being ready to do the job.

This is not a new question in Kentucky. Fortunately, the answer to the question involves government, education and the private sector. Kentucky may be ahead of the curve.

Continued on back

# Perkins Funding Stable; Speakers Address CTE Status

Pruitt said CTE should be held as a prominent piece of what the educational system should be. "Education is not rocket science; rocket science is easier," he said. "I can tell you when a rocket will blow up; you never know with education." In closing, he said it was "time to make the next big step."

**ROBERT KING**, President, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, followed Pruitt on the stage. His first comment linked what CTE teachers do to economic development. He cited Hal Heiner, Secretary of the Education and Work-force Development Cabinet, in pointing out if Kentucky's workforce participation rate equaled the national workforce participation rate, there would be 140,000 more Kentuckians working today. "The work you do is vital to the success of our state," he said.

He saw a challenge in addressing the continual automation of jobs; people being replaced by machines. As jobs are phased out, what will be phased in? He suggested the need to develop a program to embed in students abilities that won't be replaced by machines.

## ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR EDUCATION

**LAURA ARNOLD**, who leads the Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), provided a glimpse of CTE's accomplishments in the last year and a peak at what is coming in 2018.

The *New Skills for Youth Initiative*, funded from a \$2 million grant from J.P. Morgan Chase, will center on the creation of regional career academies, supported by aligning pathways to labor market information, teacher preparation and professional development, and work-based learning. She said the *Work Ready Skills Initiative* is providing \$100 million to enhance workforce training and CTE with facility upgrades and equipment updates. She cited some data:

- 68 percent of all high school students, 131,283, take at least one CTE course.
- Last year, student obtained more than 12,000 industry certifications and more than 16,000 Kentucky Occupational Skill Standard Assessment (KOSSA) certifications.
- There were more than 18,000 dual credit enrollments and more than 42,000 members of Career and Technical Education Student Organizations (CTSOs).
- 76 percent of CTE preparatory students graduated college or career ready, and 98 percent of CTE preparatory students graduated.

For the upcoming year, OCTE will be working on implementation of the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* and the new statewide educational accountability system that is being developed. In 2018, the Kentucky General Assembly will meet and adopt a 2018-2020 biennial budget. Arnold said advocating for CTE programs will be important.

Continued from front

## Commentary: *Who Is Responsible?*

The state government has long led the initiatives to improve education and training in the state, from the *Kentucky Education Reform Act* in 1990 to the details contained in *Senate Bill 1* that passed the 2017 Kentucky General Assembly. Legislation to spur the reintegration of the previously incarcerated into the workforce was championed by Gov. Matt Bevin. With the Governor's support, Education and Workforce Cabinet Secretary Hal Heiner pushed for a \$100 million bond issue to fund the *Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative* to improve facilities and upgrade equipment, much of which is going to support career and technical education (CTE). The *Work Ready Scholarship* provides free community and technical college tuition for obtaining skills in in-demand employment sectors.

Education is continuing to elevate career readiness in Kentucky. The *New Skills for Youth Initiative* will help align pathways to labor market information and incorporate work-based learning in regional career academies. The previously referenced *Senate Bill 1* gives local and state Workforce Innovation Boards a voice in what programs are offered in schools based on local need.

The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce recently created a Workforce Center to focus on business leadership, network development and support, industry collaboratives, monitoring progress with data, and essential skills. There are several direct private-sector initiatives. Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow (LIFT), Ford's Next Generation Learning (NGL), United Parcel Services' Metropolitan College, and AMTEC are employer-led education efforts. The Kentucky Foundation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KyFAME) establishes regional business groups to support education.

That is government, business and education working toward a common goal. These efforts are not operating in silos. There is communication and collaboration. If we believe in the goal of striving for the common good -- the commonwealth, if you will -- then Kentucky's community involvement answers the original question: Every aspect of society has a role in education and workforce training.

**-Michael R. Stone**  
KACTE Executive Director