



# Issues Update

March 6, 2024

*Issues Update* is a report from the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) written by Executive Director Michael R. Stone and shared with members. 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.

## Time to Contact Legislators on CTE Items Before GA

For Kentucky Career and Technical Education (CTE), the two most important pieces of legislation before the Kentucky General Assembly during the on-going 2024 session are:

- **House Bill 6**, the Executive Branch budget bill that includes an increase in SEEK funding and maintains the CTE funding level set in the 2022-24 biennial budget.
- **House Bill 499/Senate Bill 192**, companion bills filed in each chamber to establish an equitable method for funding high-quality secondary CTE programs regardless whether taught in state-operated Area Technology Centers, locally operated Career Technology Centers, or comprehensive high schools.

With 15 days remaining in the session, it is not too late for KACTE members to contact their legislators and ask for support of specific legislation. To leave a voice message for your legislator(s), call **1-800-372-7181**. To send an e-mail, the addresses for the legislators can be found at this link: [https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/Legislators/contact\\_legislator.html](https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/Legislators/contact_legislator.html).

The House passed **HB6** on February 1, 77-19. The Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee currently is working on its version of the bill. Once the Senate passes its version, a free conference committee will be formed among House and Senate members and a final bill will be passed on or before March 28, when the General Assembly will recess for the Governor's veto period. The General Assembly will reconvene on April 12 to consider overrides of gubernatorial vetoes and pass other legislation. It must adjourn by midnight on April 15.

The status of any bill before the General Assembly may be found at this link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/24rs/record.html>.

At a minimum, KACTE urges the General Assembly to maintain the current funding level for CTE.

**HB499** has progressed on the legislative path. It passed the House Education Committee on February 20 and awaits final passage by the full House before being sent to the Senate for action. **SB192** was assigned to the Senate Education Committee, and it has not been scheduled for a hearing. KACTE was advised that the Senate is waiting for



### CTE Prominent at Capitol on Student Leadership Day

February 13 was Career and Technical Education Student Organization (CTSO) Leadership Day in Frankfort. More than 400 CTSO members from across the state visited the Capitol for tours, to witness the General Assembly in session and meet with their legislators.

Pictured above are the officers of the state's eight CTSOs — DECA, Educators Rising, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, HOSA, SkillsUSA, and TSA. They witnessed Gov. Andy Beshear sign a proclamation declaring February Career and Technical Education Month in Kentucky. The theme of the national celebration of CTE was **Celebrate Today, Own Tomorrow!**

The CTSO officers met with more than 50 legislative leaders to relate what CTE pathways and CTSOs have meant to them and discuss the impact on their futures. Their example testified to the value of high-quality CTE in Kentucky.

The Senate passed Resolution 131, which recognized CTE Month, Student Leadership Day, and several CTSO officers who were present for the reading and passage of the resolution.

The students and their advisers reported being well received by the legislators and Gov. Beshear. The value of CTE to Kentucky's workforce and its importance in economic development was recognized. With the record appropriation for CTE in the 2022-24 state biennial budget, along with the example of Student Leadership Day, CTE is considered an essential piece of Kentucky's educational opportunities.

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the House to pass **HB499**, and it will concentrate its action on the House bill.

KACTE sent a letter to all members of the General Assembly in late February in support of **HB499** and **SB 192**. It read, in part:

“The Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE), the professional association for CTE teachers and administrators in all instructional pathways and at all educational levels, asks for your support of **House Bill 499** (or **Senate Bill 192**). Not only will the legislation ensure access to high-quality CTE classes, but also it establishes incentives for schools and student to achieve success.”

That was not the only issue KACTE raised in the letter. It urged consideration for additional funding through

## KACTE Officers Head to DC

KACTE officers are headed to Washington March 18-19 to meet with Kentucky’s congressional delegation. The main purpose of meetings with the staff of the state’s two senators and six representatives is to relate the quality of CTE in Kentucky, its impact on the workforce and the economy, and ask for continued support of the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

KACTE will be on Capitol Hill the week Congress must finalize six appropriation bills, including the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriation. In its version, the House level funded the Perkins Basic State Grant that is the federal funding for CTE. Kentucky receives about \$21 million in federal Perkins Act funding. The Senate version included a \$40 million increase for Perkins Act funding. Until a Fiscal Year 2024 bill is passed, CTE is level funded.

In a letter sent last fall to the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell wrote, “America’s continued prosperity relies on a well-educated workforce. . . I supported the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.” He noted CTE programs can help address the skills gap.

Appropriations is not the only issue KACTE’s officers will discuss when meeting with legislative staff. Joining with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and colleague associations across the country, KACTE will support:

- Increased appropriations for Pell Grants, particularly for short-term grants.
- **HR6655**, *A Stronger Workforce for America Act*, the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act.
- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

the budget process for construction and maintenance of CTE facilities. The letter continued:

“KACTE asks for consideration of additional funding for CTE facility construction and maintenance. Encloses is a summary of survey results of Area Technology Center and Locally Operated Vocational Education Center principals. It indicates about 25 percent of CTE facilities either are sub-standard or need significant maintenance. KACTE notes appropriations to address this situation would be one-time spending, and not a recurring budget item, thus not endangering the long-term balance in the state’s reserve fund.”

A copy of the one-page report on CTE facility construction and maintenance needs is attached.

**HB6** increases the SEEK per-pupil formula by 4 percent in 2024-25 to \$4,368 and by 2 percent in 2025-26 to \$4,455. The bill does not specify raises for teachers and staff. It leaves the decision on how to utilize the money up to the districts. Gov. Andy Beshear in his budget proposal called for spending an additional \$1.1 billion for teacher and staff raises. The Kentucky Association for School Administrators, the Kentucky School Boards Association, and other groups said schools still will be short of optimal funding.

The House budget added the actuarially required contribution to the Kentucky Teachers Retirement fund.

**PASSAGE** of the 2024-26 biennial budget is the most important task facing the General Assembly, but there are other bills that will impact education and education policy if passed. Most filed bills will not be considered in the last days of the session. There are 838 bills filed in the House, and 382 filed in the Senate. Only a handful will pass, and those that pass must be heard in committee.

**SB2** enhances numerous elements for school safety. It passed the Senate and goes to the House for its action.

**SB8**, which would require the State Board of Education to be elected by the public passed the Senate 24-14, which means seven Republican senators voted against. It now moves to the House for consideration.

**HB535**, which would mandate a secondary civic education course, was approved by the House Education Committee, but the full House has not acted.

**HB162**, which would establish math education coursework, passed the House and is awaiting Senate action.

**HB221** amends the organization of postsecondary education governing bodies. It passed the House Education Committee and is awaiting House action.

**HB227** allows the merger of contiguous school districts. It passed the House Education Committee and is scheduled for a vote of the full House.

**HB275** prohibits non-disclosure agreements regarding student disciplinary actions. It passed the House and awaits Senate action.

**HB377** establishes a teacher loan forgiveness program. It passed the House Education Committee and awaits action by the full House.

# Secondary CTE Facility Needs

The Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) asked all Career and Technical Education (CTE) secondary principals to assess facility needs. A representative number responded and identified maintenance and construction issues that enhance an effective learning environment.

## KACTE urges an investment in CTE facilities that will:

- Enhance student safety;
- Provide a healthy learning environment; and
- Extend the effective life of facilities.

Significantly, about 25 percent of state-operated Area Technology Centers and locally operated Career Technology Centers are at least 40 years old. With the demands to educate students for the modern workplace and jobs of the future, it is a hindrance to teach in structures incompatible and not reflective of the modern workplace, let alone the workplace of the future. Specifics identified include:

- **Structural Repairs;**
- **Inadequate Lighting;**
- **Inefficient HVAC;**
- **Aged Plumbing; and**
- **Substandard Electrical.**

## Selected Comments

*“We need additional space to expand our Health Sciences program, and our stakeholders continue to identify the need for construction, plumbing, electrical, computer/drones, and/or standalone welding pathways.”*

*“Student interest is at an all time high, but limited space limits opportunity to accept more students.”*

*“Building, and most all components, are original to 1965. We have had two fires, one of which resulted in the total loss of a classroom and its contents, caused by faulty (aged) lighting fixtures. Circuit breakers regularly trip because of overloading, and one room may have outlets that are linked to panels in three or more locations in the building. Windows are single pane glass and original. Asbestos floor tiles are still present in the building. Sinks run with brown water when first turned on because of the old rusted pipes.”*

*“Safety upgrades are needed in the shops including light covers, mezzanine gates, and safety gates for bay doors. Classroom floors need replacing, but we believe they have asbestos in them.”*

*“One of the stalls in our women's bathroom has not been usable for almost two full years. This is due to inadequate plumbing.”*

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The Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) is a non-profit professional association representing Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers and administrators in all instructional pathways and at all levels of CTE instruction. The KACTE mission is to develop and provide leadership and advocacy to advance Career and Technical Education. Communicate with KACTE by e-mail at [kmstone1951@gmail.com](mailto:kmstone1951@gmail.com).

