

# CTE: A Relevant Education

## Providing an Effective CTE System for Kentucky

### Research and Recommendations Presented by the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE), January 2021

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is recognized as an integral function of Kentucky public education. A majority of secondary students, and many middle school students, participate in at least one CTE or career exploration course.

The secondary graduation rate for CTE concentrator students is 99 percent, demonstrating CTE's impact and performance. Notably, the secondary graduation rate for all students is 89 percent.

CTE's project-based learning engages students, answers the question of 'why I need to learn this?' and is economically relevant.

Kentucky's CTE system consists of many parts that at times defy the definition of "system." As much progress as CTE has accomplished, more needs to be done to provide universal equity and access to all students in a systemic manner.

Current funding allocations for both operational and classroom aspects are not sufficient to meet the needs and rising costs of high-skill programs. The distribution of current state funds for state and local CTE centers are determined through different formulas and protocols creating inequities. The lack of classroom consumable supplies and updated equipment and tools hinders instruction. A commitment to planned biennial increases in CTE funding through an equitable formula benefitting all schools is warranted and may provide a pathway to achieve adequacy, equity and access.

**Immediately**, to address operational inequities and classroom support, KACTE offers two recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2022 budget.

- ★ **Recommendation One** -- In the short-term, it is suggested that an investment by the Kentucky General Assembly of approximately \$3.5 million be appropriated in Fiscal Year 2022 to begin providing financial support to Kentucky's locally operated CTE centers and for pathways that do not currently receive state funding. This recommendation addresses the glaring disparities in the current **operational** funding approaches. This recommendation begins to address the equity issues that have long faced CTE in Kentucky.
- ★ **Recommendation Two** -- As detailed in this paper, the most critical classroom need to maintain quality CTE instruction is an infusion of financial support that can be directed toward consumable supplies and updated equipment and tools. KACTE recommends the Kentucky General Assembly in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget for CTE, apart from Recommendation One's funding for organizational delivery of CTE, be increased by \$3 million specifically to address the **classroom** need, with \$2 million added to ATC funding and \$1 million added to CTC (LAVEC) funding.

**THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION** to equity and access will require detailed studies and carefully determined consensus proposals for comprehensive, long-term funding of CTE in Kentucky. **KACTE recommends the Kentucky General Assembly direct the Legislative Research Commission to work with the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Career and Technical Education to develop a plan that will result in a proposal for a comprehensive, long-term CTE-FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) career pathway enrollment funding model.**

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KACTE, representing its membership and on behalf of all CTE professionals in Kentucky, presents **CTE: A Relevant Education -- Providing an Effective CTE System** for Kentucky. This paper reviews CTE in Kentucky, identifies best practices, explains concerns, and offers recommendations. KACTE members work in all CTE educational pathways (Agriculture, Business and Marketing Services, Construction, Engineering and Technology, Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Sciences, Information Technology and Media Arts, Law and Public Safety, Manufacturing and Transportation) and at all levels of CTE instruction (Middle School, High School, ATC, CTC, Community and Technical College and Four-Year Postsecondary institutions). A diverse working group of Kentucky CTE professionals performed the research, gathered the data, and contributed to this report, which represents a school and classroom perspective.