



Issues Update

January 5, 2025

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 or 502-682-6204.

General Assembly Convenes 2025 Short Session

The Kentucky General Assembly will convene on Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025, for its short, 30-day session. Organizational meetings and a vote to ratify a planned half-point state income tax reduction to 3.5 percent are anticipated to take place during the first week. Then the House and Senate will recess until Tuesday, Feb. 4. The session will adjourn on March 28, 2025.

With the biennial budget set during the 60-day, long session last year, the short session was intended to focus on policy issues and future considerations. Speaking at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Legislative Preview Conference in Lexington on Nov. 18, 2024, most legislators supported that direction.

Speaker of the House David Osborne said he would consider the session a success if the budget was not re-opened. "We've done everything we can do at this time," Senate President Robert Stivers said, adding the General Assembly will look at government's true role and assess needs versus wants. Needs will be considered. Wants not as likely.

Stivers said there will be a focus on failing schools, and Osborne said the intent is to improve educational outcomes for students.

THE SESSION OPENS with Career and Technical Education (CTE) holding a prominent role in discussion related to workforce development and other areas, but no specific legislation regarding CTE is expected.

House Licensing and Occupations Committee chair Matthew Koch emphasized the importance of CTE. Currently, the percentage of Kentucky's potential workforce is 58 percent. He said that is not good enough. Underemployment needs to be addressed. He applauded the expansion of KEES scholarships for CTE. He seeks a CTE system aligned with the local economy. He suggested teachers get out of the school and visit local employers.

Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) President Ryan Quarles, Ed.D., pushed Work-Ready Scholarships. "We need more Kentuckians who work with their hands," he said.

Most of the topics discussed in the daylong program were tied in some way to CTE, mainly as the educational foundation for skills in a particular field or industry. Such topics were: emerging technologies, energy and

Advocacy Committee Seeks Member Input on Policy

From Kiley Whitaker

KACTE Advocacy Committee Chair

We have had a lot of huge wins in the CTE world over the last few years due to your support and due to the work of KACTE and CTE advocates. We want to continue this momentum as we move into the future.

To this end, we have created a survey to help direct our advocacy efforts around improvements in CTE legislation, policies and practices. Information from this survey will also help the KACTE Board and the CTE Summer Program planning team in determining additional professional development needed.

As we make plans, talk with legislators, and work with KACTE priorities, we want to ensure that we are meeting the needs of you, our KACTE members. This survey will take a lot of the guess work out of determining where to place our time and efforts. It is a short survey that will only take a few minutes of your time, but could have lasting outcomes for CTE as we move forward.

THANK YOU in advance for taking the time to provide this crucial information. We look forward to reviewing the results. Do not forget that together we have a very loud voice that does impact the decisions that are being made. We appreciate you.

KACTE Advocacy Survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KACTEAdvocate2024>

environment, and health. Even in the Budget and Revenue session, the value of measuring CTE's return on investment (ROI) was noted.

THE NEW MEMBERS PANEL featured a first. J.T. Payne, newly elected representative from District 12 in Henderson, is co-chair of the Kentucky Association for

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Career and Technical Education (KACTE) Leadership Committee. Although former CTE teachers and administrators, as well as a number of academic teachers, are members of the General Assembly, Payne, assistant superintendent, Henderson County Technology Center, is the first active KACTE Board member elected to the General Assembly.

As the General Assembly continues to look at CTE involvement and improvement, Gov. Andy Beshear noted in his 2025 legislative priorities that, "We also need to continue to invest in career and technical education." His comment is evidence of CTE's wide support among policymakers and interest groups. For instance, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation both cite support for quality CTE in policy documents.

KACTE is developing a white paper on CTE needs that will form the basis of the association's advocacy. Please see the item in this *Issues Update* requesting member feedback via a survey link.

General Assembly Committee Changes

Senator Stephen West will return as chair of the Senate Education Committee, but the House chose to divide the former Education Committee responsibilities. Rep. James Tipton will chair the Postsecondary Education Committee, and Rep. Steve Riley will chair the Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Riley is a retired educator, and Tipton received a masters in vocational education from the University of Kentucky.

Rep. Kim Banta, another retired educator, will chair the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education and Workforce Development. Rep. Scott Lewis, Ohio County Superintendent of Schools, will serve on Banta's subcommittee. Sen. Matthew Deneen, a teacher in Elizabethtown, will chair the Senate Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee.

Kentucky Chosen to Pilot Statewide JROTC Program

Colonel (Ret.) Tim McDonald is the first state Director of Army Instruction in Kentucky. The position was created as part of a pilot program announced by the U.S. Army Cadet Command. McDonald and his office will provide administrative and logistic management for the programs, including educational instruction and integrated processes.

McDonald will oversee the existing 97 JROTC programs in Kentucky schools. He will be Kentucky's representative and advocate on JROTC matters. The details of the pilot program were explained at the Kentucky

Dates of Note

February 11, 2025 — Student Organization Leadership Day in Frankfort. Career and Technical Education Student Organization (CTSO) members may visit Frankfort and the State Capitol for a civics program and the opportunity to meet with legislators. For more information or to obtain a registration form, e-mail kmstone1951@gmail.com.

February 13-14, 2025 — The KACTE Leadership Fellows Program will hold its second in-person session at the State Capitol and Capitol Annex. A dozen CTE teachers and administrators are participating in the 2024-25 Fellows program to enhance their leadership skills. They will re-cap their year in a breakout session at the 2025 CTE Summer Program.

July 28-31, 2025 — The Annual Statewide CTE Summer Program will be held at the Galt House Hotel, Louisville. Registration and Housing availability will be released February 3, 2025. More information on the 2025 CTE Summer Program can be found at www.kyacte.org.

Department of Education Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) CTE Advisory Committee meeting on Dec. 6. OCTE hopes through this effort to expand and improve the JROTC programs.

KBE Sets Legislative Priorities

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) legislative priorities for 2025 include supporting the work of the *Kentucky United We Learn Council*, which is reviewing the state's assessment and accountability systems. The Council has identified prototypes for reimagined systems that prioritize innovations, personalization, local community and student voice, and the incorporation of vibrant learning experiences.

Additional goals are to secure funding for numeracy, literacy and high-quality instructional resources.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is conducting a series of town hall meetings on the Support ? Education Excellent in Kentucky (SEEK) funding methodology and practice. All citizens are invited to participate and comment. Remaining town dates and sites are:

- Jan. 22, Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative, Hazard, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Jan. 24, Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative, Shelbyville, 9 a.m.-noon.

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- Feb. 5, Green River Educational Cooperative, Bowling Green, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Feb. 13, Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative, Lexington, 9 a.m.-noon.
- Feb. 19, Northern Kentucky Educational Cooperative, Cold Spring, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Feb. 26, West Kentucky Educational Cooperative, Eddyville, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Federal Developments

Funding for Career and Technical Education was held at the current level in the latest Continuing Resolution Congress passed to fund the federal government into March 2025. Both House and Senate Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations proposals include an increase for CTE funding through the Carl Perkins Act, but a final bill was not considered before adjournment.

The **Social Security Fairness Act**, which includes provisions to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) passed in the late days of the 118th Congress. The repeal of these

provisions is important to industry-based CTE teachers. It allows them to collect their earned Social Security benefits without penalty. The bill passed the House on Nov. 12, 2024, 327-75-1, and the Senate Dec. 21, 2024, 76-20. KACTE advocated several years to eliminate the GPO/WEP provisions. President Biden was to sign the law into effect on Jan. 5, 2025.

Discussion of the federal role in education policy is spurred by the re-election of Donald Trump as President. He previously stated his desire to eliminate the Department of Education (DOE). Funding currently administered through DOE would be sent to the states and localities by block grants. The discussion was further spurred by Mr. Trump's choice for Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon. She is an executive with World Wrestling Entertainment and led the Small Business Administration in Mr. Trump's first term.

An additional item in his plan for education policy is to create a credentialing body to certify teachers, indicating teachers should embrace patriotic values and not indoctrinate children. He said he would cut federal funding to schools that teach "critical race theory" or

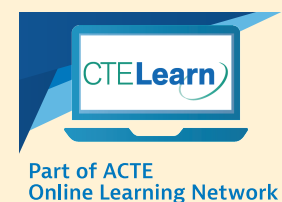
Free KACTE Member Access for CTE Learn Courses Authored by KACTE Members

Courses on the KACTE on-line professional development portal (<https://ky.ctelearn.org>) authored by Kentucky CTE professionals are available to Kentucky teachers at no cost. There are five courses available for free to Kentucky teachers:

- EC111 — **Learning Through Student-Based Enterprises** (use code MKKY24 to bypass payment)
- EC131 — **How to Develop Virtual Reality Lessons** (use code MKKY24 to bypass payment)
- EC132 — **3D Printing and Additive Manufacturing** (use code MKKY24 to bypass payment)
- EC133 — **Introduction to Artificial Intelligence** (use code MKKY24 to bypass payment)
- ED134 — **Strategies for Teaching Finance to CTE Students** (use code MKKY24 to bypass payment)

Comprehensive Professional Development Opportunities for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teachers and Administrators Are Available Through **CTE Learn**, the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) Online Learning Center -- <https://ky.ctelearn.org>.

- ★ **More Than 200 Self-Paced Online Courses**
- ★ **Each Course Provides 4 Hours of Continuing Education**
- ★ **Digital Badge & Certificate of Completion**
- ★ **Opportunity to Apply for College Credit**



Please visit the KACTE Online Learning Portal -- <https://ky.ctelearn.org> -- to learn more about the Professional Development opportunities available for all CTE professionals at all levels of CTE instruction. Discounts for KACTE members and organizational/school groups are available, as well as free resources.

Watch a 1-Minute Video on CTE Learn's Kentucky Professional Development Portal

https://youtu.be/AXeRYl_6ldI