






PA Schools Work When They Can Provide Career & Technical Education

If Pennsylvania is to give every student a chance to succeed, it must do more for students seeking career and technical opportunities. Creating educational and career pathways for students is crucial to maintaining a competitive workforce, fostering economic growth, and bolstering Pennsylvania's middle class.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) prepares students for successful careers and lifelong learning through higher-level skills and knowledge to enhance our workforce competitiveness in the 21st century global economy.

Skilled Workers Needed:	Ensuring Investments in CTE
 74 CTCs EDUCATING 55,000 STUDENTS IN PA	
90% OF OVERALL BUDGET PAID BY MEMBER DISTRICTS TO SEND STUDENTS	
 \$10 MILLION NEEDED FOR CTE SUBSIDY IN 2019-20 STATE BUDGET	
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IS KEY TO PA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	

We appreciate that Governor Wolf and the General Assembly recognize the value of investing in career and technical education (CTE) and, over the past several years, both the Senate and House have thoroughly explored this topic and made important policy recommendations covering a wide array of solutions.

However, it wasn't until the 2018-19 state budget - for the first time in nearly a decade - that Pennsylvania policymakers increased funding for CTE. While investments were included as part of a broader initiative advanced by the Governor known as the PAsmart initiative, \$10 million was specifically allocated for the Career and Technical Education Subsidy, driving the funds directly to Career and Technical Centers (CTC) and school districts with these programs.

Unfortunately, CTE is still not available to all students who want to attend, because many school districts simply cannot afford to enroll all interested students in those programs. This is troublesome, because data shows that career fields requiring CTE backgrounds are growing in demand.

The state Career and Technical Education Subsidy represents less than 8% of the total cost to fund career and technical education and federal Carl D. Perkins funding covers roughly 2% of a CTC's budget. That leaves member school districts paying approximately 90% of the overall budget to send students to CTCs.

At a time when many school districts in the state are continuing to struggle to meet basic education costs, this portion of the tab they are expected to pay for CTE is an added burden.

In addition, competitive equipment grants of up to \$100,000 (requiring a \$50,000 local match) are available through the Pennsylvania Department of Education but help defray only a fraction of costs associated with providing a quality CTE experience.

Importance of Budget Investment

In the Governor's 2019 Budget Address, he proposed a \$10 million PAsmart grant to help career and technical education better serve the students of Pennsylvania.

While PA Schools Work is grateful for the support of CTE, we would suggest an alternative placement of the additional funds to more directly serve the students of Pennsylvania:

"Prepare Tomorrow's Workforce Today' is our mission statement,

because we believe career and technical education is the total educational philosophy

that ensures students graduate from high school ready and prepared for post-secondary education and the world of work."

- Kathryn Strouse,
Administrative Director of the
Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

The best use of an additional \$10 million would be \$4 million allocated through the formula-driven Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant line and \$6 million be appropriated through the Career and Technical Education subsidy.

This allocation will be distributed in a manner to benefit all students in career and technical education. Funds sent to the equipment grant are a needed boost, as many of the career and technical schools and programs throughout Pennsylvania are in desperate need of equipment to properly instruct their students. Similarly, directing more funds to the subsidy will provide better access for students to attend these in-demand programs.

Pennsylvania must be equipped to meet the demand to sustain economic growth and competitiveness.

PA Schools Work is a coalition of organizations from across Pennsylvania representing teachers and other educators; urban, suburban and rural communities; and parents and other community members working together to advocate for PA public schools, their students and the communities they serve.

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