



# Issues Update

December 21, 2021

*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.

## KACTE Asks Members to Inform Legislators of Needs

The Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) urges its members to contact their state legislators emphasizing the importance of Career and Technical Education (CTE) for economic development and enhancing workforce skills. Using anecdotes and data from your school, explain to the legislators how investing more funding in CTE will spur positive returns. Please consider inviting them to your school to see first hand the programs in action and their impact on students.

KACTE was the host of a virtual meeting of Area Technology Center (ATC)/Career Technology Center (CTC) principals with Kentucky House of Representatives Majority Floor Leader Steven Rudy on Oct. 15. He suggested the outreach and invitation to legislators. For the first time in many years, the Kentucky General Assembly will draft a 2022-24 biennial budget during the upcoming session with revenue available to increase funding. He said the legislators need to be educated that CTE is on the frontline of economic development. He stressed the value of being positive in presentations -- *shine; don't whine!*

The background and explanation for increasing funding through changing the allocations method for CTE appropriations is the KACTE white paper, *CTE: A Relevant Education, Providing an Effective CTE System for Kentucky*, which may be found at [www.kyacte.org](http://www.kyacte.org). Also supporting the need for increased appropriations is KACTE's 2020 research report, *Starving, Status Report on CTE Funding of Operations, Supplies and Equipment*, which is posted on the website's Issues section.

**RELEVANT EDUCATION** suggests establishing CTE allocations on a student full time equivalent (FTE) basis. **The first step would add \$54 million in each year of the coming biennium to the existing CTE funding sources.** The FTE model will address the equity and access concerns facing CTE in Kentucky as explained in the white paper. It would bring equity to ATC and CTC funding, as well as provide CTE funding for CTE programs in high school CTE departments that meet the definition of high-quality CTE. The change funds programs rather than buildings. It incentivizes opening more programs and providing opportunities to more students.

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### General Assembly Leaders Plan Conservative Budget

Kentucky General Assembly leadership speaking at the annual Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Legislative Preview Conference on Dec. 17, offered few specifics on the 2022-24 biennial budget that will be passed during the General Assembly's 60-day session that begins Jan. 4.

It appears few programs will sustain any budget cuts since the Consensus Forecasting Group, meeting the same day, reported the current fiscal year will end June 30 with \$1.94 billion more revenue than projected. Further, the projections for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years showed revenue increases over the current year of \$2.24 billion and \$2.83 billion, respectively.

It is most likely most if not all of the revenue surplus in the current year will be placed in the state's "rainy day" fund, although some small expenditure could be appropriated to meet various identified needs, such as the social service workforce.

The two most mentioned destinations at the Legislative Preview Conference for the future revenue increases were the rainy day fund and contributions to pension funds to reduce unfunded future liability.

House of Representative Majority Floor Leader Steven Rudy said the focus would be on "a conservative budget." But both Rudy and Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee Chair Chris McDaniel hinted there may be investments in some key areas. McDaniel mentioned all-day kindergarten, and Rudy said education funding will be a priority.

House Education Committee Chair Regina Huff said on an education panel that early childhood education would be a priority, and Rep. Killion Timony was the one speaker that specifically mentioned funding for Career and Technical Education. He said vocational/technical education is "vastly underfunded."

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Recent announcements proclaim the economic development investment being made in Kentucky by business and industry. The resulting manufacturing, construction and service jobs will require high-level skills. CTE is and will be the best option for individuals to obtain needed workforce and workplace skills. CTE requires investment to ensure it will meet the challenge of educating Kentucky's workforce, which will further economic growth across the Commonwealth.

## Interim General Assembly Meetings Focus on Education

Several interim committee, task force and commission meetings over the summer and fall indicated further education funding and policy actions in the upcoming Kentucky General Assembly session.

The School Funding Task Force recommendations for the 2022 session included:

- Permanently authorizing full funding of all-day kindergarten. The funding for the current year was through a special appropriation of federal pandemic recovery money. Rep. James Tipton prefiled legislation to make the program permanent, which would require the General Assembly to appropriate the necessary funding.

## Defining High-Quality CTE

To bring clarity to the burgeoning conversation around high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) and help CTE educators and administrators develop and improve the quality of their CTE programs of study, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) created an evidence-based framework defining high-quality CTE across 12 elements incorporating 92 criteria:

1. Standards-aligned and integrated curriculum.
2. Sequencing and articulation.
3. Student assessment.
4. Prepared and effective program staff.
5. Engaging instruction.
6. Access and equity.
7. Facilities, equipment, technology and materials.
8. Business and community partnerships.
9. Student career development.
10. Career and Technical Student Organizations.
11. Work-based Learning.
12. Data and program improvement.

More detail may be found at <https://www.acteonline.org/professional-development/high-quality-cte-tools/>.

- Develop a plan for full state funding of school transportation costs.
- Fully fund the initiatives contained in the 2019-passed school safety law.
- Increase funding for Family Resource and Youth Service Centers.
- Amend the SEEK funding formula to compute based on average student membership model rather than average daily attendance.

**ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER** of Education David Horseman and Office of Career and Technical Education policy adviser Leslie Slaughter presented at the Interim Joint Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Protection. They pointed out the progress made in moving today's CTE model to a program for all students with integrated core academics and partnership among high schools, postsecondary institutions and employers. In 2019-20, 70 percent of all Kentucky public school students were enrolled in one of 150 CTE pathway options.

They outlined a plan for developing a statewide comprehensive college and career advising platform. A partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and KYSTATS (the state data collection and analysis agency) would give all learners a one-stop shop to access information on programs, affordability, resources, and virtual employer engagement.

**AT THE KENTUCKY EDUCATION Summit** organized by Commissioner of Education Jason Glass, Ed.D., Senate President Pro-Tem David Givens and House Speaker Pro-Tem David Meade addressed education funding. Meade mentioned the need to focus on CTE, saying students do not necessarily need a four-year degree, but they do need a credential. He also said funding of all-day kindergarten was a priority. Givens predicted the General Assembly would consider spending on teacher raises, infrastructure, pensions, and the rainy day fund. He added teacher raises would not increase the productivity of teachers, which already is high, but would broaden and deepen the pool of potential teachers and support teacher retention.

**DURING A MEETING** of the Commission on Race and Access to Opportunity, Rep. Timoney said there needs to be more awareness of CTE opportunities and eliminating the stigma associated with CTE. He urged support for career counselors.

**THE COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY Education** (CPE) released its funding requests, calling for a 10 percent increase in operating funds for performance funding and pension relief for six institutions, and a \$700 million capital investments in repair and maintenance of state-owned campus buildings. In addition, CPE is requesting \$6.7 million over the biennium for the Competitive Workforce Initiative at the Kentucky Community and Technical College

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# KY Commissioner Considers Future of Education

System (KCTCS). The funding would address workforce shortages in targeted industry sectors, facilitate employer recruitment and retention, support regional and state economies, and help maintain student affordability.

**FINALLY, GOVERNOR** Andy Beshear said in an interview with the Associated Press that his 2022-24 budget proposal to the General Assembly will contain “historic investments in education.” He also was quoted, “This is the way that we break cycles of poverty. This is the way that we attract even bigger and better jobs. This is the way that we change everything here in Kentucky.” The education investment will help continue to momentum for economic development, which he said set records in 2021.

## Commissioner’s Summit Re-thinks the Future of Education

While increased funding for education may be a priority before the 2022 Kentucky General Assembly session, which will adopt a 2022-24 biennial budget, Commissioner Glass wants Kentucky’s public education system to re-think how education is presented, operated and managed in the future. A series of presentations at the Kentucky Education Summit held Nov. 1-2 in Louisville addressed the theme ***United We Learn -- Investing in Kentucky’s Future, One Student at a Time.***

The Commissioner’s Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education used opinions and data gathered through a Commissioner’s listening tour, a survey, and empathy interviews to develop a vision for the future consisting of 10 elements:

- Kentuckians will feel a greater sense of common purpose, satisfaction and appreciation for their hard work in providing quality educational experiences.
- Schools will be places for people to learn together, gather and celebrate through a network of trusting relationships to support student success.
- Schools and districts will build trusting partnerships across communities to foster authentic collaboration to best serve our students.
- Inequities will be addressed directly and all members of the community will be involved in overcoming barriers and challenges.
- Schools will be centers of curiosity, motivation and engagement and provide an open and welcoming environment.
- Schools will be accountable for student success in a manner than inspires.
- Real conversations will take place, where everyone is empowered to share good ideas that lead to improvements for all students -- especially around innovation and collaborations.

- Schools will create pathways for students to have individual achievement and collective prosperity for their broader communities
- Assessments will focus on improving outcomes that matter to students and their future.
- The education community will have a culture that doesn’t shy away from addressing tough issues and seeks collaborative ways to solve them.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER** Tony Wagner, senior research fellow, Learning Policy Institute, set the tone for the summit saying, “It’s not what we know; it’s what we can do with what we know.” He added that creative problem solving is the single most important skill in the workplace today.

Glass noted that more than 90 percent of Americans are educated in public schools. He said now is the time for action; that Kentuckians are ready for change. The change already is happening in some locations, he explained, and he asked, “How do we bring it to scale. We need a system that emphasizes skills.” He paraphrased Wagner’s comment that content matters, skill matters more, and motivation matters most.

Travis Hamby, superintendent, Allen County Schools, which is piloting his district as a local laboratory of learning, said they are trying to transform the learning experience for students. He wants to put the public back in public school. “Equity requires inclusion, reciprocity, co-creation,” he explained. He explained the inclusive design process being used is empathize, define, ideate, prototype and test.

Kentucky Board of Education Chair Lu Young closed the Summit saying it showed the path forward and urged a united effort that keeps the dialog alive.

## Pensions

As noted, the General Assembly has pensions on the priority list for the upcoming session. The Teachers Retirement System (TRS) recommended TRS funding of \$1.25 billion and \$1.343 billion in 2022-23 and 2023-24 respectively. Those are increases of \$130 million in 2022-23 and \$220 million in 2023-23. The requests were made prior to the revenue projections by the Consensus Forecast Group.

At the December meeting of the Public Pension Oversight Board, it was reported the Teachers Retirement System saw a decrease in funding level and retiree health position due to changes in assumptions incorporated in the 2021 valuation. The unfunded liability is almost \$17 billion in the pension fund and \$1.3 billion in retiree health. However, the market value of the pension fund is almost \$26 billion, which is more than three times larger than the next largest Commonwealth Employees Retirement Fund. The retiree health valuation is \$2.3 billion.

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