



Career-Technical Education Legislative Priorities

2021 Policy Recommendations—a Focus on Equity and Inclusion. CTE educators and administrators strive to ensure equity and inclusion for all current and prospective career-tech students. Ohio’s CTE programs are designed to meet the needs of the local workforce as well as the career goals of all high school and adult learners. To maintain and enhance the state’s high quality career-technical education infrastructure, Ohio ACTE will focus on the following legislative priorities for 2021:

- 1. CTE Recommendations to (K-12) School Funding Plan:** During the last biennium, Ohio’s career-tech community advocated several recommendations that became part of the (House-Passed) Fair School Funding Plan, including:
 - Maintain base aid for JVSs, Comprehensives and Compacts;
 - Maintain career-technical education “weighted” funding outside the cap;
 - Establish state programs to secure innovative approaches to career exploration.2021 is a budget year that could see the full passage / implementation of a new school funding formula. Ohio ACTE will continue to advocate its core recommendations, monitor any other significant adjustments to the revised formula, and generally offer input from the field as the state crafts its biennial operating budget bill.
- 2. Incentivize Ohio Businesses to Offer Additional Work-Based Learning Opportunities for High School Career-Tech Students:** The state could create incentives to encourage more businesses to offer work-based learning opportunities in conjunction with high school career-technical programs. Expanding work-based learning options (i.e., temporary employment, internships, externships, mentoring or other special projects) will enhance students’ ability to gain meaningful experiences in their chosen career-technical pathway while simultaneously earning college credit, desired certificates or industry recognized credentials. In addition to providing meaningful real-world experience, early exposure to a company also increases the likelihood of employment after graduation. Incentives could include tax breaks, limiting employer liability for participating businesses, and / or enhancing flexibility within work-based learning regulations.
- 3. Maintain / Enhance Funding for Adult Education:** Like Ohio’s colleges and universities, its 52 Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs) have struggled over the last year in the wake of the Pandemic. Issues abound, including decreased enrollment and (COVID-19 related) funding reductions. Recognizing Ohio’s challenging fiscal outlook, the CTE community seeks a restoration of OTC funding to (pre-Pandemic) levels included in the last biennial budget—which will ensure their continued ability to successfully provide in-demand adult technical training in response to the state’s diverse regional workforce needs. The state should also enhance funding for the highly valued Adult Diploma Program, which offers (via OTCs) much-needed financial support to adults seeking a high school diploma and technical certificate / credential. OTCs also seek to extend a (reduced) phase-in for performance funding over the biennium so that no OTC receives less than 50% of the average allocation of the past three years.