

April 18, 2017

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chair
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx:

The undersigned organizations write to express strong support for the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and offer recommendations to bolster the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (H. R. 5587; 114th Congress), passed last year with overwhelming bipartisan support. The Committee's bipartisan efforts to modernize and update career and technical education (CTE) programs are to be applauded and we look forward to working with you as you reintroduce a bill this Congress.

To meet the demands of an evolving new economy, federal policy must support twenty-first-century teaching and learning opportunities. This includes ensuring that all students receive not only opportunities to develop academic knowledge and technical capacity in the nation's schools but also a wider range of skills and competencies that are valued by employers and essential to creating a strong talent pipeline. Both research and employer demands also emphasize the importance of developing skills such as creativity, communication, and teamwork.

High-quality CTE programming requires greater alignment and integration between education and workforce training systems that move beyond traditional rote preparation to systems that create innovative and relevant pathways to postsecondary education and the workforce. The recommendations put forth in the attachment provide deeper learning experiences that prepare all youth to become critical thinkers, complex problem-solvers, effective communicators and collaborators, and self-directed learners, that will position them to succeed in postsecondary education endeavors. These recommendations are evidence-based and informed by high-quality research on how to improve outcomes for all students.

With these goals in mind, the following recommendations focus on six primary areas:

1. Recruitment and retention of CTE teachers
2. Professional development for CTE teachers and non-CTE teachers
3. A robust authorization level for innovation and research
4. Work-based learning and employer engagement
5. Integrated student support services
6. Early college and dual-enrollment programs

The undersigned organizations are available to answer questions about the attached recommendations and provide the relevant research. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Excellent Education
Center for American Progress
Council for a Strong America
Jobs for the Future
Learning Policy Institute
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Center for Innovation in Education
National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc.
Opportunity Institute
Partnership for 21st Century Learning

Enclosure

**Proposed Amendments to
H. R. 5587—Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act**

1. Recruitment and Retention of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teachers

Recommendation: Support a strong CTE educator workforce by addressing CTE educator shortages and implementing evidence-based strategies to attract, prepare, develop, and retain CTE educators.

Section 113. National Activities

- Page 48, line 16: Insert:

“(ii) improve career and technical education teacher effectiveness, **which may include addressing career and technical education teacher shortages at the state, regional, and local level through the implementation of evidence-based efforts to recruit, prepare, and retain career and technical education teachers;**”

Section 121. State Plan (amends Section 122)

- Page 57, line 1: Redesignate (3) as (4), insert a new (3), and renumber accordingly:

“(3) **how the State will support the recruitment, preparation, development, and retention of a high-quality career and technical education teacher workforce, including:**

“(A) **how the State will use funding under this program to collect and assess data on the availability and quality of career and technical education teacher preparatory programs, the qualifications of career and technical education teachers, and areas of career and technical education teacher shortages;**

“(B) **how the State will support increasing the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers where shortages exist, which may include providing financial incentives and additional supports for individuals with industry or educational backgrounds to become certified as CTE teachers, particularly in STEM-related fields; and**

“(C) **how the State will incentivize career and technical education teachers to earn industry- or sector-specific certifications and credentials such as in the STEM fields or other in-demand industry sectors or occupations.**

- Page 59, line 20: Insert:

“(6) a description of how the eligible agency will support the recruitment, **and** preparation, **development, and retention** of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, **including**

“(A) the strategies the eligible entity will implement to increase the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers where shortages exist, which may include providing financial incentives and additional supports for individuals with industry or educational backgrounds, particularly in STEM-related fields, to become a career and technical education teacher;

“(B) how the eligible entity will incentivize career and technical education teachers to earn industry- or sector-specific certifications and credentials such as in the STEM fields or other in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

“(C) how the eligible entity will support general and career and technical education teachers who work in career and technical education programs or academies through mentoring, opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, and high-quality professional development; and

“(D) the extent to which externships and other opportunities for work-based learning will be provided for general career and technical education teachers;

Section 123. State Leadership Activities (amends Section 124)

- Page 70, line 5: Redesignate (7) as (8), insert a new (7), and renumber accordingly:

“(7) supporting the recruitment, preparation, development, and retention of high-quality career and technical education teachers, including collecting and assessing data on the availability and quality of career and technical education teacher preparatory programs, the qualifications of career and technical education teachers, and areas of career and technical education teachers shortages, which may include providing financial incentives and additional supports for individuals with industry or educational backgrounds to become certified as CTE teachers, particularly in STEM-related fields and incentivizing career and technical education teachers to earn industry- or sector-specific certifications and credentials such as in the STEM fields or other in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

- Page 74, line 18: Insert:

“(13) support for preparing, retaining, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, such as pre-service, professional development, and leadership development programs, and which may include incentivizing career and technical education teachers to earn industry- or sector-specific certifications and credentials such as in the STEM fields or other in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

Section 131. Local Application for Career and Technical Education Programs

- Page 79, line 16: Insert:

“(E) a description of how the eligible recipient will improve recruitment, retention, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional

support personnel, paraprofessionals, and career, academic, and guidance counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in such professions, which may include

“(i) providing financial incentives and additional supports for individuals with industry or educational backgrounds, particularly in STEM-related fields, to become a career and technical education teacher;

“(ii) incentivizing career and technical education teachers to earn industry- or sector- specific certifications and credentials such as in the STEM fields or other in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

“(iii) incentivizing and supporting core academic subject area teachers to obtain their CTE credentials through training and professional development, including industry-involved externships, which may be used towards credits required to earn a CTE credential;

“(iv) providing mentoring for early career CTE teachers, opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, and high-quality professional development; and

“(v) providing externships and other opportunities for work-based learning for general and career and technical education teachers; and

2. Professional Development for CTE Teachers and Non-CTE Teachers

Recommendation: Encourage collaborative professional development between CTE and non-CTE teachers that support the integration of CTE, rigorous academics, and project-based or contextualize learning opportunities for students.

Section 123. State Leadership Activities

- Page 70, line 20: Insert the following and reletter accordingly:

“(A) promotes the integration of the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)) and relevant technical knowledge and skills, which may include through project-based or contextualized learning;

“(B) promotes opportunities for joint professional development that allows teachers in traditional academic subjects to collaborate with career and technical education instructors, school counselors, and others to provide a holistic educational program;

(BC) prepares career and technical education teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide appropriate accommodations for students who are members of special populations, including through the use of principles of universal design for learning; and

(CD) increases understanding of industry standards, as appropriate, for faculty providing career and technical education instruction.”; and

Section 132. Local Use of Funds

- Page 84, line 8: Insert and reletter accordingly:

“(2) provide professional development for career and technical education and non-

career and technical education teachers, principals, school leaders, administrators, and career and guidance counselors with respect to content and pedagogy that—

“(A) supports individualized academic and career and technical education instructional approaches, including the integration of academic and career and technical education standards and curriculum that meet the challenging state academic standards and that may incorporate industry standards;

“(B) ensures labor market information is used to inform the programs, guidance, and advisement offered to students;

“(C) provides educators with opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and understanding of all aspects of an industry, including the latest workplace equipment, technologies, standards, and credentials, which may include providing the time and flexibility to strengthen industry relationships and participate in educator externships;

“(D) creates opportunities for project-based or contextualized learning, that presents academic content in the context of projects or workplaces and that actively engage students in developing problem-solving, critical thinking, application of academic content, and collaboration skills;

“(E) provides educators with an understanding of how to develop assessment tools that measure and provide information on student progress on academic and technical knowledge and skills;

“(F) includes opportunities for joint professional development that allows teachers in traditional academic subjects to collaborate with career and technical education instructors, school counselors, and others to provide a holistic educational program including, but not limited to:

“(i) planning and implementing cross-disciplinary projects and assessments that integrate academic skills into career and technical education instruction and monitor student performance on project goals;

“(ii) fostering greater communication among teachers, including increasing the understanding of how diverse content curriculum elements fit together in practical application, and developing ways to team teach and co-plan courses in their programs;

“(iii) developing literacy within the context of career-themed pathways; and

“(iv) developing pedagogical skills that are developmentally appropriate for the age group they are teaching;

“(DG) supports administrators in managing career and technical education programs in the schools, institutions, or local educational agencies of such administrators; and ⁽¹⁾_(SEP)

“(EH) supports the implementation of strategies to improve student achievement and close gaps in student participation and performance in career and technical education programs, including the provision of integrated student support services (such as additional instruction in academic content, personalized student supports, smaller learning communities, and prevention and intervention services); and

“(FI) provides educators with opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and understanding in pedagogical practices, including, to the extent the eligible recipient determines that such evidence is reasonably available, evidence-based pedagogical practices;

3. Robust Authorization Level for Innovation and Research

Recommendation: Provide adequate funding for innovation and research that allows for experimentation with and deployment of proven and promising strategies to improve outcomes for CTE concentrators.

Section 113. National Activities

- Page 46, line 15: Insert:

“(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority to applications from eligible entities that will predominantly serve students from low-income families and which design programs that integrate the activities carried out in sections 124 or 135.

- Page 51, line 13: Revise as follows:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—~~\$200,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2022.~~

~~“(1) \$7,523,285 for fiscal year 2017;~~

~~“(2) \$7,626,980 for fiscal year 2018;~~

~~“(3) \$7,732,104 for fiscal year 2019;~~

~~“(4) \$7,838,677 for fiscal year 2020;~~

~~“(5) \$7,946,719 for fiscal year 2021; and~~

~~“(6) \$8,056,251 for fiscal year 2022.~~

Title II

Replace the Tech Prep program authorized under Title II of current law with a competitive grant program akin to the bipartisan CTE Excellence and Equity Act (S. 2718, 114th Congress) to support innovation, redesign the high school experience, and prepare young people for a career, with a focus on historically underserved students. Matching grants could be provided to partnerships among school districts, employers, and institutions of higher education (IHEs). Students should develop a broad range of knowledge and skills, including critical thinking, problem solving, and effective communication. Students should also have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials or credit toward a postsecondary degree or certificate and an understanding of the relevance of that course work in the context of a future career. Key components of this type of program would include

- involving employers as partners in CTE program design, curriculum development, program evaluation, and assessment of student work;
- integrating rigorous academics with CTE in courses that meet state university admissions requirements;
- supporting integrated professional development between core academic teachers (e.g., English, mathematics, history, science, etc.) and CTE teachers; establishing credit-

transfer agreements between participating local educational agencies and IHEs for courses of study that lead to a credit-bearing postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate;

- providing students with a continuum of work-based learning experiences, such as job shadowing, internships, and pre-apprenticeship programs to develop essential workplace skills; and
- providing integrated student support that addresses the comprehensive needs of students, such as incorporating accelerated and differentiated learning opportunities supported by evidence-based strategies for special student populations.

4. Work-Based Learning and Employer Engagement

Recommendation: Strengthen the role of employers to ensure CTE programs of study align with industry needs, encourage the facilitation of high-quality work-based learning, and respond to evolving labor market demands.

Section 7. Definitions

- Page 7, line 7: Strike (i) and (ii), redesignate (iii) and (iv) as (ii) and (iii), respectively, and insert:

“(i) by striking “applied learning” and all that follows through “problem-solving skills” in subparagraph (B) and inserting, “work-based, or other applied learning opportunities that supports the development of academic knowledge, problem-solving skills, and the ability to work collaboratively and communicate effectively,”;

Section 123. State Leadership Activities

- Page 74, line 17: After “opportunities” insert: , including paid work experience;

Section 131. Local Application for Career and Technical Education Programs

- Page 77, line 4: Strike (3) and insert:

“(3) a description of partnerships with employers in place or that will be developed, including how such partnerships will be utilized to—

“(A) provide students with a continuum of work-based learning experiences, including opportunities such as career exploration, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship programs, mentoring, internships, school-based enterprises, and virtual work-based learning opportunities;

“(B) engage employers in program design, curriculum development, program evaluation, and assessments of student work; and

“(C) provide educators with externship opportunities; and

Section 132. Local Uses of Funds

- Page 87, line 5: Insert:

“(E) a continuum of work-based learning opportunities, including opportunities such as career exploration, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship programs, mentoring, internships, school-based enterprises, virtual work-based learning opportunities, and paid work experience;

5. Integrated Student Support Services

Recommendation: Strengthen student supports that address the comprehensive needs of special student populations, including underrepresented student subgroups.

Section 131. Local Application for Career and Technical Education Programs

- Page 77, line 13: Redesignate (4) as (5), and insert:

“(4) a description of the integrated student supports that will be made available to address the comprehensive needs of students, informed by the comprehensive needs assessment conducted under subsection (c), which may include—

“(A) accelerated and targeted instruction for historically underserved students served under this Act who require additional support in order to meet proficiency requirements in core academic or technical subjects;

“(B) universal and individualized academic and nonacademic, college and career guidance and counseling, beginning in middle school that includes the development of individual development plans for each student and is reviewed at regular intervals throughout the year and annually;

“(C) a system of timely, consistent, and structured student supports that include an assessment of academic and career and technical course work needed for high school completion and successful postsecondary education transition, work-based learning experiences, the development of career objectives, and college planning, including financial planning and labor market data on in-demand industry sectors or occupations; and

“(D) a community-based approach that provides wraparound academic, social, and emotional, and health supports to improve overall youth development; and

Section 132. Local Uses of Funds

- Page 83, line 11: Redesignate (A) as (B), strike (C), insert the following, and reletter accordingly:

“(A) a system of timely, consistent, and structured student supports that include an assessment of academic and career and technical course work needed for high school completion and successful postsecondary education transition that results in an individual

development plan, work-based learning experiences, and college planning, including financial planning and labor market data on in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

“(AB) introductory courses or activities focused on career exploration and career awareness;

“(BC) readily available career and labor market information, including information on—

“(i) occupational supply and demand;

“(ii) educational requirements;

“(iii) other information on careers aligned to State or local economic priorities;

and

“(iv) employment sectors;

~~“(C) programs and activities related to the development of student graduation and career plans;~~

“(DC) career guidance and academic counselors that provide information on postsecondary education and career options; or

“(ED) any other activity that advances knowledge of career opportunities and assists students in making informed decisions about future education and employment goals;

6. Early College and Dual Enrollment

Recommendation: Expand student access to dual-enrollment programs and early college high schools through CTE programs to significantly improve the secondary and postsecondary education outcomes of students.

Section 131. Local Application for Career and Technical Education Programs

- Page 77, line 13: Redesignate (4) as (5) and insert:

“(4) a description of the career and technical education programs that the eligible recipient will develop and implement to provide students participating in career and technical education programs with the opportunity to gain postsecondary credit while still attending high school, such as through dual- or concurrent-enrollment programs or early college high school, as practicable; and