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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH *of* PENNSYLVANIA

House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing

Career and Technical Education

Wednesday April 12, 2023 | 12:00 p.m.

Representative Roni Green

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 12:00 | Chair Welcome and Member Introductions |
| 12:05 p.m. | Kyle Bucholtz, Advisor
<i>McDowell Manufacturing</i> |
| 12:20 p.m. | Joseph Tarasovitch, Principal
<i>Erie County Technical School</i> |
| 12:35 p.m. | Dr. Lee Burket, Director
<i>Pennsylvania Department of Education</i>
<i>Bureau of Career and Technical Education</i> |

Q & A with Legislators

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

House Democratic Policy Committee
Public Hearing on the Career and Technical Education
April 12, 2023

Good afternoon, Chairman Bizzaro and members of the House Democratic Policy Committee.

My name is Dr. Lee Burket, and I am the Director of the Bureau of Career and Technical Education at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit comments regarding career and technical education in Pennsylvania.

Building robust pathways between school and the workforce is critical to ensuring that learners of all ages have the skills they need to earn family-sustaining wages in fulfilling occupations while helping Pennsylvania businesses find the talent they need to be successful. One way that the Department carries out this mission is through our support of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE).

CTE enables secondary, postsecondary, and adult learners to pursue technical education, in conjunction with a comprehensive academic education, that prepares them for high-quality and high-priority occupations. In Pennsylvania, CTE is offered in multiple forms to high school students, college students, and adult learners. This system creates work-ready students with credentials to jump right into employment opportunities through a variety of avenues including, but not limited to, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and other types of work-based learning.

CTE Level	Number of Schools/Campuses	Programs with Enrollments	Enrollments
Secondary	224 school entities (140 high schools and 84 CTCs)	1,717	68,576 students
Postsecondary	24	955	59,463 students
Adult	64	291	10,501 students

Secondary Career and Technical Education

More than 220 school districts, charter schools, and career and technical centers (CTCs) offer nearly 2,000 PDE-approved secondary CTE programs to nearly 68,600 students. Collectively, these schools serve approximately 12 percent of the state’s secondary enrollment; nearly 15 percent of CTE students receive special education services.



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Table 1: Secondary CTE Enrollment Since 2017-18

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Grade 9-12 Enrollment	538,117	540,595	540,854	543,801	546,391
Secondary CTE Enrollment	67,248	67,236	68,105	65,536	68,576
Percent of 9-12 Enrollment in CTE	12.5%	12.4%	12.6%	12.1%	12.6%
CTE Enrollment in CTCs	50,786	50,649	51,533	49,470	52,993
CTE Enrollment in High Schools	16,462	16,587	16,572	16,066	15,583
Economically Disadvantaged CTE Students	26,232	33,648	32,040	33,082	30,078
Industry Certificates Earned by CTE students in Grades 9-12	34,809	39,235	33,769	36,571	46,393

There are 140 high schools approved by the Department to offer secondary CTE programs; 14 of which have eight or more Department-approved CTE programs. This year, nearly 15,600 students in grades 9 through 12 are enrolled in high school CTE programs.

CTCs allow students in one or more school district(s) within an approved career and technical center attendance area to access career and technical education at a common location/campus. As a member of a CTC, each member school district has representation on the joint operating committee (JOC). The JOC performs the same duties as a school board, which includes approving the CTC budget. Member school districts fund the operation of the CTC as determined by the articles of agreement.

There are 84 CTCs in Pennsylvania, and each center's JOC decides whether the it operates as a comprehensive CTC or an occupational CTC. Comprehensive CTCs offer students both academic courses and technical programs. Occupational CTCs offer only technical programs; students receive their academic coursework at their school district of residence. There are 16 comprehensive CTCs and 68 occupational CTCs. The State Board of Career and Technical Education has approved nine CTCs as single district, meaning only one district enrolls students in the single district CTC. Collectively, this year 53,000 students are enrolled in CTE programs at CTCs statewide.

Postsecondary Career and Technical Education

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education distributes federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) funds to 24 postsecondary institutions: 14 community colleges, four private two-year colleges, one private state-aided institution, one postsecondary private licensed school, and one college of technology. Thirteen CTCs offer adult CTE programs that lead to short-term industry credentials that are less than an associate degree.



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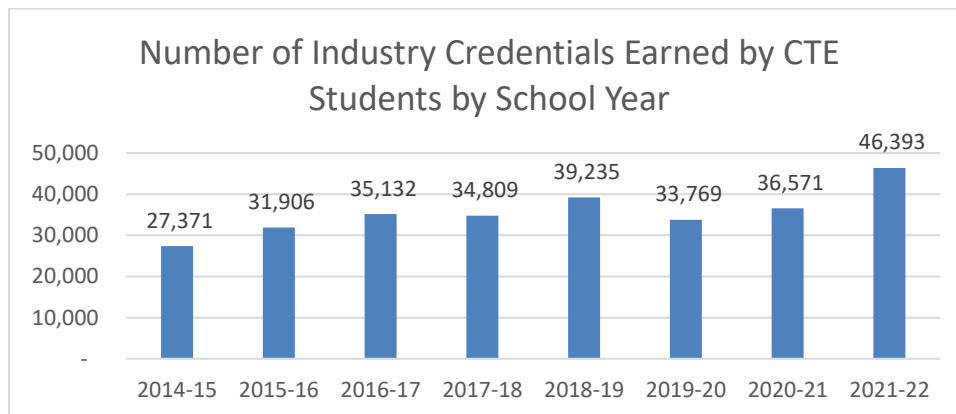
CTE for Adult Learners

Sixty-four entities receive state funds to operate adult technical training, short-term training to meet the immediate needs of employers. These entities are referred to as State Adult Affidavit Recipients.

CTE Programs

CTE Programs of Study are developed by PDE with employers to provide students with the recommended academic and technical courses needed for employment in in-demand occupations within 13 career clusters. The federal Perkins Act requires Pennsylvania to have a robust system of PDE-approved CTE Programs of Study. Program approvals are based on the local schools’ technical and academic scope and sequence, and its alignment to a Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) description. Each Program of Study has a statewide task grid that students and faculty use to track skills and competencies obtained in the program, leading to industry recognized credentials. Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, all public schools must include industry credentials on a student’s transcript.

In 2021-22, secondary CTE students earned 46,393 industry certifications, a 26.9% increase over 2020-21 and the highest number of industry credentials earned by CTE students in the last eight years.



Funding

State, federal, and local funding supports career and technical education in Pennsylvania, including:

- **Federal Perkins V Funding:** Currently, Pennsylvania receives \$45 million in Perkins V funding to support 97 secondary schools and the 24 postsecondary entities that offer PDE-approved CTE programs. Funding is distributed through a formula, and recipients



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must use the funds to improve academic and technical skills through integration of academic standards with technical content. Recipients must provide a program of study where the secondary and postsecondary coursework are aligned through an articulation agreement.

- **State Funding:** The state uses the **Secondary Career and Technical Education (SCTE) Subsidy** to financially support school districts, charter schools, and CTCs that operate approved secondary CTE programs. The SCTE allocation is determined using the formula described in the Pennsylvania Public School Code. The formula uses the weighted vocational average daily membership (ADM) for the current school year, the market value/personal income aid ratio, and the actual instructional expense as factors for reimbursement. There are no limitations on how eligible secondary schools and CTCs may use SCTE subsidy funds. Schools may use the funding however necessary to provide CTE programs and support CTE students.

Two annual state grant programs provide funding to CTCs and school districts with CTE programs to update or purchase new equipment for in-demand occupations. The Competitive Equipment Grant program provides up to \$50,000 to eligible schools with matching funds. Supplemental Equipment Grants are distributed to eligible schools based on a formula; no local match is required.

- **Student Tuition:** School districts use state Basic Education Funding (BEF) subsidy and local tax revenue to support programs, including CTE programs. Charter schools and CTCs do not receive BEF subsidy or collect local taxes. Instead, school districts pay a per student cost to the charter school or CTC for each district student who enrolls. Tuition is not set by PDE and varies statewide. Charter school tuition is based on a formula in the state Charter School Law. For CTCs, member school districts pay a per student cost based on a formula in the CTC articles of agreement.

While many agree that CTE is a critical tool to provide learners with access to fulfilling, family-sustaining careers, not all secondary students in Pennsylvania have access to CTE programs. Students and families – and many educators – have limited knowledge of CTE or how to enroll in CTE-oriented programs. Exacerbating this issue, a shortage of certified CTE educators means even if a school has equipment/space, there isn't an instructor to teach the courses.

In some cases, budgetary and student performance concerns lead some school districts to prevent students from enrolling in CTE programs offered at CTCs. For instance, 12 school districts do not have any CTE programs and report no CTE students, despite CTCs being located in nearly all of their counties (Lackawanna, Mercer, Fayette, Montgomery, Dauphin, Lycoming, Bedford). Additionally, when CTC student enrollment declines, the cost a district pays to send a student to



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a CTC increases and can result districts limiting the number of interested students who are allowed to enroll.

Governor Josh Shapiro believes that all students should have access to high-quality educational experiences, whether in a traditional classroom setting or in a CTC. As such, his 2023-24 Budget includes a \$17.3 million investment to increase access to CTE programs and to create opportunities that lead to high-priority, good-paying careers. The proposal also includes \$5 million for career and technical education related to computer science and STEM, which will enable schools to receive grants to establish or expand CTE programs aligned to high-priority occupations.

CTE is crucial to ensuring businesses can find workers with the skills they are looking for and that every Pennsylvanian has the opportunity to chart their own course; and it is more important than ever that students complete their secondary education with strong academic and technical skills that prepare them for successful careers. The targeted investments we make today through these programs will expand the number of apprenticeships and students prepared to fill critical needs in the trades tomorrow.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak with you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.