

Support Career and Technical Education Opportunities for Students

Governor Kathy Hochul’s proposed state budget for 2023-24 would, at last, complete implementation of the 2007 Foundation Aid formula while also funding other School Aid categories as called for by current law. But one gap we prioritize for the Legislature to address is to increase funding to support opportunities for students to pursue career and technical education.

Specifically, we recommend that the final state budget:

- Increase the “aidable” salary for Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) CTE instructors to \$60,000 over the next three school years—\$40,000 for 2023-24, \$50,000 for 2024-25, and \$60,000 in 2025-26; and
- Increase the per pupil cap and expand funding to include 9th grade students for Special Services Aid for CTE programs in the Big 5 city school districts and other districts which are not BOCES members.

The aidable salary limit for BOCES programs, including CTE, has not been increased since 1990. Over that time span, the Consumer Price Index has more than doubled. As a result, rising costs have been borne from other sources, including local taxes, and this has jeopardized the capacity to sustain these programs and to meet growing demands for skilled entry-level workers.

State per pupil funding for CTE programs in the Big 5 cities and other non-BOCES districts also falls short of meeting costs and does not provide support on behalf of students in 9th grade.

Our State Constitution promises “a system of free common schools, wherein all the children of this state may be educated.” We owe young people an education that prepares them for demands of adulthood. CTE programs deliver on that promise. In 2019-20, 90% of students in BOCES CTE programs graduated, above the statewide rate for that year. A high number directly entered the workforce, but more than half of 2018 CTE program graduates went on to college.

The Council urges the Legislature to increase state funding for CTE programs, to assure opportunities for students and meet the needs of employers.