

February 8, 2021

*Via: E-mail*

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of the State of California  
State Capitol, 1st Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: 2021-22 State Budget Proposal**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Career Technical Education (CTE) Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Coalition, an organization comprised of 13 CTE JPAs that represent **Career Technical Education centers** and 60 school districts in California, we write to share our perspective on your 2021-22 State Budget proposal.

We are pleased to see that the state's revenue estimates and financial situation have dramatically improved since the 2020 State Budget Act was signed into law, which has led you to propose a record \$85.8 billion in Proposition 98 funding for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

This funding includes a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and selected categorical programs, a one-time \$6.6 billion investment to reopen schools for in-person instruction and provide expanded learning opportunities, and over \$540 million in professional development funding for educators.

**Cost-of-Living-Adjustment**

We support your proposal to provide a COLA to the LCFF and selected state categorical programs such as special education, child nutrition, and preschool. However, the two grant programs that are the primary funding source for CTE in California, the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant (CTEIG) and the K-12 Strong Workforce Program (K12SWP), have not received a COLA since they were established as ongoing programs in the 2018 State Budget Act.

Since the CTEIG and K12SWP have been established, the funding requested for these programs has significantly exceeded the funding available. For the most recent 2020-21 allocations, the aggregate funding request for CTEIG was \$311 million, more than double the \$150 million the budget provides for the program. For K12SWP, the requested funding was \$71 million more than the \$150 million available.

For this reason, we request that your Administration provide the same COLA for CTEIG and K12SWP that the other state categorical programs will receive in the 2021 State Budget Act. This COLA will help to sustain CTE programs **and centers** that keep students across the state engaged and train them for employment that is vital to the state's economy.

**Reopening and Expanded Learning Proposals**

We support the proposal for \$6.6 billion in funding to assist with reopening schools for in-person instruction and to provide expanded learning opportunities to make up for the learning loss that has occurred under the COVID-19 pandemic.

While your Administration and the Legislature are actively engaged in negotiations for how to allocate this funding via an early action package, we simply request that the final product allows CTE JPAs to be included as eligible entities that can access these dollars.

While our members serve the same student populations that California's school districts serve, CTE JPAs have been left out of all of the COVID-19 state and federal assistance funding. Our JPAs employ teachers and other school employees that have continued to serve our students both remotely and in-person during the pandemic, scrambled to provide personal protective equipment to our students and staff while they are on our campuses **or at centers**, implemented infection mitigation strategies in our classrooms, and provided access to needed technology so our students can continue to learn remotely. Yet the additional and unanticipated costs associated with continuing to serve our students safely during this time have been borne almost entirely by our limited general funds.

Moving forward, our JPAs **and centers** are already working on strategies for accelerated learning to help our students catch up from setbacks caused by the pandemic. For example, our JPAs have adapted their programs to allow students to complete much of their CTE coursework via distance learning. However, in order to complete many of the CTE programs and receive the appropriate certification to accept jobs that are waiting for them, such as for registered dental assistants and certified nursing assistants, students still need to complete their hands-on clinical work in-person. Our CTE JPAs are poised to offer these courses and others during the summer, and access to funds for expanded learning can help us to serve our students consistent with the priority and urgency expressed in the budget proposal.

By allowing CTE JPAs to access these dollars, you not only allow students to finish their programs, but enter the workforce where there are a number of jobs waiting for them in industries that are looking for skilled workers.

### **Educator Professional Development Investments**

We support your proposed \$540 million investment in educator effectiveness and professional development programs. We especially appreciate that the \$100 million proposed for the Teacher Residency Grant Program includes CTE JPAs as eligible entities for this funding. We kindly request that the same language be inserted for the Classified School Employees Teacher Credentialing Program and the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant, which as currently written would not allow CTE JPAs to apply for this funding.

### **Looking Forward**

We understand that even with the estimated state revenue increases, you have very difficult decisions to make with the 2021-22 State Budget. Now more than ever we need to ensure that the state does everything it can to keep our students engaged and protect programs that sustain and grow California's skilled workforce pipeline.

Before the COVID-19 recession, the Public Policy Institute of California estimated that by 2025 the state was looking at a shortfall of 1.5 million skilled workers and a shortage of 1 million workers with a college degree. These worker shortfalls will likely grow because of the pandemic, which is why it is necessary now more than ever for the state to invest in its CTE programs,

which not only trains students for employment vital to the state's economy, but keeps students engaged in their academics.

We thank you for your consideration of our suggestions, and look forward to working with your Administration and the Legislature in continuing to refine the 2021-22 State Budget.

Sincerely,

Leilani Aguinaldo, Legislative Advocate  
CTE JPA Coalition

Kyle Hyland, Legislative Advocate  
CTE JPA Coalition

cc:

Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins  
Speaker Anthony Rendon  
Members and Staff, Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education  
Members and Staff, Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education