

## **PENNSYLVANIA'S CAREER PATHWAY SYSTEM NEEDS SUPPORT TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE**

**Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a proven method to set high school students on a path to future career and educational success.** Data shows that students with exposure to CTE are more likely to graduate from high school, gain employment, and earn higher wages. Additionally, these students are just as likely to pursue two-year and four-year degrees as their non-CTE peers, and those who benefit from CTE the most are the ones who are most in need—boys and students from low-income households.

Pennsylvania enrollment of 6.42% of all the state's high school students in career-related learning in intensive CTE programs ranks 36th out of the 50 states. Our neighboring states enroll an average of three times the Pennsylvania share in CTE (19.3%). In Delaware, 36.7% of students are enrolled in CTE programs. In West Virginia, the number is 33%.

### **WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?**

- Pennsylvania has weak state funding and statewide program support for career-related learning, leaving school districts and regional career and technical centers – whose resources may already be stretched thin – to foot the bill.
- The state's decentralized approach to CTE can help connect learning to local labor market demands, but this also leaves it highly dependent on quality leadership and business partnerships at the local level.
- The state's dual enrollment system remains severely underfunded and under-developed, meaning that students who would benefit from CTE the most are missing out. A lack of central planning infrastructure also creates a disconnect between school districts and CTE programs, hampering discussions over dual enrollment and resources between them.
- Apprenticeship programs have received increased investment over the past six years, but these programs are not well-integrated into an overall high school-related learning system.

**PENNSYLVANIA LACKS A CLEAR GOAL, THE FUNDING NECESSARY TO MEET THAT GOAL, AND THE SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THAT GOAL.**

### **HERE'S HOW PENNSYLVANIA CAN CHANGE THAT:**

- **Increase** Career and Technical Education funding by \$200 million.
- **Increase** funding for equipment to career and technical centers and other CTE programs by \$11 million annually.
- **Provide** \$10 million for competitive grants to increase dual enrollment.
- **Provide** \$1 million for increases in high school pre-apprenticeship enrollment annually.
- **Strengthen** business-led sector partnerships that can partner with CTE programs, through \$8 million in direct subsidies or tax credits, ensuring that more high school pre-apprenticeships and other career pathways connect with good-paying, living-wage careers and meet the skill needs of employers as well as increasing post-secondary enrollment.

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