

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 10, 2024

Dr. Amy Loyd, Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Assistant Secretary Loyd,

Thank you for your commitment and leadership in addressing teacher shortages in classrooms across the United States. We continue to hear from schools about difficulties in recruiting and retaining instructors in Career and Technical Education (CTE) and write to urge you and the Department to increase data collection efforts on this critical issue. Fifty-seven percent of schools report difficulty recruiting instructors in CTE, compared to 39 percent of schools reporting difficulties hiring in academic subjects.¹ These trends are seen elsewhere, with the number of schools unable to fill CTE vacancies increasing from 4.5 percent to 6.5 percent in a five-year span.² As you continue to collect data on the educational workforce, we ask you to consider the significant shortage of instructors specializing in CTE. Collecting specific data that encompasses the scope of teacher shortages within CTE, including the specific Career Clusters most affected, will assist Congress in increasing educational opportunities to meet workforce demands.

Data underscores the impacts CTE has on students across the country. Notably, high school CTE students graduate at a rate of 94 percent, which is 7 percent higher than the national average.³ Many CTE programs allow students to attain industry-recognized credentials and associate degrees, helping them meet our workforce demands without requiring a traditional four-year degree. Unlike general education coursework, if schools are unable to hire qualified CTE teachers, these classes are typically canceled because other teachers are not qualified to teach such specialized curriculums. With an evolving labor market, CTE offers students an opportunity to enter a competitive workforce with the education and experience needed to excel.

Additionally, CTE teachers are newer to the profession compared to teachers in other fields. In 2020–21, approximately 11 percent of all public-school teachers taught CTE as their main teaching assignment. Of those teachers:⁴

- 10 percent had less than 3 years of teaching experience;
- 29 percent had 3 to 9 years of teaching experience;

¹ The Brookings Institution. “Career and technical education is a hidden weak spot in many high schools’ teacher workforces.” (April 9, 2024) (Online at <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/career-and-technical-education-is-a-hidden-weak-spot-in-many-high-schools-teacher-workforces/>)

² Education Commission to the States. “Recruiting and Retaining Successful CTE Teachers” (2023) (Online at <https://www.ecs.org/recruiting-and-retaining-successful-cte-teachers/>)

³ U.S. Department of Education. “Eight years after their expected graduation date, students who focused on career and technical education (CTE) courses while in high school had higher median annual earnings than students who did not focus on CTE.” (2024) (Online at <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/cte/index.html#:~:text=Among%209th%2Dgrade%20public%20school,of%20their%20expected%20graduation%20date>)

⁴ National Center for Education Statistics. “Career and Technical Education in the United States 2024” (2024) (Online at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2024/tob_508c.pdf)

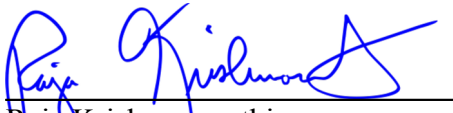
- 36 percent had 10 to 20 years of teaching experience; and
- 25 percent had over 20 years of teaching experience.

These findings underscore that there are a broad range of issues impacting CTE teacher shortages across the country. With better, more robust data, we can begin to help address root causes and underlying issues that are causing shortages in these critical areas of the educational continuum. We therefore request information about the following no later than August 30, 2024:

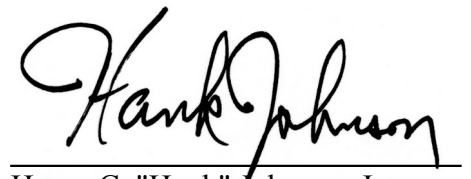
1. What mechanisms currently exist at the Department of Education to procure CTE-specific teacher shortage data?
2. We ask that the Department of Education to begin collecting robust data on the characteristics of the CTE teacher workforce disaggregated by CTE program area and/or Career Cluster. Information should include characteristics such as demographics, salary, years of industry experience, and highest level of educational attainment.
3. When collecting data for the Department’s Teacher Shortage Area database⁵, we ask that schools no longer offering CTE programming due to staffing shortages be noted.

Thank you for your commitment to expanding CTE opportunities to students across the country.

Sincerely,



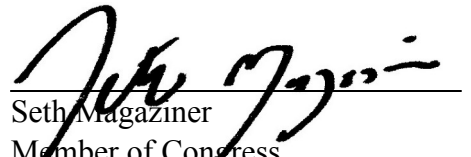
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



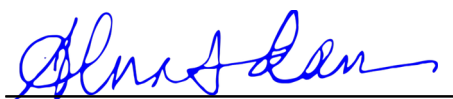
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Marie Gluesenkamp Perez
Member of Congress

⁵ U.S Department of Education. “Teacher shortage Areas” (2024) (Online at <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/reports>)

Angie Craig

Angie Craig
Member of Congress

Josh Harder

Josh Harder
Member of Congress