

Legislative Talking Points: GEERS Funding for CTE

- First and foremost, we want to thank the General Assembly and Administration for the continued support of career and technical schools (CTCs) across the Commonwealth.
- During the first round of CARES distribution in May 2020, Pennsylvania received \$523.8 million in one-time federal emergency funds for education.
- None of those dollars could be used for Pennsylvania CTCs because the federal government indicated those must be driven out via the Title 1 formula.
- However, the federal government did create the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund that could be used more broadly across education. Of the \$104 million Pennsylvania received, \$10.5 million went to CTCs across the Commonwealth.
- While we are thankful for the \$10.5 million in GEERs funding, it was not enough to offset the immense costs of the COVID-19 crisis to our Career and Technical schools across the Commonwealth.
- With the recent release of an additional \$47 million in GEERs funding to Pennsylvania, we are asking that at least \$40 million of that be directed to Career and Technical Centers to help offset the costs of the ongoing pandemic.
- Currently our schools are facing many unmet needs due to a lack of funding. While each school has individual and specific needs, some examples of how the funding will be used include:
 - program and cafeteria updates to increase student distancing
 - technology for students including hot spots for those students without internet access, devices for instructors and paraprofessionals,
 - HVAC upgrades to assist with air purification,
 - student on-line learning platforms and industry learning software,
 - industry credentials,
 - recruitment/marketing materials, especially for programs that train essential workers,
 - upgrading/training programs for students 2020 and 2021 who missed significant hands-on education time,
 - mental health support for students,
 - professional development for instructors, and
 - staffing that supports mitigation efforts such as health and safety nurses and contact tracers.
- An additional \$40 million in funding to career and technical schools would help alleviate some of the financial burden of the COVID-19 crisis.