

ITEEA Legislative Priorities and Positions

Approved by the ITEEA Board on January 19th, 2026

1. Increase Federal, State, and Local Investments in Technology and Engineering Education and STEM Education as forms of Career and Technical Education (CTE).

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) was first authorized in 1984 and most recently reauthorized in 2018 as Perkins V. Through the Perkins Basic State Grant program, funds are allocated to states to support the development, implementation, innovation and improvement of CTE programs. In some states and localities, these funds may be used to support Technology and Engineering Education and STEM Education programs.

ITEEA urges the passing of legislation and policies that enable Perkins funding to be utilized to support high quality Technology and Engineering Education and STEM Education as a form of CTE.

Only nominal increases have been made to Perkins funding in the past several years, with Perkins funded at \$1.47 billion in FY25. This remains hundreds of millions below the inflation-adjusted level from 20 years ago.

ITEEA urges Congress to provide a meaningful increase in the Perkins Basic State Grant program for FY 2026. Increasing Perkins funding will help provide critical educational programs and supports to students in every congressional district, including high quality curriculum, work-based learning, industry-recognized credentials, and more. In addition, Perkins funding supports teacher training and professional development.

ITEEA also supports additional federal programs for their investment in Technology and Engineering Education, STEM Education, and CTE including the National Science Foundation (NSF) STEM Education Directorate, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and the CHIPS and Science act.

2. Support the Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Educators in Technology, Engineering, STEM, and CTE.

Institutions around the country are reporting shortages of qualified educators in Technology and Engineering, STEM, and CTE across elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. Further, due to a combination of factors, including salaries and wage discrepancies compared to industry, many skilled professionals are leaving teaching or electing for careers in industry.

ITEEA urges the passing of legislation and policies that alleviate shortages and improve the Technology and Engineering, STEM, and CTE teacher pipeline, including:

- Improve recruitment and retention by making teaching a more financially attractive career, including adopting incentives for entering and/or remaining in the profession.
- Designate Technology and Engineering Education as a "High Need" field.
- Increase investment in and access to high-quality Technology and Engineering, STEM, and CTE teacher preparation and professional development.
- Make common-sense laws and policies to reduce barriers for qualified educators to teach, such as incentivizing interstate teacher licensure reciprocity.
- Support investment in post-secondary Teacher Education programs, including allocating designated funding to adequately cover increasing operational costs.