

Senate Appropriations – Human Resources Division
Chairman Dick Dever
March 15, 2023

HB 1019

Chairman Dever and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Pam Stroklund, Career and Technical Education Director for Minot Public Schools. I offer testimony in support of HB 1019, the Department of Career and Technical Education Appropriations Bill.

First off, I would like to thank all of you who were a part of the 67th Legislative Session. Your vote clearly showed your support for the Department of Career and Technical Education by not only providing funding to continue, but also expand CTE opportunities across the state. Our workforce depends on the Dept. of CTE to continue providing youth with exploratory opportunities and foundational skills needed to enter the world of work. The Dept. of CTE's limited staff also strive to provide adults with the skills needed to fill North Dakota's workforce shortages.

Your vote secured the funding to bring business, industry, and education to the table identifying workforce needs and enthusiastically planning innovative ways to fill our workforce shortages through CTE Capital Projects.

Last year, Minot Public Schools was awarded \$10,000,000 in CTE Capital Projects funding (\$6,666,666 America Recovery Plan Act [ARPA] and \$3,333,333 Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund). The opportunity to expand career and technical education in the Minot area quickly became a reality as work began on the Minot Area Workforce Academy.

Our vision for the Minot Area Workforce Academy is to serve as the hub to an Area Career and Technical Education Center providing new opportunities for high school students and the community. The expansion of the Early Childhood Education program and the addition of a new Commercial Driver's License program are set to open August 2023 in the Minot Area Workforce Academy. Without additional funding for New and Expanding Programs, the high demand, high cost CDL program is in jeopardy of not being reimbursed by the Dept. of CTE.

Along with increased programs, our vision included increasing work-based learning opportunities for Minot and area high school students. Making the community connections to place students in work-based learning opportunities, such as job shadows, internships, and pre-apprenticeships, takes time and commitment. Without funding for a Work-Based Learning Coordinator, fewer students will receive the opportunity to find out if a career is right for them before graduating high school.

As Minot Public Schools moves forward with a new high school, Minot North, and renovates Magic City Campus to accommodate 9-12th grade students, CTE program expansion and additions are also included in the plans. These CTE opportunities were highlighted in the CTE Capital Projects application funded. Due to inflationary overages of \$8M and a commitment to stay within the existing budget, several of the CTE projects (Commercial kitchen, Welding lab expansion, Diesel technology program addition) were carved out or put on are on hold until further funding is secured.

On behalf of Minot Public Schools and the community of Minot, we request your support of HB 1019 as submitted by the Department of Career and Technical Education and encourage a “DO PASS” recommendation:

- \$4 million to Continue funding existing programs
- \$20 million to fund New and Expanding programs to ensure all the new innovative programs proposed in the CTE Capital Projects receive full support for a successful launch
- \$3 million to fund Work-Based Learning Coordinators to ensure more students have the opportunity to explore career options on the job site
- Additional FTE staff for the Dept of CTE to support the expanded programs across the state

A critical request to add back into HB 1019 and also encourage a “DO PASS”:

- \$40 million to fund New and Expanding CTE Centers Inflation Impact to ensure all CTE Capital Projects can proceed as planned and make an impact on our future workforce

Thank you for allowing me to share our plan and our current reality. I will stand for any questions you may have.