



Eric Ripley
Executive Director, Career
& Technical Education
Grand Forks Area Career and Technology Center

Direct Phone: 701.746.2205, ext. 7117
Fax: 701.772.7739
eripley270@mygfschools.org

March 12, 2025

Members of the House Appropriations – Education and Environment Committee:

Workforce needs for the state continue to be a critical factor for North Dakota's economic growth and vitality, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) serves as a critical component in the development of our state's workforce pipeline. SB2019 provides the opportunity to financially support and expand the availability of CTE programs to students across the state. The expansion of high quality CTE programs was evident in the state's appropriations for the new CTE Centers, including the **Career Impact Academy** serving the Grand Forks region.

The **Career Impact Academy**, completing construction in May, will serve as a CTE center providing access to Grand Forks and surrounding rural communities in program areas that align with regional workforce needs. The establishment of the facility aligns with the goals of the Department of Career and Technical Education, and highlighted by Governor Armstrong in his State of the State address as "an absolute game changer" for engaging students in their education and development of the state's future workforce.

As a member of the 69th Legislative Assembly, you have the opportunity to support CTE as an investment into meeting our state's workforce challenges. I respectfully ask your support of SB2019, including the priority items below, which supports the goals and objectives of Career & Technical Education, and the Career Impact Academy.

Priority items within SB2019 that I would strongly advocate for the committee's inclusion includes the following:

- **New Programs (Currently at \$3M)** – The new CTE Centers are coming online statewide, and with the new facilities are new programs to expand and enhance the availability of high-quality CTE to our state's students. For the Career Impact Academy, opening in Fall, 2025, we are planning to offer 9 different CTE program pathways to our region. Simply stated, \$3M is not enough to support the expansion of CTE within the state.
- **CTE Capital Projects Program (Currently at \$0M)** – To complete the remaining funding gaps in the CTE Center projects, along with supporting new CTE Center proposals. During the last session, the legislative ask was \$55M for inflationary funds, with \$26.5 being allocated. The remaining balance for existing projects is needed to deliver on the CTE Centers proposals originally approved by the state.
- **Cost to Continue (Currently at \$4M)** – As costs within existing programs (salaries, benefits, curricular resources) increase year-over-year, these dollars are used to help maintain current reimbursement rates.

Sincerely,

Eric Ripley
Executive Director of Career & Technical Education



Mark Sanford Education Center
2400 47th Ave. S
Grand Forks, ND 58201-3405



PO Box 6000
Grand Forks, ND 58206-6000



www.gfschools.org

Equal opportunity employer

Grand Forks School District prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, or other status protected by law. The District also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, as required by federal law.