



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Samra G. Brouk

## Senator Brouk, BOCES Call for CTE Funding in State Budget

SAMRA G. BROUK March 11, 2022

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**ROCHESTER, NY** - Senator Samra Brouk hosted a press conference Friday morning to call on state leaders to include funding for career and technical education (CTE) in the state budget. Brouk was joined by students, educators, the Monroe County School Board Association, and representatives from BOCES and NYSUT.

Advocates have been calling on the state to increase funding for CTE programs for a variety of reasons, many of which are connected to improving educational outcomes for young

people and growing the local workforce. Even if a student does not pursue a CTE career after high school, they will be able to take these employability skills with them as they enter another field or go through college or internships. Students learning how to problem solve and use critical thinking is valuable regardless of their goals and aspirations

Career and technical education programs have been proven to develop career readiness skills in young people, as well as to keep students engaged and enrolled in school. In fact, 29 BOCES reports that 90% of young people enrolled in CTE programs graduate high school, compared to 84% of students statewide. With approximately 53,000 students enrolled in CTE programs statewide, the majority of which being young women and young people of color, funding these programs helps create equitable pathways to graduation for students, regardless of background or socioeconomic status.

To that end, these programs are critical in terms of creating a local pipeline of skilled, trained, and prepared workers to fill jobs, without saddling young people with thousands of dollars in student loan debt. This helps students not only enter the workforce earlier, but gives employers a larger pool of workers to prevent staffing shortages.

While the benefits of Career and Technical Education programs are hard to deny, New York State needs to invest in these programs to allow them to reach their full potential. Senator Brouk and advocates are calling for two changes in the state budget to better serve these programs:

1. Expand access to CTE programs to include freshmen and sophomores, and to increase the rate of reimbursement to schools for this program to \$3,900 per pupil.
2. Increase the rate of pay for educators in these programs from roughly \$30,000 to \$60,000 over the next three years to attract and retain workers to meet the growing need.

**Senator Samra Brouk, Chair of Senate Mental Health Committee and member of Education**

**Committee said,** “We know that career and technical education programs set students up for success, regardless of what their future may hold. All young people stand to benefit from career readiness training and skill development, and our workforce requires qualified, prepared workers to fill vacant positions. We cannot continue to talk about education and the labor market as if they exist separately from one another, and funding these programs allows us to invest simultaneously in our young people and our workforce.”

**Senator Shelley Mayer, Chair of the Senate Committee of Education said,** “I have long believed that we need to invest in Career and Technical Education (CTE) to provide all our students the opportunities they deserve. I am so pleased to join with Senator Brouk to show statewide support for more funding and expansion of CTE programs. These opportunities are good for students, are backed by labor and are supported by businesses. It’s time for the State to increase its level of investment in CTE and support this pathway for students’ success.”

**Andrew Pallotta, President of NYSUT said,** “Getting back to ‘normal’ isn’t good enough for our students — it’s time we demand a public education system that truly supports every child. We know community schools change the game, providing students and families with the wrap-around services that address the issues they face well beyond our classrooms. Couple that with expanded access to CTE programs that prepare students for college and careers and we can make a dramatic difference for millions of public school students. We’re proud to stand with Sen. Brouk and her colleagues to fight for the resources our students and families need this year.”

**Andrew Jordan, Special Education Teacher, Monroe #1 BOCES/ Co-President, BOCES United**

**Professionals (BUP) said,** “For many students, BOCES and CTE are the most promising pathway to career success. Let's help give students access to these high-quality programs!”

**Marne Brady, Co-President, BOCES United Professionals (BUP) said,** “Community schools provide vital academic services, healthy food, clothing, and wellness services that our students and families need. It is time to ensure every community that wants to establish a community school has the resources to do so.”

**Sherry Johnson, Executive Director of the Monroe County School Board Association said,** “Our members thank Senator Brouk for making the CTE formula increase a priority addition to the state budget. Our districts, working with their business partners, understand the need for a workforce that CTE programs provide and they have students interested in the skills and career opportunities. The pandemic accelerated the demographic shift when many employees chose to retire. Now is the time to support the CTE formula increases for students and our economy.”