

Tyson Eslinger, Superintendent of Schools Proponent in Person HB2631

Date: 3/8/2022

Subject: Proponent & Supporter for HB2631 with the Short Title "Career technical education credential and transition incentive for employment success act; providing state aid to school districts for students obtaining a credential; establishing the career technical education credential and transition incentive fund." http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2021_22/measures/hb2631/

Who: Tyson Eslinger, USD 216 Deerfield 803 Beech St. Deerfield, KS 67838

Short Statement: As the superintendent of a small southwest Kansas rural school district, career and technical education is at the heart of what we do with our student body. Every year, most of our students are leaving our school district, not looking to head to KU, K-State, Wichita State, or Fort Hays State University. Many are looking to enter the workforce, and others are looking to attend a technical college or GCCC to earn certifications and gain employment in the area. Even for our students looking to move on to a 4-year college and acquire a Bachelor's degree, they benefit from the opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications that they can then use for employment while they attend school to help lessen the student loan debt bill. One great example of this is the CNA certification, which allows our students to work in the healthcare industry while continuing their education. With our CTE program, we are providing many of our students at USD 216 the opportunity to feel good about themselves, feel optimistic about their future, and earn a livable wage early in their lives while also helping support and contribute to the state of Kansas.

This year, we have two great examples in our Senior class of students who were not engaged with the traditional education path and had a hard time getting to school and even more challenging time engaging in the content they were being taught. With our focus over the last two years on growing our CTE program from 2 pathways to 12 pathways, these two students will now graduate with CNA, manicuring, and digital literacy; both students have a career path in the Emergency Responder field and IT/Technology field that they will be working in and pursuing next year. These two students' lives were changed by these opportunities and will now positively impact their community and state because of it.

Most of these credentials cost money, some of them more than others, but for the state to incentivize these credentials and help schools and students get the certifications they need, the certifications that matter to them and their future would be greatly appreciated. We will always work to find a way to do what is needed for our students at USD 216, and this bill would help us accomplish that even more.

Thanks!