The Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education (Virginia ACTE) is dedicated to expanding relevant and rigorous career and technical education (CTE) programs, enhancing leadership among its members, influencing public policy for the benefit of CTE students and professionals, and developing a competitive workforce in the commonwealth of Virginia.

**Funding Priorities**

***CTE Resource Center: $1.2 million***

1. New database for Virginia’s Educational Resource System Online (VERSO), the repository for all CTE curriculum for Virginia's educators and administrators.

VERSO comprises:

* + course frameworks (competencies, definitions, SOL correlations, and national-standards correlations)
	+ credentialing information (correlated to all courses and includes vendor information, cost)
	+ resources for teachers and students.
1. Cloud-based storage
	* Less expensive to maintain than physical servers and firewalls
	* Better protected against failure
2. New website
	* Responsive (adapts to device)
	* Easy to navigate and find courses and associated information
	* Forward-looking design

***Allocations for Credentialing Assessments, Equipment, Governor's Academies:***

***Increase $3 million***

* Increase for credentialing assessments, because recently revised Standards of Accreditation provide an option of credentialing for all students. **($1 million**)
* Increase for equipment base allocation and funding allocated for equipment in high-demand, high-skill and fast-growing industry section. **($1 million**)
* Increase in allocation for Governor’s STEM Academies and Governor’s Health Sciences Academies. **($1 million**)

**Rationale**

***CTE Resource Center***

The CTE Resource Center’s website, which houses VERSO and other data, is free to all CTE educators in the commonwealth. The Center is valuable to Virginia’s educators as well as to CTE programs across the United States; no other state offers such a portal and resources to its CTE teachers.

The increasingly rigorous graduation requirements in Virginia make VERSO more critical than ever:

* + It is the repository for the state’s CTE state-approved curricula: the course frameworks, competencies, definitions, SOL correlations, correlations to national standards and state regulations, and student competency records.
	+ It is linked to credentialing information, which includes the provider and cost for teachers, administrators, and students in Virginia's school divisions.

VERSO faces significant problems and a potentially harmful long-term shutdown:

* + The database is old and has long been eclipsed by more modern structures. The VERSO data program, developed in 2001, is obsolete, with no support available.
	+ The data are “suffocating” under a buildup of information. There currently is no way to delete or archive information, which means that VERSO soon will run out of storage and stop working.
	+ The Center's website is falling out of compliance and never has been responsive – adaptable to a variety of devices used in schools and classrooms.

VERSO upgrades move the commonwealth forward technologically:

* + A data structure that uses a widely known language and architecture would make any new structure easily adaptable and updatable. Cloud-based storage would move the Center, its systems, and its database of course information forward technologically and reduce costs.
	+ Bringing the database and its structures up to date and more easily maintained is critical to the operation of the Center and vital to the continuity of instruction in Virginia’s classrooms.

# Credentialing Assessments, Equipment, Governor's Academies

* + Students entering ninth grade before the 2018-2019 school year and seeking a Standard Diploma are required to obtain an industry credential. School divisions must allocate local funds for credentialing assessments.
	+ Students entering ninth grade in the 2018-2019 school year have the option of obtaining an industry credential.
	+ Students earned more than 157,400 credentials during the 2016-2017 school year.
	+ Equipment funding currently is distributed among 132 school divisions.
	+ Basic equipment in labs and learning centers will require updating to meet the needs of rapidly changing curriculum and industry- driven needs for a qualified workforce, which can cost $60,000 to $250,000 depending on the equipment.
	+ More than 642,000 students took one or more CTE courses during the 2016-2017 school year, indicating daily and consistent use of CTE equipment and labs.
	+ Small planning grants are available to successful Governor's STEM Academy applicants, but long-term funding to sustain the programs is vital to their success.
	+ Additional funding for Governor’s STEM Academies would encourage more school divisions to submit applications.
	+ School divisions allocate local funding to implement and sustain Governor’s STEM Academies.