

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Updates

State Schools Committee

February 2026

CTE Salary Workgroup

The Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) convened a salary workgroup in August 2025 to analyze the current structure of the 156 salary schedule and to:

1. Identify and address salary related barriers for schools to fill and retain instructor/administrative positions or instructors/administrators accepting occupation-based teaching positions.
2. Consider new salary schedules for KRS 156 occupation-based instructors/administrators

The KDE has authority over only KRS 156 employees. We are cognizant of the potential impact our revisions could have on local districts.

Issues:

- Candidates earn lower pay than that of business and industry when coming into teaching (generally)
- Industry experience does not count in the current Area Technology Center (ATC) salary schedule
- Retirement choices
- Currently occupation-based teachers receive higher pay than state average in first 2 tiers. It equalizes in tier 3 and falls below in following tiers
- There is a lack of funding to fully implement significant changes to the ATC salary schedule
- Changes could lead to disparities between ATC employees and local district employees (though they currently have more flexibility). Consideration of local CTC/comprehensive high school morale

Considerations:

- Years of service include experience in business and industry for placement on the schedule
- Retirement choice: Let them choose between social security and Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System (KTRS)
- Base ATC salary schedules on local home district salary schedule
- Annual step and rank instead of 5-year increases
- Increase by percentage point (This won't fix the variances across the state)

- Base ATC salary schedule on highest district salary schedule (KSB/KSD uses JCPS salary schedule)
- Change calendar days
- Increase MOAs with local districts to increase salaries
- Partner with business and industry for salary supplement

Other:

- Phase-in approach for implementation of new salary schedule
- How much increase for consideration? What is feasible?

Currently we use the state average for salaries to determine the ATC salary schedule. This is not feasible to consider business and industry averages.

	State-Wide Local District Averages				KRS 156 Salaries			
Experience	Rank IV	Rank III	Rank II	Rank I	Rank IV	Rank III	Rank II	Rank I
0-4	\$ 36,717	\$ 44,212	\$ 48,391	\$ 53,074	\$ 43,050	\$ 50,706	\$ 54,459	\$ 58,053
5-9	\$ 37,282	\$ 48,128	\$ 52,654	\$ 57,441	\$ 44,814	\$ 52,785	\$ 58,064	\$ 63,870
10-14	\$ 37,956	\$ 53,454	\$ 58,367	\$ 63,361	\$ 45,444	\$ 54,579	\$ 60,038	\$ 66,043
15-19	\$ 38,354	\$ 56,266	\$ 61,386	\$ 66,546	\$ 46,080	\$ 55,126	\$ 60,639	\$ 66,703
20-up	\$ 38,969	\$ 60,894	\$ 66,218	\$ 71,702	\$ 46,772	\$ 57,221	\$ 62,942	\$ 69,237

What we have found is that overall, KY Tech ranks 50th in the state for educator salaries.

KY Tech ranks 65th at Rank I, 74th at Rank II, and 76th at Rank III and 21st at Rank IV (overall averages).

Ranking by Band (all Ranks)

0-4 years; 7th

5-9 years; 14th

10-14 years; 30th

15-19; 56th
20-29; 82nd

We note that ATC teacher salaries are higher than most districts during the first three bands and then start falling behind. We recognize that industry salaries are higher than teacher salaries and while we cannot bring our salaries up to industry scale as there are many factors and would not be feasible, we do want to revise our system to recognize industry experience and implement scale that is both attractive and sustainable. The salary workgroup is continuing to analyze viable options for future consideration.

The workgroup includes representatives from districts, ATCs, business and industry, and KDE staff. It has met twice virtually to review feasible options and continues to collaborate through a shared document to identify sustainable solutions.

16 KAR 2:020 Occupation-based teacher certification

16 KAR 2:020 is under the authority of the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB). The EPSB reviewed and approved the proposed amendments during its September 2025 meeting. Proposed amendments include technical changes for clarity and a more significant change within Section 5 that removes the requirement of an associate degree for individuals seeking certification in HVAC, Electricity, or Plumbing if they hold a Kentucky issued master license in the appropriate area.

The regulation is moving through the regulatory process and has been referred to the LRC subject matter committee for review.