



February 18, 2025

Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala, and Harbick, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development:

On behalf of Portland Public Schools, I urge you to support HB 3446, which makes a critical adjustment to how CTE funding is distributed—one that will ensure students engage in meaningful career preparation rather than just earning credentials without skill development.

The key change in this bill is the insertion of a single word, “and.” While it may seem small, this shift significantly impacts student success, CTE program quality, and workforce alignment.

Under the current statute, funding is awarded when a student either completes an entire CTE program of study (3 or more credits) *or* earns an industry-recognized credential, with a bonus point if the student is historically underserved. This incentivizes CTE programs to prioritize credential chasing over ensuring students complete at least three credits in a program of study—the threshold that research shows leads to better career and educational outcomes. HB 3446 closes that loophole by requiring that funding **only** be allocated when students complete a program and then provides additional funding if they earn a credential or are historically underserved.

This update strengthens student success by ensuring that CTE programs remain rigorous and comprehensive rather than fragmented. It aligns with industry needs, where depth of knowledge and hands-on experience are more valuable than superficial credentials. It promotes equity, ensuring historically underserved students have access to complete CTE pathways rather than being funneled into quick credentialing tracks. It also protects the integrity of CTE funding, ensuring resources support true program completion and workforce readiness. HB 3446 keeps CTE meaningful and ensures students graduate ready for high-wage, high-demand careers.

Thank you,

Chris Brida  
Director of Career and Technical Education  
Portland Public Schools