

Oklahoma State Question 847

Resources for CareerTech & K-12 Employees

As conversations about State Question 847 continue across Oklahoma ahead of the November 3 election, CareerTech employees may be asked questions by students, families, partner organizations and community members. This resource provides factual, educational information, key messages and FAQs to help you better understand the measures and the role local property taxes play in supporting CareerTech and other community services.

Key Messages

1: Local funding means local control.

Key Message: Property taxes are a locally controlled funding source that supports many of the services Oklahomans rely on every day.

Supporting Messages

- Property tax revenue generally stays in the community where it is collected.
- Local communities help determine how these dollars are invested.
- Property taxes help fund public schools, CareerTech, libraries, public safety, public health, county government, roads and bridges.
- Local funding gives communities the flexibility to address their unique needs.

2: State Question 847 would change local funding.

Key Message: State Question 847 proposes changes to Oklahoma's property tax system that could affect local funding.

Supporting Messages

- SQ 847 would limit how quickly taxable property values can increase each year.
- This would impact the resources available to support CareerTech and other essential community services.

3: Critical community services depend on stable funding.

Key Message: Stable local funding helps communities provide the essential services residents rely on every day.

Supporting Messages

- Local funding supports public schools, the CareerTech system, emergency medical services, public safety, libraries, county government, public health and transportation infrastructure.

- Stable funding allows communities to plan for the future, respond to local needs and invest in long-term priorities.
- If local funding changes, communities may need to reduce services, identify replacement funding or pursue other revenue sources.
- State question 847 does not identify a dedicated replacement funding source for the local funding that could be affected.

4: Strong communities depend on local investment.

Key Message: Communities are strongest when they have stable local funding to invest in the people, services and infrastructure that meet local needs.

Supporting Messages

- Local investment supports education, workforce development, public safety, infrastructure and public health.
- Every community has different priorities and funding needs.
- Local funding gives communities the flexibility to respond to changing conditions.
- CareerTech is one example of how local investment benefits students, employers and Oklahoma's economy.

Resources & Local Data

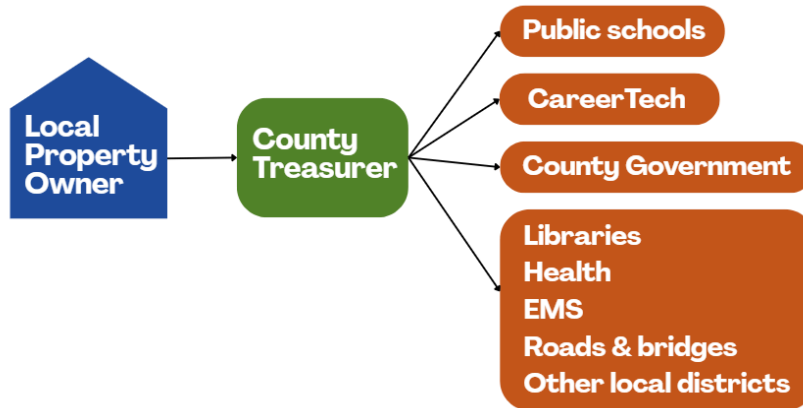
- OkACTE [SQ 847 FAQs](#) page

FAQs - A Deeper Dive

Understanding Property Taxes and Local Funding

- **What are property taxes (ad valorem taxes)?**
 - Ad valorem taxes are local property taxes paid on real estate.
 - Unlike state income or sales taxes, this money stays in the local community where it is collected.
 - Property taxes are a major source of funding for CareerTech, public schools and other essential local services.
 - Property taxes stay LOCAL.
 - Local elected officials determine community priorities.
- **What does property tax revenue support?**
 - Local property taxes fund essential services, including:
 - K-12 public schools
 - The CareerTech system

- Libraries
- Public health services
- Emergency medical services
- Roads and bridges
- These services depend on stable, predictable local funding.



- **How are property taxes different from state taxes?**
 - Property taxes are a local revenue source - **NOT** a state tax.
 - Local voters approve many of the tax rates that generate this revenue.
 - Because the funding is local, communities and their local elected officials help determine how these dollars are invested.
 - Local funding allows communities to support the schools and services that best meet their needs.

State Question 847

- **What would SQ 847 do?**
 - **On the ballot November 3, 2026**
 - Referred to voters by the Oklahoma Legislature through a legislative referendum.
 - Limits how quickly taxable property values can increase each year
 - For homestead property, the maximum annual increase would decrease from 3% to 1.75%.
 - For non-homestead property, the maximum annual increase would decrease from 5% to 4%.
 - Lowers the maximum annual increase in taxable property values.
 - Over time, lower growth limits on taxable property values would slow the growth of local property tax revenue.
- **How would SQ847 impact communities?**

- Slower growth in taxable property values would slow the future growth of local property tax revenue over time.
- Over time, the growth in local property tax revenue could fall below the rate of inflation, reducing purchasing power for K-12 schools, CareerTech and locally funded essential community services.
 - For K-12 schools, slower revenue growth could affect efforts to maintain smaller class sizes and expand CareerTech opportunities for students.
 - For CareerTech, slower revenue growth could limit the system's ability to expand programs, respond to workforce needs and serve additional students.
 - Oklahoma's CareerTech system was established to rely heavily on local ad valorem tax revenue to support long-term growth and responsiveness to local workforce needs, a funding structure established in the Oklahoma Constitution.

Community Impact

- **If local property tax revenue goes away, what replaces it?**
 - **There is no identified replacement funding source.**
- **If local funding decreases, what options would communities have?**
 - The cost of operating schools, emergency services, CareerTech, and road and bridge maintenance does not disappear when revenue declines.
 - Communities could face difficult decisions:
 - Reduce services
 - Shift costs to other taxpayers, like individuals, commercial or agricultural
 - Seek replacement funding from the state
- **Why does this matter to our community?**
 - Local property taxes support many of the essential services Oklahomans rely on every day.
 - Stable funding allows communities to maintain these services, plan for the future and respond to local needs.
 - Changes to local funding can affect how communities invest in education, emergency services, health, workforce development, infrastructure and other local priorities.
 - Understanding the impacts of the measure helps voters make informed decisions about their communities.
- **If property taxes are reduced, won't governments just spend less?**
 - Not necessarily. The cost of operating schools, CareerTech centers, and emergency services does not disappear when revenue declines.
 - Communities generally face three choices:
 - Reduce services

- Shift costs to other taxpayers
 - Seek replacement funding from the state
- No dedicated replacement funding source has been identified.
- **Does Oklahoma already offer property tax relief?**
 - Yes. Oklahoma provides several targeted relief programs, including:
 - Homestead exemptions
 - Additional exemptions for qualifying low-income homeowners
 - Senior property tax protections
 - Exemptions for veterans and surviving spouses
 - These programs reduce taxes for those who need help while preserving funding for local services.
- **Has replacement funding been identified?**
 - No dedicated replacement funding source has been identified.
 - Future funding decisions would be made by policymakers.

CareerTech & Workforce Development

- **Why is Oklahoma CareerTech providing information about State Question 847?**
 - Oklahoma CareerTech is providing factual information to help Oklahomans understand how State Question 847 could affect CareerTech, workforce development and local communities.
 - A portion of Oklahoma's CareerTech Centers and K-12 school districts is generated through local property taxes.
 - This funding supports:
 - Workforce training programs
 - Modern equipment and facilities
 - K-12 CareerTech programs
 - Career and technical education for students and adults
 - Expansion of high-demand programs
 - CareerTech programs delivered through K-12 school districts could face a compounded impact, as both CareerTech funding and local school district funding rely heavily on local property taxes.
 - If one arm of the CareerTech system takes a deep cut, it will be felt throughout the entire system.
- **Could CareerTech be affected?**
 - Yes. The CareerTech system uses property tax revenue to support:
 - Workforce and industry training
 - Skilled trades education
 - K-12 CareerTech programs
 - Equipment and technology upgrades
 - Adult education programs

- Reduced funding could limit program growth and workforce development efforts.
- CareerTech is one example of many locally funded services that rely on property tax revenue. Public schools, libraries, emergency medical services, county government, roads and bridges, and public health departments could also be affected, depending on the measure and future funding decisions.
- **Could public schools be affected?**
 - Yes. Property taxes are a major source of local K-12 public school funding.
 - Significant revenue losses could affect:
 - Teacher recruitment and retention
 - Classroom resources
 - Student programs and extracurriculars
 - Facility improvements and long-term planning
 - K-12 CareerTech programs could face a compounded impact because they rely on both CareerTech funding and the funding their local school districts receive.
- **Why is CareerTech important to Oklahoma?**
 - Oklahoma CareerTech:
 - Prepares students for high-demand careers
 - Trains Oklahoma's workforce
 - Helps employers fill workforce needs
 - Supports economic development and attracts employers
 - Strengthens local communities
- **Would every CareerTech center be affected the same way?**
 - Funding sources vary by district.
 - Local impacts may differ.

Tough Questions

The questions below may arise during presentations, interviews or community conversations. These suggested responses are intended to help keep discussions factual, educational and consistent with the purpose of this toolkit.

Examples:

- **Aren't you campaigning?**
 - Our role is to provide factual information about how CareerTech is funded and what State Question 847 proposes. We are not encouraging anyone to vote a particular way. We want our communities to understand the issues so they can make informed decisions.
- **Isn't CareerTech protecting its own funding?**
 - CareerTech is one of many local services supported in part by property tax revenue. Because State Question 847 could impact local funding, we believe it's

appropriate to help explain how the system is funded today and what the proposed changes could mean. Ultimately, it's up to each voter to decide how they will vote.

- **Why should I care?**
 - State Question 847 could affect how local property tax revenue supports services that many communities rely on, including CareerTech, public schools, libraries, emergency services and county government. Understanding how those services are funded helps provide context as voters evaluate the measure.
- **Won't the Legislature just replace the funding?**
 - State Question 847 does not identify a dedicated replacement funding source. Any future funding decisions would be made by policymakers, and we don't want to speculate about what those decisions might be. Our role is to explain how the current funding system works.
- **Doesn't CareerTech already get state money?**
 - Yes. CareerTech is funded through a combination of state and local funding sources. Local property tax revenue is an important part of that funding model and helps technology centers respond to the unique workforce needs of their communities.
- **Why is CareerTech involved?**
 - CareerTech has a responsibility to help students, families, employers and community members understand how CareerTech is funded and how proposed changes could affect workforce development and local communities. Our goal is to provide factual information, not advocate for or against the measures.
- **Do you oppose these state questions?**
 - *(If answering in your official capacity as a CareerTech or K-12 employee):*
My/Our role is to provide factual information about how CareerTech is funded and what the measure proposes. We encourage everyone to review the information and make their own informed decision.

Election Communications Guidance

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide **factual, educational information** about State Question 847. Communications should remain informational and comply with Oklahoma law regarding the use of public resources during elections.

The guidelines below are provided as a general resource. Each entity should consult its own legal counsel regarding questions about specific communications or activities.

Individual Rights

Employees, board members and community members may participate in political activities **in their personal capacity**, provided they do not use public resources or represent their personal views as official CareerTech positions.

Dos and Don'ts

DO

- Provide factual, objective information about State Question 847.
- Explain how CareerTech is funded and how the measure could affect CareerTech and local communities.
- Answer questions using approved messaging and factual information.
- Encourage individuals to review available information and make their own informed voting decisions.
- Consult local legal counsel if questions arise about specific communications or activities.

DON'T

- Tell people how to vote.
- Use public resources to advocate for or against a ballot measure.
- Use CareerTech facilities, equipment, email systems, websites or work time for campaign activities.
- Distribute materials that encourage support for or opposition to a ballot measure using public resources.
- Allow campaign activities or petition drives during work time or in connection with official CareerTech activities.

In your personal lives - when you are not working or acting in an official capacity as a tech center employee, for example in conversations with friends and family - you are welcome and encouraged to share your personal opinions and views.

Additional Guidance

For more detailed guidance regarding election communications and the appropriate use of public resources, refer to the Oklahoma State School Boards Association's Election & Advocacy Guidance: [OSSBA Election & Advocacy Guidance for School Leaders](#)