
Education Committee

HB 1487

Brief Description: Providing courses of study options in public high schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Schoesler, Miloscia, Cox, Hunt, Kenney, Rockefeller and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs each public high school to provide courses of study in career and technical education and describes some of the expectations for those courses of study.

Hearing Date: 2/5/03

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

In 1993, the Legislature enacted education reform measures that include four general student learning goals required of school districts. Goal Four requires districts to provide students with opportunities to understand the importance of work and how student actions affect future career opportunities. The legislation also directed schools to provide high school students, who have completed the certificate of mastery, with the opportunity to pursue career and educational objectives through educational pathways that emphasize the integration of academic and vocational education. Finally, the legislation repealed and did not replace instructions to school districts on vocational education.

In addition to references to occupational goals and pathway opportunities included in current law, the State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted graduation requirements to help implement the law. Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, students must receive a minimum of one credit in occupational education, complete a culminating project, and complete a high school and beyond plan that includes education or work goals for the first year after high school.

In 2002, with the enactment of SSB 5940, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction was directed to establish standards for career and technical education programs. In addition, the office was to review and approve local district plans for the delivery of career and technical education, provide technical assistance to local districts, and serve as the

state adviser to career and technical organizations that support students and teachers.

The first section of SSB 5940 was vetoed by Governor Locke. In his veto message, the governor stated: "Section 1 of the bill would have established different expectations for school districts based on their current program offering. School districts currently offering career and technical education programs would be required to continue those programs, while districts that are not currently offering those programs are only encouraged to establish them. I urge all school districts to establish career and technical education programs, but cannot support a provision that requires some, but not all, school districts to do so. In addition, the requirement to provide career and technical education programs infringes on local school board decision-making."

Currently, there are 300,624 full-time equivalent students enrolled in grades nine through twelve. Of those students, twenty percent, or 60,129 full-time equivalent students, are enrolled in career and technical programs in the public schools. Enrollment in the programs has grown steadily since 1991.

Summary of Bill:

In addition to providing a course of study for students who plan to attend a baccalaureate institution, high schools shall provide a course of study for students who plan to pursue a professional or technical degree or certificate that requires less time to complete than the time required for a baccalaureate degree. The program will either help participants obtain industry certification upon completion or will allow the student to enter a college education or training program that is related to the education the student received through the student's high school program. The course of study must be provided in each pathway offered by the school.

High schools will also provide a course of study for students who plan to defer additional education and enter the world of work directly after graduating from high school. The program will help students to demonstrate the application of the state's essential academic learning requirements to work, occupation-specific skills, and knowledge of more than one career or job option with the student's chosen pathway. The course of study, which must be available in each pathway offered by the school, will also help the students learn general workplace skills.

Districts that did not offer career and technical programs during the 2001-02, school year may be grandfathered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/29/03.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.