
Education Committee

HB 1544

Brief Description: Concerning agriculture, food, and natural resource education.

Sponsors: Representatives Klippert, Steele, Dufault, Johnson, J. and Dent.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reconstitutes the vocational agriculture education service area program of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as a program in the agriculture, food, and natural resource career cluster area (agriculture education program).
- Establishes duties, funding, and staffing requirements for the agriculture education program.
- Requires the OSPI to provide every student enrolled in an approved agriculture, food, and natural resource education course with membership to the corresponding career and technical student organizations (CTSOs).
- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Board of Directors of the Washington FFA Association, to adopt and periodically implement rules to implement the agriculture education program and the student CTSO membership provisions.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Vocational Agriculture Education Service Area - Establishment and General Duties.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Legislation enacted in 1983 established a vocational agriculture education service area (service area) within the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The service area is charged with numerous duties, including:

- assessing needs in vocational agriculture education, assisting local school districts in establishing vocational agriculture programs, and evaluate existing programs;
- developing in-service programs for teachers and administrators of vocational agriculture, and assisting in teacher recruitment and placement in vocational agriculture programs;
- serving as a liaison with the Future Farmers of America and representatives of business and industry to disseminate information, promote the improvement of vocational agriculture programs, and assist in the development of adult and continuing education programs in vocational agriculture; and
- establishing an advisory task force committee of agriculturists that is tasked with making annual recommendations related vocational agriculture education.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to adopt rules as necessary to implement the service area, but the Washington Administrative Code does not include any such rules.

Career and Technical Education.

Career and technical education (or CTE) is a planned program of courses and learning experiences that begins with an exploration of career options and supports basic academic and life skills. Career and technical education instruction is provided in two general course classifications—exploratory and preparatory—both of which must comply with numerous standards established by the OSPI.

Career and technical education instruction is delivered through programs at middle and high schools, through approved online courses, and at skill centers that are regional CTE instructional venues. Skill centers are operated by a host school district and governed by an administrative council in accordance with a cooperative agreement of the participating school districts.

All CTE courses are categorized as being within one of 16 nationally established "career clusters." Career clusters are groups of jobs and industries that are related by skills or products. There are many CTE course offerings under each cluster. Examples of the 16 career clusters include:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources;
- Business, Management & Administration;
- Finance;
- Health Science; and
- Marketing.

School districts must provide high school students with the opportunity to access at least one CTE course that is considered equivalent to a mathematics course or at least one CTE course that is considered equivalent to a science course, as determined by the OSPI. Students must each earn one CTE credit as a graduation prerequisite, but the State Board of Education allows students to meet this requirement through an occupational education course that meets the

definition of a CTE exploratory course. Credits awarded through a CTE course apply to core academic and graduation requirements if equivalency requirements are met.

Career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) are CTE student organizations. Staff of the OSPI is authorized to serve as state advisors to CTSOs and to develop tools for the coordination of leadership activities with the curriculum of CTE programs. Washington has eight recognized student organizations:

- Washington DECA;
- Washington FFA;
- Washington State Family, Career and Community Leaders of America;
- Washington Future Business Leaders of America;
- Washington Health Occupation Student Association;
- SkillsUSA Washington;
- Washington Technology Student Association; and
- Washington Career and Technical Sports Medicine Association.

Summary of Bill:

Agriculture Education Program.

The vocational agriculture education service area program of the OSPI is reconstituted as a CTE program in the agriculture, food, and natural resource career cluster area (agriculture education program).

"Agriculture, food, and natural resource career cluster area" is defined as a program of study that requires students to:

- complete courses in specified areas, including agribusiness systems, food products and processing systems, and power, structural, and technical systems;
- develop an extended learning program that is supervised by their agriculture, food, and natural resource educator; and
- be engaged in a CTSO.

The agriculture education program must provide assistance to school districts and coordinate its activities with applicable CTSOs. The agriculture education program staff members must include, but are not limited to, the supervisor of the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Education Program employed by the OSPI and any additional staff member deemed appropriate.

With the exception of terminology changes, including changing "vocational agriculture programs" to "agriculture, food, and natural resource education programs," the general duties for the agriculture education program, including developing in-service programs for teachers and administrators, providing liaison services, and establishing an advisory task force, remain unchanged from the original service area provisions.

Funding provisions are also modified. Adequate funding for the staffing of individuals trained or experienced in the field of agriculture, food, and natural resource education must be provided for

the agriculture education program.

Automatic Enrollment in Career and Technical Student Organizations.

The OSPI is directed to provide every student enrolled in an approved agriculture, food, and natural resource education course, based on annual June 1 enrollment, with membership to the corresponding CTSOs.

Rule Making Duties for the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the Board of Directors of the Washington FFA association, is directed to adopt and periodically revise new rules to implement the agriculture education program and the student CTSO membership provisions. Existing rule provisions obligating the SPI to adopt rules as necessary to implement the service area remain in effect.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 2022.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.