



Noteworthy State Legislation for Improving Career and Technical Education

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States have been working to increase the rigor and effectiveness of career and technical education to both meet the needs of their students and to address the workforce needs of the state and the nation. The following is not an exhaustive list but it highlights efforts in the states that appear to be “ahead of the curve” in state policy approaches.

Accountability

Washington S.B. 6377 (2008)

What’s special?

It requires career and technical education programs to meet performance measures and targets developed by the state superintendent of public instruction. Districts must submit an improvement plan when the program fails to meet these criteria.

Florida S.B. 1232 (2007)

What’s special?

The Florida Career and Professional Education Act established accountability measures for a coherent sequence of career courses in a career and professional academy. These courses must lead to industry certification or college credit linked directly to the career path. For an organized sequence to be offered a third year, at least 50% of students enrolled in the second year must achieve industry certification or college credit. To be offered a fourth year, 66% of students enrolled must achieve industry certification or college credit.

California (2005), Nevada (2007) and Virginia (2007)

What’s special?

In 2005, the California legislature modified the school report card to include assessment of career and technical education data measures, including the number of pupils participating and the percentage of pupils who complete a career and technical program and earn a high school diploma. In 2007, both Nevada and Virginia policymakers added provisions to the accountability systems to include the reporting of career and technical education data on annual reports from the districts.

Alignment

Louisiana H.B. 1023 (2006)

What’s special?

Legislation required the governing board of K-12 education and the governing board of community/technical colleges to improve career and technical education pathways between high school and community/technical colleges. Collaboration must include:

- Alignment of career and technical education to more industry-driven programs
- Expansion of career and technical programs and related opportunities for high school students
- Creation of articulated courses and programs between high schools and community/technical colleges.

North Carolina S.B. 1069 (2009)

What's special?

The Joining Our Businesses and Schools (JOBS) Study Commission was established to study issues related to economic development. Instructional program frameworks are supposed to aid in the transition to postsecondary education and future careers, including technical and vocational needs of each economic development region, employment and workforce preparation needs of the state as a whole (e.g., to meet the shortage of highly skilled employees such as technicians, teachers and allied health practitioners). The Commission also is charged with studying issues related to economic growth through the creation of measures and metrics that define the readiness of a community to deliver services to all stakeholders that will equip the workforce to be competitive in a STEM-intensive economy, including ensuring that students throughout the education pipeline gain the skills learned from science, technology, engineering, math and other rigorous subjects.

Career Ready Certification

Alabama State Board Ruling (2009)

What's special?

Starting with the 2009 school year, students in more than 200 schools will have the option of earning a nationally recognized Alabama Career Readiness Certificate in addition to their high school diploma. The certificates will document that students are proficient in the key areas of applied mathematics, reading for information and locating information. To earn the certificate they students must score 3 on the WorkKeys standardized tests.

Florida H.B. 7087 (2006)

What's special?

This legislation created the Florida Ready to Work Certification Program with the goal of enhancing the workplace skills of Florida's students and better preparing them for successful employment in specific occupations. The program may be conducted in public middle and high schools, community colleges, technical centers, one-stop career centers, vocational rehabilitation centers and Department of Juvenile Justice educational facilities, and also may be made available to other entities that provide job training. The state department of education is required to establish institutional readiness criteria for program implementation. Qualifying programs must include:

- A comprehensive identification of workplace skills for each occupation identified for inclusion in the program by the Agency for Workforce Innovation and the department of education
- A pre-instructional assessment that delineates the student's mastery level on the specific workplace skills identified for that occupation
- A targeted instructional program limited to those identified workplace skills in which the student is not proficient as measured by the pre-instructional assessment
- A certificate and portfolio awarded to students upon successful completion of the instruction.

Georgia Work Ready

What's special?

Georgia Work Ready was initiated by Governor Sonny Perdue and launched in February 2007. Students are encouraged to earn "work-ready" certificates and communities are encouraged to commit to hiring those holding certificates. The Web site, <http://www.gaworkready.org/>, is an online resource for students, career explorers and adult learners. Included on the site are unique resources assisting learners in

learning where to start for getting certified and help scheduling work ready- assessments, resources for employers to validate authenticity of certificates and information on work-ready certificates by county.

Oregon H.B. 2398, Sec. 2 (2009)

What's special?

This legislation creates the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, which implements and oversees the statewide program of career readiness certificates. Implementation and administration must involve, at a minimum, developing and establishing policies and procedures for:

- Initial skills review assessments to identify participant's skill levels
- Targeted instruction and remedial skill-building for participants
- Foundational skills assessments for participants
- Training of staff to administer assessments based on established guidelines
- Delivery site criteria and validation of these criteria
- Quality assurance processes
- Development of systems to collect, track and maintain data
- Printing and distribution of certificates
- Participants' eligibility criteria.

A participant must be a resident of Oregon, Washington or Idaho and must be a United States citizen.

Charter Schools

Idaho S.B. 1088 (2007)

What's special?

This legislation creates professional-technical regional public charter schools. The public charter schools must meet the standards and qualifications established by the division of professional-technical education and must operate in association with at least two school districts. The funding for the schools is the same as current law except that they receive the statewide average index for public charter schools.

Dropout Prevention/Retrieval Programs

Research indicates that high school students at all levels of achievement are least likely to drop out if they are engaged in a combination of academic and career/technical courses throughout their high school careers.

Ohio OAC 3301-61-05, -18 (2009)

What's special?

This state board rule established criteria for career-based intervention programs providing disadvantaged students in grades 7-12 with classroom instruction, academic intervention and work-based learning experiences. The students may be disadvantaged either academically, economically or both. All programs must be approved by the state department of education. Districts offering the intervention programs report data on student transition to the next grade level, attendance, behavior, graduation/dropout rates, transition rates to a high school-level career, and technical education workforce development program and pass rates on required state assessments.

Washington H.B. 1758 (2009) and S.B. 6377 (2008)

What's special?

H.B. 1758 streamlines the pathway to a high school diploma for some students. Students who dropped out of school then later enrolled in a career/technical program at a community college or technical school will receive a high school diploma with their associate's degree. The high school diploma is issued by the community college or technical school. S.B. 6377 authorizes skill centers to enter into agreements with school districts to grant high school diplomas, enabling students to attend skills centers on a full-time

basis without co-enrollment at the high school. The programs must be designed for at-risk, credit-deficient and fifth-year students.

Dual/Concurrent Enrollment

Colorado S.B. 285 (2009)

What's special?

This legislation allows postsecondary-level career and technical education providers to offer concurrent enrollment opportunities to high school students. The law also requires teachers in such programs to hold a career and technical education teaching credential that has been authorized by the state board for community colleges and occupational education.

Louisiana S.B. 259/H.B. 612 (2009)

What's special?

The bill creates a high school career option program consisting of an academic major and a career major. It requires students in grades 9-12 to take core curriculum and either general or college preparatory courses or the specific career courses required for the career major. It allows students enrolled in a career major to participate in dual enrollment with a community college. For students participating in this program, career-readiness and computer application courses count toward meeting graduation requirements.

High- Demand Occupations

Research indicates that connecting high school and postsecondary programs to career goals can help increase the supply of individuals prepared to fill critical, high-skill, high-demand, high-wage jobs.

New Hampshire S.B. 459 (2008)

What's special?

This measure established an Advanced Manufacturing Education Advisory Council. Its purpose is to advise the department of education in the implementation, evaluation and expansion of the advanced manufacturing curriculum, and to assist the department in searching for public and private funds to ensure statewide access for all public high school students to advanced manufacturing curriculum coursework.

Texas H.B. 1935 (2009)

What's special?

The Jobs and Education for Texas (JET) grant program was established to award grants to public junior colleges, public technical institutes and eligible nonprofit organizations to:

- Develop or support nonprofit organizations' programs that prepare low-income students for careers in high-demand occupations. These programs must help student prepare for, apply to and enroll in a public junior college or technical institute, provide matching funds, and demonstrate that they have achieved or will achieve above average developmental course completion rates, and three-year degree or certificate completion rates among participating students.
- Defray the start-up costs of new career and technical education programs in high-demand occupations.
- Provide scholarships for students who demonstrate financial need and who are enrolled in training programs for high-demand occupations.

Additional provisions of this bill establish the Green Job Skills Development Fund and Training Program. "Green jobs" are defined as jobs in the field of renewable energy or energy efficiency. To qualify, a training program must be hosted by a regional partnership designed to implement training programs that lead trainees to economic self-sufficiency and career pathways. Regional partnerships must include, at a

minimum, a postsecondary institution, chamber of commerce, local workforce agency, local employer or other public or private participating entity, economic development authority, and community or faith-based nonprofit organization that works with one or more targeted populations. Programs must target specified groups of individuals for training, including low-income workers, unemployed youth and adults, individuals who did not complete high school or other underserved sectors of the workforce in high poverty areas. Funds may be used for support services, including basic skills, literacy, GED, English as a Second Language, and job readiness training, career guidance and referral services.

Middle Schools

South Carolina H.B. 3155 (2005)

What's special?

Strong academics and real-world problem solving skills are emphasized in this legislation. Included in the bill are counseling and career awareness programs for students in middle school. Before the end of the second semester of the 8th grade, the student and parent select a preferred cluster of study and develop an individual graduation plan. The students are provided with the services of a career specialist who has completed the career development facilitator certification program.

Washington S.B. 5676 (2009)

What's special?

This bill includes a funding incentive. It requires career and technical education opportunities for middle school students and provides that middle schools providing a career and technical education program in science, technology, engineering or mathematics directly to students will receive funding at the same rate as a high school operating a similar program.

Rigorous and Applied Learning

Hawaii S.B. 885 (2007)

What's special?

The Hawaii Excellence Through Science and Technology Academy program is a partnership between the department of education and the Kauai Community College and operates at two public schools. The purpose of the pilot program is to establish science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) academies, which may include an applied-learning focus, at the public schools and to add resources and support to the department of education to increase the readiness and motivation of Hawaii high school graduates to pursue postsecondary training and career options in STEM disciplines. The bill also directed the department of education to include in their career and technical education program robotics and Project EAST (environmental and spatial technology) which integrates cutting-edge technology, such as computer assisted drafting, geographic information systems, global positions systems and computer graphic applications into the education curriculum.

Kansas Math-in-CTE Model

What's special?

The Kansas department of education has partnered with the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education to bring the Math-in-CTE Model to Kansas schools. The model pairs a career and technical education instructor with a math instructor from the same district or building who share a common planning time. They work together to identify and teach math concepts that are embedded within the career and technical education curriculum. By working together the instructors are better able to standardize the math vocabulary used in both classes, which will enable the students to make better connections between what is taught in math class and how it is applied in career and technical education.

Ohio OAC 3301-61-03 (2009)

What's special?

This state board rule sets clear criteria for ensuring that all career and technical education programs or pathways meet expectations of quality. Business and industry, accrediting association and licensing agencies assist in identification of necessary competencies in each program. Multiple measures for assessing student attainment of academic and technical content standards are required.

Texas H.B. 3, Section 41 (2009)

What's special?

Legislation requires the state education agency's plan for career and technology education to ensure a rigorous course of study consistent with the required curriculum all districts must offer. The plan is supposed to ensure that a career and technology program:

- Incorporates competencies leading to academic and technical skill attainment
- Leads to an industry-recognized license, credential or certificate, or an associate or baccalaureate degree
- Includes opportunities for students to earn college credit for coursework
- Includes, as an integral part of the program, participation by students and teachers in activities of career and technical student organizations supported by the state education agency and the state board of education.

Virginia SB 1147/HB 2039 (2007)

What's special?

This bill requires the state board to establish requirements for a technical diploma that meet or exceed the requirements for a standard diploma and include a concentration on career and technical education.

Scholarships

North Dakota H.B. 1400 (2009)

What's special?

Any student who graduates from a high school in North Dakota during or after the 2010-11 school year is eligible to receive a career and technical education scholarship provided the student completes all requirements for a high school diploma and:

- Completes either:
 - One unit of Algebra II or
 - Two units of a coordinated plan of study recommended by the department of career and technical education and approved by the state superintendent of public instruction
 - Obtains a cumulative grade point of at least "B" as determined by the state superintendent.
- Obtains a grade of at least "C" in each unit or one-half unit required for the diploma
- Obtains a cumulative grade point average of at least "B" as determined by the state superintendent
- Receives:
 - A composite score of at least 24 on an ACT test or
 - A score of at least 5 on each of three WorkKeys assessments.

Scholarships are available in the amount of \$700 each semester during which the student is enrolled full-time at an accredited state institution and maintains a cumulative grade point average of 2.75.

Scholarships are capped at \$6,000.

Special Populations

Hawaii S.B. 214 (2004) and S. B. 1394 (2005)

What's special?

The 2004 legislation extended the state's career and technical education programs to students from the indigenous communities. The 2005 policy provided vocational training and retraining for students from military families, requiring the department of education to develop a priority listing of public schools impacted by a large population of military dependent students (e.g., with 20% or higher proportion of military students).

Career Advisors and Faculty Recruitment

North Dakota H.B. 1400 (2009)

What's special?

This bill requires the department of education to develop a program leading to a certificate in career development facilitation. The certificate is to be awarded to any individual who:

- Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- Has at least a five-year employment history
- Successfully completes the department's programmatic requirements.

An individual holding a certificate awarded under this program is a career advisor.

The department may provisionally approve an individual to serve as a career advisor if the individual:

- Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- Has at least a five-year employment history
- Provides the department with a plan for completing the department's programmatic requirements within a two-year period.

Virginia S.B. 169 (2009)

What's special?

The Virginia Teaching Scholarship Program was expanded by this legislation to include those teacher candidates pursuing an endorsement in career and technical education. The legislation was a recommendation from the Joint Subcommittee to Study Science, Math and Technology Education in the Commonwealth at the Elementary, Secondary and Undergraduate Levels.

This *StateNote* was compiled by Melodye Bush, mbush@ecs.org.

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