



Ninety-Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2001
Committee Statement
LB 486

Hearing Date: 2/12/01
Committee On: Education

Introducers: (Stuhr, Baker, Dierks, Erdman, Hartnett, Hudkins, Janssen, Price, Schrock, Smith, Suttle, Thompson)

Title: Adopt the Career and Technical Education Act

Roll Call Vote – Final Committee Action:

- Advanced to General File
 - X Advanced to General File with Amendments
 - Indefinitely Postponed
-

Vote Results:

5	Yes	Senators Coordsen, Maxwell, Suttle, Price, Stuhr
2	No	Senators Wickersham, Raikes
1	Present, not voting	Senator Brashear
0	Absent	

Proponents:

Senator Elaine Stuhr
 Mike Roeber
 Ken Spellman
 Rachel Wise
 Kermit Bosshamer
 Sheree Moser
 Cindy Baum
 Megan Loftis
 Brian Halstead

 Jim Hansen

Representing:

Introducer
 Assn. for Career and Technical Education
 Omaha Public Schools
 Omaha Public Schools
 Eaton Corporation
 Lincoln Public Schools
 Northeast Community College
 Oakland/Craig Student
 State Board of Education
 Department of Education
 Citizen

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

Legislative Bill 486 creates the Career and Technical Education Act. The Act states legislative findings and a mission statement, provides for a grant program for measuring achievement in career and technical education and improving opportunities based on the resulting data, provides for a feasibility study to determine if these achievement measurements can fulfill existing requirements to measure progress toward the state academic standards, and requires the development and dissemination of recommended student competencies for career and technical education. An intent is stated to fund the Act with \$1.3 million in annual appropriations.

Legislative findings state:

1. Changes from an industrial to an information-based economy influence the need for students to have a wide range of skills;
2. Individuals need broad knowledge and skills for changes in career fields and to move between occupations;
3. Career and technical education prepares students with skills to balance work, family, and community. It is essential to prepare students to select career paths and guide them to courses that will lead to career goals.
4. Career and technical education provide opportunities to develop realistic career goals and make appropriate decisions for those goals;
5. The ability to reach out to all students, especially those without career plans or goals and who often do not graduate, is an educational challenge. The need is unfulfilled for career and technical education programs allowing all students to complete courses that are challenging with identified learning expectations;
6. Individuals need to be prepared with the skills for a career path or cluster, such as agriculture and natural resources, architecture and construction, business, engineering and technical services, family and consumer sciences, health sciences, information and industrial technology, and marketing;
7. A need exists for career and technical education programs to assist students in (a) recognizing careers requiring special skills, (b) acquiring knowledge and skills for a career path or cluster, (c) acquiring skills to balance work, family, and community, (d) gaining experience in chosen fields through supervised work-based learning experiences, and (e) acquiring knowledge and skills needed for career preparation at the postsecondary level. A measurement of achievement and progress in career and technical education will help students see where they stand in developing skills for meeting career plans and employer expectations; and
8. Successful career and technical education programs must have collaboration and partnerships between parents, schools, businesses, and communities.

The mission of career and technical education is stated as developing “the capacity of individuals to be productive and successful in work, family, and community.” The measure also states that career and technical education provides opportunities for learning core academic competencies, technical competencies, and basic employment skills. Students also explore a career options and prepare for postsecondary education, careers, and life long learning.

The Career and Technical Education Grant Program is created. Schools and educational service units (E.S.U.’s) may apply for grants to (1) measure student achievement and progress in career and technical education and (2) support staff development or other activities to improve learning

for career and technical education students based on the data from the measurement of student achievement.

Feasibility studies would be completed by the department on the assessment instruments used to measure student achievement to determine the ability of districts to utilize the instruments and results to fulfill the requirements of section 79-760, which provides for assessments to measure achievement of the standards. Recommended student competencies for career and technical education would also be developed and disseminated.

The department would be required to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to implement the Act.

An intent is stated to appropriate \$1,300,000 annually to conduct the feasibility studies, develop and disseminate recommended student competencies, and provide grants.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

The committee amendments would replace provisions creating the Career and Technical Education Grant Program, expand the findings language, reduce the intended appropriation, and add an emergency clause.

The purpose of the grant program would be to help students assess their progress in developing the knowledge and skills for postsecondary education and future careers. School districts and educational service units (E.S.U.'s) would be eligible to apply for grants to (1) measure student achievement and progress in accordance with the career path or cluster concept and (2) for the costs of training staff to implement measurement instruments.

Feasibility studies would be completed by the department on the assessment instruments to determine their capacity to measure (1) achievement of the academic content standards and (2) progress toward specific career path or cluster goals. The department would report the results to the Legislature and the State Board of Education by December 2002. The department would also develop and disseminate recommended student competencies for career and technical education based on the data from the grants. The competencies would be reviewed periodically by the Department.

The department would administer the program and adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to implement the Act. The department would also try to award grants across the state in both rural and urban districts. If grant requests exceed the funds available, funds would be prorated on a per-school-district basis. Grants would not be for more than one year.

Language would be added to the findings, which would define career paths or cluster as a concept for learning and improving student achievement. It is further stated that the career paths or clusters identify paths to postsecondary education and the workplace and assist students in recognizing the relationship between education and future opportunities.

The intended appropriation was reduced from \$1,300,000 annually to \$500,000 annually for the grant program and \$70,000 for fiscal year 2001-02 to conduct feasibility studies and to develop and disseminate recommended student competencies.

Senator Ron Raikes, Chairperson