

HCS HB 1612 -- CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Swan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues in Education by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Education by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill requires the State Board of Education within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to establish minimum requirements for a career and technical education (CTE) certificate that a student can earn in addition to his or her high school diploma. Students entering high school in the 2017-18 school year and thereafter must be eligible to earn a CTE certificate.

The bill requires the state board to establish CTE requirements intended to provide students with the necessary technical employability skills to be prepared for an entry-level career in a technical field or additional training in a technical field. These provisions must not be considered a means for tracking students, meaning separating pupils by academic ability into groups for all subjects or certain classes and curriculum, in order to impel students to particular vocational, career, or college paths.

Each local school district must strive to offer programs of study that are economically feasible for students in the district. In establishing CTE offerings, the district may rely on standards, technical coursework, and skills assessments for industry-recognized certificates or credentials.

No later than January 1, 2017, the department must develop a process for recognition of a school district's career and technical education program that offers a career and technical education certificate.

This bill is similar to HB 380 (2015).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill gives students a dignified alternative to attending college by presenting vocational training as an option. In addition, students will be encouraged to complete their high school coursework because school will be more exciting, fun, and relevant to their future careers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Swan; JG Foundation; Association For Career & Technical Education; Microsoft Corporation; Missouri Education Reform Council; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri Chamber Of Commerce And Industry;

Missouri State Teachers Association; and Western Governors University.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.