

SUBJECT: Revising career and technology education goals

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Sadler, Dutton, Dunnam, Hardcastle, Hochberg, Oliveira, Olivo, Smith
0 nays
1 absent — Grusendorf

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 26 — 30-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

WITNESSES: None

BACKGROUND: Education Code, Chapter 29 governs public school educational programs. Section 29.181 outlines provisions for public education career and technology education goals and requires each public school student to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner and for gaining entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continuing the student’s education at the postsecondary level.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) must prepare and update every two years a state plan for career and technology education. The plan must ensure that all secondary and postsecondary students have the opportunity to participate in career and technology programs, that the state complies with requirements for supplemental federal career and technology education funding, and that career and technology education is established as a part of the total education system in Texas.

DIGEST: SB 1731 would amend the career and technology education goals in sec. 29.181 to add that each student would have to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for making informed career and job choices based on:

- ! experience with workplace characteristics and descriptions of the operating equipment, conditions, and how persons do work today;

- ! establishing a connection with the workplace that provides a sense of the workplace and its environment; and
- ! expectations at the various workplaces.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2001.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

SB 1731 would encourage school districts to enrich their career and technology programs at a time when most have reduced their budgets for these programs. Not all students will attend four-year universities, and the curriculum should not be exclusively geared to college-preparatory courses. Students who seek employment or post-secondary career and technology training immediately after high school may not be adequately prepared by the current course of study.

Technology is changing at lightening speed and is effecting our society, the way we live, and especially the way we work, as well as the kinds of jobs that are becoming available. Almost as soon as one technology is in place, there is another one to take its place. This is effecting the workplace and can make job and career choices especially difficult for today's students.

SB 1731 is needed to help students make informed career choices by requiring public schools to include in their career and technology education classes programs that would enable students to establish a more realistic connection to the modern workplace by describing the equipment, conditions, and characteristics of the modern workplace. This would help students to realize what is expected of them as future employees because they would have a basic familiarity with the environment of the workplace.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

Schools should not deviate from their mission of promoting high academic standards and providing a general academic education and a mastery of minimum basic skills for all students. Students, especially those yet to enter high school, have little idea of their future career aspirations and goals and should not be limited in their educational opportunities by being steered into career and technology programs.