



MINUTES

Career and Technical Education Implementation Study Committee

Thursday, December 12, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Tim Kraayenbrink, Co-chairperson
Senator Chris Cournoyer

Representative David Kerr, Co-chairperson
Representative Mary Ann Hanusa
Representative Monica Kurth

LSA CONTACTS: Organizational staffing provided by: Kathleen B. Hanlon, Senior Research Analyst, 515.281.3847; Minutes prepared by: Amber Shanahan-Fricke, Legal Counsel, 515.725.7354

CONTENTS

- I. Procedural Business
- II. Overview
- III. CTE in Iowa and Leveraging Perkins V
- IV. Perspectives from Secondary Career and Technical Programming Task Force Members
- V. Committee Discussion
- VI. Materials Filed with the Legislative Services Agency



I. Procedural Business

Call to Order and Adjournment. The meeting of the Career and Technical Education Implementation Study Committee was called to order by temporary Co-chairperson Kraayenbrink at 10:01 a.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2019, in room 116 of the State Capitol Building, Des Moines. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Election of Permanent Co-chairpersons. All members of the committee present voted in favor of electing temporary Co-chairpersons Kraayenbrink and Kerr as permanent co-chairpersons.

Adoption of Rules. All members of the committee present voted to adopt the proposed rules.

Opening Remarks. The co-chairpersons each made brief introductory comments.

II. Overview

The Legislative Council authorized the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Implementation Study Committee, granted the committee one meeting date, charged the committee to “study administrative rules related to career and technical training and work-based learning programs in consultation with former members of the Secondary Career and Technical Programming Task Force, including an assessment of the membership of the regional career and technical education planning partnerships to assure that all affected groups have substantial representation,” and directed the committee to submit its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly for consideration during the 2020 Legislative Session.

III. CTE in Iowa and Leveraging Perkins V

Mr. Jeremy Varner, Administrator, Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, Iowa Department of Education (DE), and Mr. Eric St. Clair, Consultant, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, DE, provided an overview of CTE in Iowa following the enactment of House File 604 (2013 Iowa Acts, chapter 141, section 52), which established the Secondary Career and Technical Programming Task Force, and the enactment of House File 2392 (2016 Iowa Acts, chapter 1108), the language of which was largely based on the recommendations of the task force. The task force and House File 2392 focused on three themes: career and academic planning, ensuring high quality CTE programs with business-driven advisory committees and ongoing review and approval of such programs, and regional planning because CTE is capital-intensive and robust offerings are expensive and require a critical mass of students and stakeholder partnerships to expand opportunities to include globally competitive programs.

Mr. Varner observed that the provisions implemented since 2016 have achieved results. Institutions are investing funds in CTE, improving programs, sharing resources and coordinating delivery, expanding college credit opportunities, and changing perceptions about skilled career areas. However, he noted there is much to be done to eliminate disparities and inefficiencies and to help students explore and prepare for high-demand careers. The General Assembly has taken steps to help with this work by increasing state CTE funds, creating summer college credit programs in support of the Future Ready Iowa Initiative, and establishing a Career Academy Incentive Fund. He noted that the fears regarding administrative rules have proven unfounded. His division is currently working to develop a state plan that will align with the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Pub. L. No. 115-224), commonly referred to as Perkins V, and to address gaps and align state efforts. Perkins V provides funding for CTE in the state’s schools and colleges. Currently, there are 9,000 CTE programs in Iowa’s high schools, more than 1,300 programs in Iowa’s community colleges, and



100,000 Iowa students are enrolled in CTE coursework annually. Mr. Varner observed that skill and labor shortages hamper economic growth; unskilled or under-skilled Iowans face economic insecurity.

Mr. St. Clair explained why now is an opportune moment to evaluate the state of CTE in Iowa, noting the significant state and federal investments in CTE. He reviewed the charge of the committee and the history of the committee, noting that the taskforce convened as required under House File 604 and was composed of 25 education, business, and community stakeholders who developed five recommendations on the following topics: career guidance, including changes in policy and practice to encourage meaningful career exploration beginning in eighth grade; CTE programming, including quality sequencing, aligning a multitude of opportunities, and more intentional use of concurrent enrollment; work-based learning that is age-appropriate, ranging from exploratory career fairs, to internships to registered apprenticeships; CTE teacher preparation and training to address the teacher pipeline and CTE-specific instruction; and regional collaboration to advance high-quality programs through strategic planning and delivery.

Mr. St. Clair then detailed House File 2392 and its corresponding implementation, including administrative rules. He stated that Division I of the Act discussed career guidance and Division II addressed career and technical education. In Division I, there are three requirements which necessitated reforms because previous career exploration and academic planning activities seem to be completed as a check-the-box type of process, not a meaningful discussion or process. First, the Act maintained the prior requirement that all school districts develop a career and academic plan beginning in eighth grade based on career guidance and development standards. This process is to be holistic, with involvement from students and parents or guardians, resulting in an individualized career and academic plan for each student that is reviewed and revised annually to ensure alignment with career and academic goals. Mr. St. Clair stated that the plan is required to prepare the student for completion of required curriculum by graduation to identify coursework that supports postsecondary goals, and to prepare the student to complete all essential components of district plans by graduation and meet district statutory graduation requirements. Division I also provides for district career guidance plans which are roadmaps for implementation of career and academic processes. It is within these processes that individual student career and academic plans happen. Finally, Division I provides that districts must utilize appropriate tools, software, and resources through the process to support the requirements of career and academic planning processes to meet the standards set by the State Board of Education. A list of approved software products is maintained on the DE Internet site and is reviewed every three to four years.

Mr. St. Clair then detailed Division II of House File 2392. First, he noted that the Act was new in providing a review and approval process for the CTE programs at secondary schools. While CTE programs have been reviewed at postsecondary institutions in Iowa for years, Iowa has not provided that mandatory oversight at the secondary level until this legislation. The purpose of the oversight is to evaluate the CTE program to ensure it meets minimum expectations and is relevant, safe, and responsive to student needs and the state's labor market needs. The oversight process rests on three principles: 1) is instructor-driven and program-centric, 2) facilitates continuous improvement, and 3) promotes collaboration. After discussing the review and approval process, Mr. St. Clair discussed the change in program alignment for updating to the modern framework comprised of 6 service areas and 16 career clusters. He also noted that the State Board of Education adopted CTE standards involving the six service areas in September 2019.

Next, Mr. St. Clair discussed regional planning partnerships, which he stated were not a new concept. Rather, he stated that such partnerships were a relic from 1989 legislation, although none were active when the legislation was passed. He explained why it was difficult to maintain a regional planning



partnership, noting the constant evaluation of program curriculum and need for capital and resources. He stated that it is particularly difficult to maintain authentic CTE experience in small school districts due to expense. He stated that regional planning partnerships are valuable because they provide the mechanism to address issues and provide access to careers, promoting greater collaboration and planning around CTE. The statute called for the creation of 12 to 15 regional planning partnerships and the implementation of the statute resulted in the development of 15 partnerships that nearly mirror community college boundaries. Mr. St. Clair discussed the responsibilities of the regional planning partnership, citing promoting collaboration around CTE, establishing strategic vision for CTE through multiyear plans, and facilitating review of CTE. He stated that the plan serves multiple purposes and that the statute provides who shall be representatives on the partnership, but allows for additional representatives. He reported that the regional partnerships are in substantial compliance with the requirements to have representation from the various sectors; however, some regions are performing better than others.

Mr. St. Clair discussed Perkins V and described its benefits as driving up equity in access and delivery to CTE, broadening CTE beyond secondary education, leveraging and reinforcing state CTE policies, focusing on creating efficiencies, using existing and new provisions to further strengthen the CTE system, creating new opportunities in programming through accountable performance metrics, using performance indicators to drive key priorities including promoting work-based learning and concurrent enrollment, focusing on teacher preparation and retention, addressing issues with teacher pipeline, and providing greater and more targeted support to teachers already in the profession. Furthermore, Mr. St. Clair stated that Perkins V provides for CTE funding in middle school down to 5th grade and supports leveraging existing practices up through middle school and high school. Perkins V supports serving certain target populations such as at-risk youth in and out of school, adult learners, and persons in correctional facilities. Mr. St. Clair noted that there is a push federally to reinstate federal Pell Grant eligibility for incarcerated individuals and at the state level, Governor Reynolds has signaled a support for “second chance” funding. He indicated that Perkins V requires that recipients use data to drive programming decisions. Mr. St. Clair stated that with Perkins V there is a push for CTE student organizations, which enhance CTE programs, and a push to integrate work-based learning opportunities and best practices. He indicated that they are striving to leverage Perkins V funding within the state framework and use it to fill gaps such as the need for teacher preparation. By engaging the right stakeholders and being inclusive of statewide strategic priorities such as Future Ready Iowa initiative, there are durable policies and practices and a comprehensive system and way forward. In conclusion, Mr. St. Clair stated that Perkins V was passed in 2018, after which Iowa developed a one-year transition plan, submitted the plan last spring, and that the plan was approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The department is currently developing a four-year Perkins V plan for submission to the USDE in April 2020.

IV. Perspectives from Secondary Career and Technical Programming Task Force Members

Mr. Murray Fenn, CTE Consultant, Green Hills Area Education Agency (AEA); Ms. Dana Lampe, Technology Instructional Coach and Future Business Leaders of America Adviser, Linn-Mar Community School District; Ms. Kathleen Nacos-Burds, Vice President of Learning and Student Success, Northeast Iowa Community College; and Mr. Ken Sagar, President, Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, provided an overview of CTE in Iowa since 2016 from their perspectives as former members of the task force.

Mr. Fenn identified career and academic plans as the chief topic of concern in his AEA. Regional planning partnerships in the area have asked school districts to submit their plans to the AEA. He stated district



plans have helped districts direct more focused activities to allow students to develop more focused individual career and academic plans. He noted the program approval process has helped focus the partnerships, and caused instructors, schools, and community colleges to work more collaboratively and to integrate academic and CTE coursework. He stated that House File 2392 has done an excellent job of focusing the state Perkins V matching funds to CTE.

Mr. Sagar noted that labor is partnering with schools and postsecondary institutions on job fairs, visits to construction sites, and pre-apprenticeship training programs to make students aware of the value of a variety of trade jobs, many of which demand high levels of mathematics and science knowledge. He observed that any recommendations made relating to CTE in Iowa must receive funding and other support if the recommendations are to have any effect. Iowa's present and future infrastructure depends on tradespeople, he stated.

Dr. Nacos-Burds noted that the regional planning partnerships have brought all of the area's schools, the AEA, the community college, and business and industry together to talk collaboratively about priorities and to learn from each other in order to make greater progress in the area. She stated that the community college has added success coaches in every area school to review student career plans. Through accreditation and program approval, the community college and school districts work closer to make curricula tighter, allowing students to achieve college credit and possibly graduate high school with an associate's degree. However, she observed, staying current and providing robust programs with state-of-the-art technology is expensive. The community college is looking at models for partnering with business and industry to share resources and provide more certifications and apprenticeships with cutting edge equipment. Relationship building is the biggest achievement accomplished by the legislation.

Ms. Lampe noted that 70 percent of students take CTE coursework, but often as electives. It is not required that students complete a CTE program of study. She opined that schools need more guidance counselors, support, and resources to assist students to become career and college ready. Students who are involved in high school career and student organizations have a higher rate of graduation, but their monetary costs for participating can be relatively high. Offering incentives that help pay organization dues and participation costs could remove some of the barriers to student participation. Ms. Lampe expressed appreciation for Perkins V funding but noted it was only a small piece of the necessary funds.

V. Committee Discussion

Representative Kurth inquired whether there is a difference in participation in regional planning partnerships between rural and urban areas. Mr. St. Clair responded that there is to a certain extent. However, as a panel member would elaborate, there is incredible participation by employers in a northeast Iowa community, which is very rural, while at the same time, some urban areas have very robust engagement. Senator Cournoyer inquired about chamber of commerce participation in regional planning participation. Mr. St. Clair responded that the Greater Des Moines Partnership was on a regional planning partnership. Representative Hanusa asked about the implementation of the local variation in regional planning partnerships, specifically that the legislative intent that regional planning partnerships reflect their regions, which may be stronger in, for example, agriculture or labor. Mr. St. Clair responded that the actions have been taken to cast a wide net, inclusive of all categories of employers, but noted that the panel may be in a better position to respond to the question. Mr. Varner responded that all industry stakeholders have been represented but some regions have had some difficulty with business because a number of councils compete for their time and participation. The department is working on achieving better participation as implementation continues.



Career and Technical Education Implementation Study Committee

Representative Kurth and Mr. Varner discussed career and academic plans for eighth graders. Mr. Varner reported that plans are mandatory on an individual level, which the department collects data on, but that district plans are not collected by the department. In response to a follow-up question from Representative Kurth, Mr. Varner stated that the eighth graders' plans are reviewed and revised. He elaborated by stating that a robust school plan includes middle school and high school internships and career fairs with real opportunities, not just electronic systems, that help students figure out what they want to do to be successful. If the plan can do so while also meeting labor market needs, it is a win for everyone, stated Mr. Varner.

Senator Kraayenbrink expressed concern that the minimum threshold for programs was too low, not demanding enough of students, and that students would not be job ready when they graduate if the students' local school board did not make career and academic planning a priority. He questioned whether the law was being maximized to its fullest potential. Mr. Varner stated that it is a large system and not every school will implement its program in the same way; there should be some local control. He went on to emphasize the focus, even at the federal level, on earlier student activities on the curricular side, and on work-based learning activities. He stated he was open to discussing options.

Senator Cournoyer asked for clarification about work-based learning opportunities. Mr. Varner identified a spectrum of activities, including I-JAG, career fairs, business professionals in the classrooms, teachers in the workplace, job shadow experiences, internship, and registered apprenticeships.

Senator Kraayenbrink, Senator Cournoyer, and Mr. Varner engaged in a conversation regarding disruptive students in the classroom. Senator Kraayenbrink expressed that some students may have more success on a career path, rather than in a traditional classroom, and an early recognition of this will resolve behavior issues. Mr. Varner stated that everyone needs some postsecondary training. While Perkins V addresses at-risk youth, it does not speak to alternative schools. Senator Cournoyer opined that a caregiver should be involved during this process. Mr. Varner stated that a parent is involved in career and academic plans and must sign off on such plans. Senator Kraayenbrink stated that it may not necessarily be a parent, but should be a responsible adult.

Representative Kurth clarified with Mr. Varner that Perkins V funding may be used no earlier than for fifth grade. She also discussed Girls Who Code and Project Lead the Way. Mr. Varner stated that it is helpful to begin discussing career aspirations at a young age and CTE redesign places an emphasis on middle school.

Senator Kraayenbrink stated that a better job could be done educating foster parents that college can be available for free for students in foster care.

Senator Kraayenbrink asked for feedback on CTE, including legislative solutions. Dr. Nacos-Burds stated that the approval process needs improvement. Mr. Varner stated that DE recognizes from the first round that there are processes that can be improved; it does not need to review every process every year. DE is streamlining and removing the most arduous parts. Senator Kraayenbrink noted that the length of the process probably disincentivizes participation. Dr. Nacos-Burds suggested that the secondary schools have key competencies for programs; currently, there is no common numbering or curriculum amongst secondary schools. Mr. Varner stated that DE just adopted standards in CTE and that should help.

Senator Cournoyer responded to Ms. Lampe's comments that students are taking CTE as an elective and not completing CTE programs. She stated that students' schedules are full. She suggested planning in middle school. Mr. Varner indicated that he hears from CTE educators consistently that course



competitiveness is a problem; one solution is getting students in the programs earlier and another is getting students to choose these programs.

Senator Cournoyer stated she has noticed a dramatic shift in recent years, noting that the stigma associated with community college is dissipating. She also noted the recent trend in “signing days” at college for nonathletes and commended it. She acknowledged a local business in her community that utilizes trade work with high-paying jobs and stated there is still a need for a cultural shift to embrace such jobs; the trend in that direction needs to continue.

Representative Hanusa stated we need to recognize the importance of trades and acknowledge that the trades can be high-paying, worthwhile careers. Representative Hanusa also acknowledged that there has been a shift toward utilizing community colleges. In response, Ms. Lampe stated that her school district is producing a program of studies document with career pathways and projected incomes.

Representative Kurth asked Mr. Sagar if students are prepared for the math element in the trades. Mr. Sagar said it depends. He stated that he liked the program of studies document plan students develop with guidance counselors that Ms. Lampe described, because if students understand what they need to study in order to achieve a career, they are better prepared.

In response to an inquiry from Representative Kurth, Ms. Lampe stated that with the change in standards in CTE, schools are working to reform curriculums and incorporate standards. She stated that schools have been working for 10 years and have not completed such reform and incorporation.

VI. Materials Filed with the Legislative Services Agency

Materials were distributed at or in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Services Agency. The materials may be accessed from the “Committee Documents” link on the committee’s Internet site: www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=88&session=2&groupID=33682

1. Career and Technical Education Implementation Presentation, Jeremy Varner and Eric St. Clair, Department of Education.