



House Education Committee
House Bill 2620: Excellence in Education Act
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Good morning Chairman Aurand and members of the House Education Committee. The Kansas Community Colleges, through their trustee association, KACCT, speak in support of the Excellence in Education Act, HB 2620's, recognition of the need to support career technical education by emphasizing concurrent enrollment of secondary students in technical education programs.

This bill proposes :

state aid to each district based on the career technical education enrollment reported by the district which takes into consideration: (1) The number of career technical education programs offered that provide industry certification upon completion; (2) the number of agriculture education programs offered, and the number of such programs that provide industry certification upon completion; and (3) the need to transport pupils to and from a postsecondary educational institution to attend a career technical education program.

It establishes:

a career technical education incentive program. Each school year, to the extent there are sufficient moneys appropriated to the program, the board of regents shall make an award in the amount of \$1,000 for each pupil who graduates from high school having obtained an industry-recognized credential in an occupation identified by the secretary of labor as an occupation in highest need of additional skilled employees.

And it allows:

the governing board of a community college, technical college or institute of technology located outside such service area, in coordination with one or more school districts located within the service area to apply to the board of regents for permission to establish a career technical education program to be taught at a location in such service area if a particular career technical education program, which is open to enrollment of secondary students, is not offered in that service area.

Experts report economic recovery is dependent on a highly skilled workforce. This is a tremendous challenge because not enough individuals are earning the credentials needed to fill current and future job openings.

Credentials include certificates and degrees, associate and higher, offered by postsecondary institutions and industry-recognized certificates.

- More than 96,000 Kansans are unemployed while over 32,000 jobs remain open. This indicates a skills shortage and mismatch. —Kansas Department of Labor, Job Vacancy Survey 2010
- Even though advanced skills and postsecondary credentials are clearly the path to successful and long-term employment options, a majority of Kansas adults age 25 or older (60 percent) have not earned a postsecondary credential.

In order to position Kansas for future economic success, and to remain competitive from a national and global perspective, it is vital to increase the number of Kansas citizens with meaningful postsecondary credentials. In order to prepare the state workforce with the skills and credentials required for 64% of the jobs, we must increase postsecondary credential production by 1,500 credentials annually. This will prepare the state workforce with the skills and college credentials required for 64% of the jobs.

This plan, as it applies to technical education, seeks to provide and incent secondary schools and students to take technical education programs concurrently with their high school education so they leave high school with a credential that allows them to enter the workforce and secure higher paying jobs. By building career pathways and stackable credentials, students may leave high school with a CAN certificate and be able to work their way through college to secure a nursing degree. They not only leave high school career ready, but will be able to earn a higher wage as they pursue other educational opportunities, lessening the economic burden on the students and their parents.

It also lessens the burden on the community as studies have shown that because individuals with postsecondary credentials earn more over their lifetimes and have a larger total percent of disposable income, they contribute more to the community, state and national economies. ☐ Individuals with postsecondary credentials place lower demands on social welfare programs and have a greater, longer-lasting positive community impact than those without postsecondary credentials.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, each one percent increase in worker skill levels has the same effect on output and productivity growth as a one percent increase in hours worked.

Kansas citizens with higher levels of education have higher labor participation rates and are better prepared to weather lay-offs and economic downturns. In 2008, only 65 percent of Kansans with less than a high school diploma were employed, compared to 89 percent employment for those with an associate degree.

We believe an emphasis in career and technical education is long overdue and we support an effort to provide the workforce skills and training necessary to drive our economy. This when partnered with an infusion into post-secondary technical education can move the Kansas economy forward as well as help students and parents.