

BILL: House Bill 1250
TITLE: Career Education Act
DATE: March 7, 2019
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, opposes House Bill 1250.

MABE opposes bills relating to Career and Technology Education (CTE) which include provisions to substantially remove or weaken local board and school system discretion and decision-making authority over curriculum, instruction, assessments, or graduation requirements. Specifically, MABE is opposing House Bill 1250 based on the following provisions:

- House Bill 1250 would prohibit a school system from requiring a student to take a technology education course as a graduation requirement if the student has taken a CTE course.
- House Bill 1250 would prohibit a local school system from directing a charter school or contract school on how technology education credits may be counted toward graduation.
- House Bill 1250 would mandate that if a school system pays for a student to take an Advanced Placement (AP) exam, a Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), or a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the local board shall pay for a student to take an industrial certification exam or apprenticeship entrance exam. MABE is not opposed to the merits of these respective exams, but affirms that a local school system should retain the right to select exams for school system payment.
- House Bill 1250 would impose a mandate on the administration of software used by school systems to administer postsecondary information processing and counseling by mandating the equivalency of the pursuit of a vocational certificate, industry certification, or apprenticeship program with the pursuit of postsecondary education.

Again, MABE's position is grounded in supporting the local school system's decision-making role in deciding how to structure and administer career counseling programs for high school students.

Local boards of education support the continuous improvement of CTE programs benefiting thousands of Maryland students across the State every day. State law now requires statewide career and technical education (CTE) goals developed by the State Board of Education, in consultation with DLLR and the Governor's Workforce Development Board. Goals must be set for each year from 2018 through 2024 so that by January 1, 2025, 45% of high school students successfully complete a CTE program, earn industry-recognized occupational or skill credentials, or complete a registered youth or other apprenticeship before graduating high school. This bold statewide goal is conceptually aligned with federal education reforms; and will require significant state investments to achieve.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and Maryland State ESSA Plan, prominently feature a strong emphasis on Career and Technology Education (CTE) and apprenticeship programs. Maryland's statewide accountability system provides "credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum" for those students who, among other criteria, have:

- completed a youth or other apprenticeship training program approved by the Maryland Apprenticeship Training Council;

- completed an industry certification aligned with an MSDE-approved CTE program and achieved CTE concentrator level status or higher; or
- completed an MSDE-approved Career and Technology Education program.

As Maryland strives to expand CTE and apprenticeship programs, it is imperative that federal funding continues to provide a substantial amount of the funding for these programs. Therefore, MABE advocated for the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act in 2018. The new Perkins CTE Act includes reforms to support aligned and innovative academic and credentialing programs designed to advance 21st Century skills.

In conclusion, MABE opposes House Bill 1250 based on the provisions of the bill which would remove local board and school system discretion in a number of key areas. In order to remove MABE’s opposition to this bill, the following amendments are proposed:

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1250

On page 4, in line 19, strike “SHALL” and replace with “MAY”.

- Removes the mandate regarding how school systems use career readiness software for students pursuing post-secondary education and apprenticeships.

On page 4, strike beginning with “ON” in line 32 through “OPTIONS,” in line 33.

- Removes the mandate regarding how school systems make students aware of post-secondary education and apprenticeship opportunities.

Strike beginning with line 10 on page 5 through line 6 on page 6, in its entirety.

- Removes the prohibition on school system governance of contract schools regarding CTE courses and credits toward graduation.

On page 7, strike beginning with line 1 through line 8, in its entirety.

- Removes the mandate and condition on how school systems determine which student assessments to pay for.

Strike beginning with line 20 on page 8 through line 16 on page 9, in its entirety.

- Removes the prohibition on school system governance of charter schools regarding CTE courses and credits toward graduation.