

**Chapter 28A.700 RCW**  
**SECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

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**RCW 28A.700.005 Findings—Intent—2008 c 170.** (1) The legislature finds that many secondary career and technical education programs have made progress in retooling for the twenty-first century by aligning with state and nationally certified programs that meet industry standards and by increasing the rigor of academic content in core skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

(2) However, the legislature also finds that increased expectations for students to meet the state's academic learning standards require students to take remedial courses. The state board of education is considering increasing credit requirements for high school graduation. Together these policies could restrict students from pursuing high quality career and technical education programs because students would not have adequate time in their schedules to enroll in a progressive sequence of career and technical courses.

(3) The legislature further finds that teachers, counselors, students, and parents are not well-informed about the opportunities presented by high quality career and technical education. Secondary career and technical education is not a stopping point but a beginning point for further education, including through a bachelor's degree. Secondary preapprenticeships and courses aligned to industry standards can lead directly to workforce entry as well as to additional education. Career and technical education is a proven strategy to engage and motivate students, including students at risk of dropping out of school entirely.

(4) Finally, the legislature finds that state policies have been piecemeal in support of career and technical education. Laws exist to require state approval of career and technical programs, but could be strengthened by requiring alignment with industry standards and focusing on high-demand fields. Tech prep consortia have developed articulation agreements for dual credit and smooth transitions between high schools and colleges, but agreements remain highly decentralized between individual faculty and individual schools. Laws require school districts to create equivalences between academic and career and technical courses, but more support and professional development is needed to expand these opportunities.

(5) Therefore it is the legislature's intent to identify the gaps in current laws and policies regarding secondary career and technical education and fill those gaps in a comprehensive fashion to create a coherent whole. This act seeks to increase the quality and rigor of secondary career and technical education, improve links to postsecondary education, encourage and facilitate academic instruction through career and technical courses, and expand access to and awareness of the opportunities offered by high quality career and technical education. [2008 c 170 § 1.]

**RCW 28A.700.010 Career and technical education—Plans—Standards—Technical assistance—Leadership development.**

(1) To ensure high quality career and technical programs, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall periodically review and approve the plans of local districts for the delivery of career and technical education. Standards for career and technical programs shall be established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall develop a schedule for career and technical education plan reapproval under this section that includes an abbreviated review process for programs reapproved after 2005, but before June 12, 2008. All school district career and technical education programs must meet the requirements of this section by August 31, 2010.

(2) To receive approval, school district plans must:

(a) Demonstrate how career and technical education programs will ensure academic rigor; align with the state's education reform requirements; help address the skills gap of Washington's economy; and maintain strong relationships with local career and technical education advisory councils for the design and delivery of career and technical education;

(b) Demonstrate a strategy to align the five-year planning requirement under the federal Carl Perkins act with the state and district career and technical program planning requirements that include:

(i) An assessment of equipment and technology needs to support the skills training of technical students;

(ii) An assessment of industry internships required for teachers to ensure the ability to prepare students for industry-defined standards or certifications, or both;

(iii) An assessment of the costs of supporting job shadows, mentors, community service and industry internships, and other activities for student learning in the community;

(iv) A description of the leadership activities to be provided for technical education students; and

(v) Annual local school board approval;

(c) Demonstrate that all preparatory career and technical education courses offered by the district meet the requirements of RCW 28A.700.030;

(d) Demonstrate progress toward meeting or exceeding the targets established under RCW 28A.700.040 of an increased number of career and technical programs in high-demand fields; and

(e) Demonstrate that approved career and technical programs maximize opportunities for students to earn dual credit for high school and college.

(3) To ensure high quality career education programs and services in secondary schools, the office of the superintendent of public instruction may provide technical assistance to local districts and develop state guidelines for the delivery of career guidance in secondary schools.

(4) To ensure leadership development, the staff of the office of the superintendent of public instruction may serve as the state advisors to Washington state FFA, Washington future business leaders of America, Washington DECA, Washington SkillsUSA, Washington family, career and community leaders, and Washington technology students association, and any additional career or technical student organizations that are formed. Working with the directors or executive secretaries of these organizations, the office of the superintendent of public instruction may develop tools for the coordination of leadership activities with the curriculum of technical education programs.

(5) As used in this section, "career and technical education" means a planned program of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options; supports basic academic and life skills; and enables achievement of high academic standards, leadership, options for high skill, high wage employment preparation, and advanced and continuing education. [2008 c 170 § 101; 2001 c 336 § 2. Formerly RCW 28C.04.100.]

#### **RCW 28A.700.020 List of statewide high-demand programs—**

**Definitions.** (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the workforce training and education coordinating board, the Washington state apprenticeship and training council, and the state board for community and technical colleges, shall develop a list of statewide high-demand programs for secondary career and technical education. The list shall be developed using the high-demand list maintained by workforce development councils in consultation with the employment security department, and the high employer demand programs of study identified by the workforce training and education coordinating board. Local school districts may recommend additional high-demand programs in consultation with local career and technical education advisory committees by submitting evidence of local high demand.

(2) As used in this section and in RCW 28A.700.040, 28A.700.050, and 28A.700.060, and \*section 307 of this act:

(a) "High-demand program" means a career and technical education program that prepares students for either a high employer demand program of study or a high-demand occupation, or both.

(b) "High employer demand program of study" means an apprenticeship or an undergraduate or graduate certificate or degree

program in which the number of students per year prepared for employment from in-state programs is substantially fewer than the number of projected job openings per year in that field, either statewide or in a substate region.

(c) "High-demand occupation" means an occupation with a substantial number of current or projected employment opportunities. [2012 c 229 § 802; 2008 c 170 § 102.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Section 307 of this act was vetoed.

**Effective date—2012 c 229 §§ 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904:** See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

**RCW 28A.700.030 Preparatory secondary career and technical education programs—Criteria.** All approved preparatory secondary career and technical education programs must meet the following minimum criteria:

(1) Either:

(a) Lead to a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized by trades, industries, or other professional associations as necessary for employment or advancement in that field; or

(b) Allow students to earn dual credit for high school and college through career and technical education, advanced placement, or other agreements or programs;

(2) Be comprised of a sequenced progression of multiple courses that are technically intensive and rigorous; and

(3) Lead to workforce entry, state or nationally approved apprenticeships, or postsecondary education in a related field. [2022 c 75 § 6; 2008 c 170 § 103; 2006 c 115 § 2. Formerly RCW 28C.04.110.]

**RCW 28A.700.040 Performance measures and targets—Improvement plans—Denial of approval or reapproval of program.** (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish performance measures and targets and monitor the performance of career and technical education programs in at least the following areas:

(a) Student participation in and completion of high-demand programs as identified under RCW 28A.700.020;

(b) Students earning dual credit for high school and college; and

(c) Performance measures and targets established by the workforce training and education coordinating board, including but not limited to student academic and technical skill attainment, graduation rates, postgraduation employment or enrollment in postsecondary education, and other measures and targets as required by the federal Carl Perkins act, as amended.

(2) If a school district fails to meet the performance targets established under this section, the office of the superintendent of public instruction may require the district to submit an improvement plan. If a district fails to implement an improvement plan or continues to fail to meet the performance targets for three consecutive years, the office of the superintendent of public instruction may use this failure as the basis to deny the approval or reapproval of one or more of the district's career and technical education programs. [2008 c 170 § 104.]

**RCW 28A.700.050 Grants to develop or upgrade high-demand career and technical education programs.** Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grants to middle schools, high schools, or skill centers, to develop or upgrade high-demand career and technical education programs as identified under RCW 28A.700.020. Grant funds shall be allocated on a one-time basis and may be used to purchase or improve curriculum, create preapprenticeship programs, upgrade technology and equipment to meet industry standards, and for other purposes intended to initiate a new program or improve the rigor and quality of a high-demand program. Priority in allocating the funds shall be given to programs that are also considered high cost due to the types of technology and equipment necessary to maintain industry certification. Priority shall also be given to programs considered in most high demand in the state or applicable region. [2008 c 170 § 105.]

**RCW 28A.700.060 Model career and technical education programs.**

(1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, the workforce training and education coordinating board, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the council of presidents shall work with local school districts, workforce education programs in colleges, tech prep consortia, and four-year institutions of higher education to develop model career and technical education programs of study as described by this section.

(2) Career and technical education programs of study:

(a) Incorporate secondary and postsecondary education elements;

(b) Include coherent and rigorous academic content aligned with state learning standards and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, nonduplicative progression of courses that are aligned with postsecondary education in a related field;

(c) Include opportunities for students to earn dual high school and college credit; and

(d) Lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

(3) During the 2008-09 school year, model career and technical education programs of study shall be developed for the following high-demand programs: Construction, health care, and information technology. Each school year thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the workforce training and education coordinating board shall select additional programs of study to develop, with a priority on high-demand programs as identified under RCW 28A.700.020. [2012 c 229 § 803; 2008 c 170 § 107.]

**Effective date—2012 c 229 §§ 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904:** See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

**RCW 28A.700.070 Course equivalencies for career and technical courses—Curriculum frameworks and course lists—Grants to increase academic rigor—Technical working group.** (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall support school district

efforts under RCW 28A.230.097 to adopt course equivalencies for career and technical courses by:

(a) Recommending career and technical curriculum suitable for course equivalencies;

(b) Publicizing best practices for high schools and school districts in developing and adopting course equivalencies; and

(c) In consultation with the Washington association for career and technical education, providing professional development, technical assistance, and guidance for school districts seeking to expand their lists of equivalent courses.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide professional development, technical assistance, and guidance for school districts to develop career and technical course equivalencies that also qualify as advanced placement courses.

(3) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with one or more technical working groups convened for this purpose, shall develop and, after an opportunity for public comment, approve curriculum frameworks for a selected list of career and technical courses that may be offered by high schools or skill centers whose academic standards content is considered equivalent in full or in part to the academic courses that meet high school graduation requirements. These courses may include equivalency to English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, world languages, or health and physical education. The content of the courses must be aligned with the most current Washington K-12 learning standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, arts, world languages, health and physical education, social studies, and required industry standards. The first list of courses under this subsection must be developed and approved before the 2015-16 school year. Thereafter, the superintendent of public instruction may periodically update or revise the list of courses using the process in this subsection.

(4) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grant funds to school districts to increase the integration and rigor of academic instruction in career and technical courses. Grant recipients are encouraged to use grant funds to support teams of academic and technical teachers. The superintendent of public instruction may require that grant recipients provide matching resources using federal Carl Perkins funds or other fund sources.

(5) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall convene a technical working group to develop a course equivalency crosswalk for technology-based competitive student activities that complies with the equivalency and content requirements established in subsection (3) of this section. This technical working group shall include educators from school districts or educational service districts that have experience with technology-based competitive student activities. The superintendent of public instruction shall develop and approve course equivalencies to include in the updated list established in subsection (3) of this section based on the work of the technical working group. [2023 c 407 § 4. Prior: 2018 c 191 § 1; 2018 c 177 § 304; 2014 c 217 § 101; 2008 c 170 § 201.]

**Finding—Intent—2018 c 177:** See note following RCW 28A.305.905.

**Finding—Intent—2014 c 217:** See note following RCW 28A.150.220.

**RCW 28A.700.080 Awareness campaign for career and technical education.**

(1) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall develop and conduct an ongoing campaign for career and technical education to increase awareness among teachers, counselors, students, parents, principals, school administrators, and the general public about the opportunities offered by rigorous career and technical education programs. Messages in the campaign shall emphasize career and technical education as a high quality educational pathway for students, including for students who seek advanced education that includes a bachelor's degree or beyond. In particular, the office shall provide information about the following:

(a) The model career and technical education programs of study developed under RCW 28A.700.060;

(b) Career and technical education course equivalencies and dual credit for high school and college;

(c) The availability of scholarships for postsecondary workforce education, including the Washington award for vocational excellence, and apprenticeships through the opportunity grant program under RCW 28B.50.271, grants under RCW 28A.700.090, and other programs; and

(d) Education, apprenticeship, and career opportunities in emerging and high-demand programs.

(2) The office shall use multiple strategies in the campaign depending on available funds, including developing an interactive website to encourage and facilitate career exploration; conducting training and orientation for guidance counselors and teachers; and developing and disseminating printed materials.

(3) The office shall seek advice, participation, and financial assistance from the workforce training and education coordinating board, higher education institutions, foundations, employers, apprenticeship and training councils, workforce development councils, and business and labor organizations for the campaign. [2019 c 252 § 116; 2008 c 170 § 301.]

**Intent—2019 c 252:** See note following RCW 28A.655.250.

**RCW 28A.700.090 Grants for state or industry certification testing fees.**

(1) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide grants to eligible students to offset the costs of required examination or testing fees associated with obtaining state or industry certification in the student's career and technical education program.

(2) The office shall establish maximum grant amounts and a process for students to apply for the grants.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "eligible student" means:

(a) A student enrolled in a secondary career and technical education program where state or industry certification can be obtained without additional postsecondary work or study; or

(b) A student who completed a secondary career and technical education program in a Washington public school and is seeking state or industry certification in a program requiring additional postsecondary work or study or where there are age limitations on certification.

(4) Eligible students must have a family income that is at or below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level using the most current guidelines available from the United States department of health and human services. [2008 c 170 § 302.]

**RCW 28A.700.100 Entry-level aerospace assembler training program  
—Grants to high schools—Selection criteria—Data collection by**

**education data center—Reports.** (1)(a) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grants to high schools to implement a training program to prepare students for employment as entry-level aerospace assemblers. Grant funds must be allocated on a one-time basis and may be used to purchase or improve course curriculum, purchase course equipment, and support professional development for course teachers. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall consult and team with the community and technical colleges' center of excellence for aerospace and advanced materials manufacturing regarding the developing aerospace program of study and industry career needs. This information must assist the office of the superintendent of public instruction in refining specific aspects to the criteria in (b) of this subsection and leveraging advantages and opportunities for students in selected high schools.

(b) The superintendent of public instruction must select grant recipients based on the criteria in this subsection (1)(b). This is a competitive grant process. Successful high school applicants must:

(i) Demonstrate engaged and committed high school and district leadership and faculty in support of the aerospace assembler program;

(ii) Demonstrate capacity to offer the program and maximize the use of grant resources addressing: Availability of appropriate physical space, meeting program technology requirements, providing projected enrollment from the high school as well as from other area high schools as appropriate, planned hours and days each week the program is to be offered, and other specific program requirements set forth by the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(iii) Demonstrate linkages to programs at local community and technical colleges and private technical schools to provide a seamless pathway for students to continue their education and career preparation beyond high school;

(iv) Demonstrate a history of successful partnerships within the community and partner support for implementing an entry-level aerospace assembler program that includes one or more of the following: Apprenticeships, supplying materials, instruction support, internships, mentorships, and other program components;

(v) Provide the plan for program implementation that includes a beginning date for first classes as well as plans for recruiting and retaining students in the course; and

(vi) Demonstrate capacity to continue the program in years succeeding the initial grant year.

(2) The education data center in the office of financial management must collect aerospace assembler program student participation and completion data for grant recipient high schools. The center must follow students to employment or further training and education in the two years following the students' completion of the program. Findings must be reported beginning in January 2014 and each January thereafter through January 2018 to the governor, the office of



the superintendent of public instruction, other appropriate state agencies, and the appropriate education and fiscal committees of the legislature. [2011 2nd sp.s. c 1 § 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 2nd sp.s. c 1:** "The legislature finds that careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are critically important to the state's economy and will grow in importance in the future. The vitality of STEM product and process development, manufacturing, international trade, and research are dependent on a well-educated, trained, creative workforce. The legislature also finds that there are current employment opportunities and projected high employer demands in STEM careers. The legislature further finds that the interdisciplinary connections of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics taught in integrated, applied, and hands-on courses not only deepens content understanding but also extends and expands that learning to thoughtful and creative problem-solving practices on the assembly line, in the laboratory, and at the drawing board.

It is the intent of the legislature to support STEM education programs to help increase the number of Washingtonians prepared to enter STEM career fields. It is also the intent of the legislature to support courses and programs that begin in high school and build upon one another so that technical certifications and degrees are connected from high schools and skill centers to community and technical colleges and four-year universities." [2011 2nd sp.s. c 1 § 1.]

**RCW 28A.700.110 Enhanced manufacturing skills programs—Grants to skill centers—Selection criteria—Data collection by education data center—Reports.** (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grants to skill centers to implement enhanced manufacturing skills programs. Grant funds must be allocated on a one-time basis and may be used to purchase or improve program curriculum, purchase course equipment, and support professional development for program teachers. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall consult and team with the community and technical colleges' center of excellence for aerospace and advanced materials manufacturing regarding the developing aerospace program of study and industry career needs as well as other community and technical college manufacturing programs. This information must assist the office of the superintendent of public instruction in refining specific aspects to the criteria in subsection (2) of this section and leveraging advantages and opportunities for students in selected skill centers.

(2) The superintendent of public instruction must select grant recipients based on the criteria in this subsection (2). This is a competitive grant process. Successful skill center applicants must:

(a) Demonstrate that enhanced manufacturing skills programs meet industry certification standards;

(b) Demonstrate engaged and committed skill center and school district leadership and faculty in support of the program;

(c) Demonstrate capacity to offer the enhanced manufacturing skills programs and maximize the use of grant resources addressing: Availability of appropriate physical space, meeting program technology requirements, providing projected enrollment from area high schools and students from area community and technical colleges if space is

available, planned hours and days each week the program is to be offered, and other specific program requirements set forth by the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(d) Demonstrate linkages to programs at local community and technical colleges and private technical schools to provide a seamless pathway for students to continue their education and career preparation beyond high school;

(e) Demonstrate a history of successful partnerships within the community and partner support for implementing an enhanced manufacturing skills program that includes one or more of the following: Apprenticeships, supplying materials, instruction support, internships, mentorships, and other program components;

(f) Provide the plan for program implementation that includes a beginning date for first classes as well as plans for recruiting and retaining students in the program; and

(g) Demonstrate capacity to continue the program in years succeeding the initial grant year.

(3) The education research center in the office of financial management must collect enhanced manufacturing skills programs student participation and completion data for grant recipient skill centers. The center must follow students to employment or further training and education in the two years following the students' completion of the program. Findings must be reported beginning in January 2014 and each January thereafter through January 2018 to the governor, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, other appropriate state agencies, and the appropriate education and fiscal committees of the legislature. [2011 2nd sp.s. c 1 § 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 2nd sp.s. c 1:** See note following RCW 28A.700.100.

**RCW 28A.700.130 Career launch program funding.** (1) Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, to allow students to engage in learning outside of the school day or in a summer program, school districts shall be funded up to one and two-tenths full-time equivalents for career launch programs, as defined in RCW 28C.30.020.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall develop procedures to ensure that school districts do not report any student for more than one and two-tenths full-time equivalent students, combining both the student's high school enrollment and career launch enrollment. [2019 c 406 § 60.]

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 43.79.195.

**Findings—Short title—2019 c 406:** See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

**Findings—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 406:** See note following RCW 43.216.135.

**RCW 28A.700.140 Grants to initiate or improve health science programs.** (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish and administer a grant program for the purpose of supporting high school career and technical education programs in starting or expanding offerings in health science programs.

(2) Grants must be awarded through a competitive grant process administered by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. In developing award criteria, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must consult with the workforce training and education coordinating board and the Washington state apprenticeship and training council.

(3) Grant funds may be allocated on a one-time or ongoing basis dependent on the needs of the program and may be used to purchase or improve curriculum, add additional staff, upgrade technology and equipment to meet industry standards, and for other purposes intended to initiate a new health science program or improve the rigor and quality of an existing health science program. Priority must be given to grant applications that include partnerships between employers and exclusive bargaining representatives as sponsors or cosponsors.

(4) Programs receiving funds under this section must meet the minimum criteria for preparatory secondary career and technical education programs under RCW 28A.700.030. [2023 c 126 § 10.]

**Findings—2023 c 126:** See note following RCW 28B.50.800.

**RCW 28A.700.900 Short title.** This chapter may be known and cited as the career and technical education act. [2008 c 170 § 406.]