



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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**DUAL ENROLLMENT FOR CAREER
AND TECH PREP PROGRAMS**

**House Bill 5534 as enrolled
Public Act 258 of 2000
Second Analysis (6-9-00)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Lauren Hager
House Committee: Education
Senate Committee: Education**

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

New technologic tools used for the design, manufacture, and distribution of goods have changed the world of work for nearly all Americans during the past two decades. The invention of the computer has, as it has matured, thrust us into a new economy that continues to develop in what has come to be called the information age. These changes in the economy require differently educated workers.

According to the 1998 Governor's Report to the Legislature entitled "Gold Collar Jobs: The Future of Michigan," the percentage of management and professional jobs which usually required a four-year college degree will remain relatively constant over the next decade. However, the percentage of jobs that require skills training will increase dramatically, while the percentage of jobs that go to unskilled workers will shrink. The report observes that this phenomena will create more "gold-collar" jobs, which are defined as those jobs within high-wage, high-skill, high-demand occupations.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor estimates significant increases in certain information technology positions. For example, while there were 506,000 systems analysts four years ago in 1996, employment for systems analysts is expected to increase by 103 percent, to 1,025,000 by the year 2006. Similarly, the number of computer engineers and computer scientists stood at 427,000 in 1996 and is expected to increase 114 percent, to 912,000 by the year 2006.

The growth in high-skilled jobs has not been limited to the computer field. The number of workers in precision production grew 20 percent from 1991 to 1996, while engineering and management services grew 44 percent over a similar period. Machine tool operator positions are expected to grow by over 50

percent before 2005, physical therapists by 74 percent, and pipelayers and fitters by 32 percent.

According to reports, the number of good-paying occupations in the Midwest that do not require a four-year college degree outpaces those that do. However, all of the 10 top jobs for which a degree is not necessary require technical training, including employment as millwrights, appliance repairers, tool and die makers, and science technicians. In addition, job growth is expected for drafters, electricians, carpenters, machine tool makers, some computer technicians, programmers, and computer network administrators.

Although many new employment opportunities appear imminent, few of them will be available to workers who are improperly educated or inadequately trained. Indeed, according to Michigan Future Inc., 1997, one in ten information technology jobs in the United States is currently unfilled, creating a stunning industry-wide unemployment rate of negative 10 to 15 percent. Further, the rate is falling, not rising, and more jobs are expected to be created in these fields. Consequently, and even as early as 1996, the unemployment rate for skilled production, crafts, and repair workers in Michigan was below the average for all workers in general, demonstrating the need that industry has for skilled employees.

In Michigan, an education that prepares a student for employment in high-skill work customarily begins in high school, often at a regional vocational technical center, and then continues two years beyond high school graduation in one of the state's 29 community colleges. These curricular options are sometimes called 'tech prep' (or technical preparation) courses of study because they concentrate the student's education and training on learning the sorts of information and

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knowledge that can be immediately helpful in the high-skill world of work. According to committee testimony, several of the state's community colleges have already re-designed their education programs as state-of-the-art 'tech prep' business training sites, and have developed their curriculum, instruction, and evaluation in league with corporate employers in the business community.

The need for literate and numerate workers who understand and use the most recent design and computing tools will require continually renewing educational opportunities of the sort that can incorporate thinking that relies on the most recently gained understanding of those technologies when they are utilized to their full capacity. Public schools too seldom provide these kinds of educational opportunities.

While the core technology of public schools has been and likely will continue to be teaching and learning within the subject matter disciplines, some observe that what is needed is new thinking within those disciplines--the kind of thinking that accommodates authentic problem-solving and that relies on more highly technologic tools. They argue that this kind of learning should be more present in Michigan schools, especially since businesses can employ students who are trained in this way. One way to accomplish this aim is to more closely connect the job skills training and education that already is available at the state's 29 community colleges with a larger array of highly technologic vocational opportunities in high schools and regional career and technical centers. To that end, legislation has been introduced to allow dual enrollment in high school and community colleges, and to more closely articulate the vocational curriculum at the three sites so that students seeking state-of-the-art employment training can more easily move between the three educational institutions.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would create the Career and Technical Preparation Act to do the following:

- allow an eligible student to enroll in, and receive payment by his or her school district of all or part of eligible charges for, an eligible course offered by a career and technical preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution;

- provide that an eligible student would be responsible for charges not paid by the school district, and for

repayment of charges paid by the district if he or she did not complete a course;

- allow an eligible student to receive high school credit or postsecondary credit, or both, for an eligible course;

- require school districts to provide information to all high school students on the career and technical preparation enrollment options, and to provide counseling services to eligible students and their parents; and,

- require intermediate school districts to collect certain information and report it to the Department of Education, and impose reporting requirements on the Department of Career Development.

The bill also would repeal Section 13 of the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, which provides for that act to sunset on June 30, 2001.

The proposed act would take effect April 1, 2001, and would be repealed June 30, 2006. Payment of all or part of eligible charges for eligible courses would have to begin in the state fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2001.

"Career and technical preparation program" would mean a program that taught a trade, occupation, or vocation and that was operated by an eligible postsecondary educational institution located in this state. "Eligible postsecondary educational institution" would mean a state university, community college, or independent nonprofit degree-granting college or university that was located in this state and chose to comply with the proposed act.

Enrollment. The bill states that the purpose of the act would be "to provide a wider variety of options to high school pupils by encouraging and enabling qualified pupils to enroll in courses or programs in career and technical preparation programs at eligible postsecondary institutions".

Upon request by an eligible student, the school district in which he or she was enrolled would have to give the student a letter signed by his or her principal indicating the student's eligibility under the bill. ("Eligible student" would mean a student enrolled in at least one high school class in at least grade 11 in a school district in this state, except a foreign exchange pupil enrolled in a school district under a cultural exchange program, who was making satisfactory progress in meeting local attendance and graduation requirements. A school

district also could require that the student achieve state endorsement in at least one subject area under Section 1279 of the Revised School Code (which requires schools to administer state assessments to high school students in the subject areas of communications skills, mathematics, science, and social studies). “School district” would mean a school district, local act school district, or public school academy, as defined in the Revised School Code.)

An eligible student could apply to a career and technical preparation program to enroll in one or more eligible courses offered by that program and, if accepted, could enroll in one or more of those courses. (“Eligible course” would mean a course offered by a career and technical preparation program that was not offered through the school district, intermediate school district, or area vocational-technical education program in which the eligible student was enrolled, or that was offered through that district or program but was determined by its governing board not to be available to the student because of a scheduling conflict beyond the student’s control; that was a career and technical preparation course not ordinarily taken as an activity course; that was a course that the career and technical preparation program normally applied toward satisfaction of certificate, degree, or program completion requirements; and that was not a hobby craft or recreational course.)

Within a reasonable time after registration, the career and technical preparation program would have to send written notice to the eligible student and his or her school district. The notice would have to indicate the student’s course or courses and hours of enrollment. The program also would have to notify the student about tuition, fees, books, materials, and other related charges, as determined by the program, in its customary manner, and would have to notify the student of the estimated amount of the eligible charges that would be billed to the school district. (“Eligible charges” would mean tuition and mandatory course fees, material fees, and registration fees required by a career and technical preparation program for enrollment in an eligible course. Eligible charges also would include any late fees charged by a program due to the school district’s failure to make a required payment according to a timetable prescribed under the bill. Eligible charges would not include transportation or parking costs or activity fees.)

Billing and Payment. Unless otherwise agreed between a career and technical preparation program and a school district, after the expiration of the program’s drop/add period for a course, the program would have to send a bill to an eligible student’s school district detailing the eligible charges for each eligible course in which the student was enrolled.

Upon receiving the bill, the school district would have to pay to the program on the student’s behalf an amount equal to the lesser of 1) the amount of the eligible charges or 2) the prorated percentage of the state portion of the foundation allowance paid on behalf of that student, with the proration based on the proportion of the school year that the student attended the career and technical preparation program. A school district could pay more money to a program than required under the bill, and could use local school operating revenue for that purpose. The student would be responsible for paying the remainder of the costs associated with his or her enrollment in the program that exceeded the amount the school district was required to pay and that was not paid by the district.

A career and technical preparation program could not charge a late fee to an eligible student or a school district for a payment that was made in compliance with the timetable prescribed under the bill, even if the program otherwise would consider the payment late.

If an eligible student did not complete an eligible course in which he or she had enrolled, and if the school district had paid for the course on the student’s behalf, all of the following would apply:

- a) The program would have to forward to the district any funds that were refundable due to noncompletion of the course. If applicable, the district then would have to forward to the student any refunded money in excess of the amount paid by the district.
- b) The student would be required to repay the school district any funds that were expended by the district for the course that were not refunded to the school district by the career and technical preparation program. If the student did not repay this money, the school district could impose sanctions against the student as determined by the district’s policy. This provision would not apply to a student who did not complete the course due to a family or medical emergency, as determined by the career and technical preparation program.

If a school district paid for books for an eligible student for a career and technical preparation course, the books would be the property of the district and would have to be turned over to it after the student completed the course.

A school district could require an eligible student to provide, on a form supplied by the district, reasonable verification that he or she was regularly attending a career and technical preparation course under the bill.

Course Credit. An eligible student could enroll in, and receive payment by the school district of all or part of eligible charges for, an eligible course for high school credit or postsecondary credit, or both. When a student enrolled in a career and technical preparation course, he or she would have to designate whether the course was for high school or postsecondary credit, or both, and notify his or her high school and the career and technical preparation program of that designation. A student taking more than one eligible course could make different credit designations for different courses. A student could not audit a course in which he or she was enrolled under the bill.

A school district would have to grant academic credit to an eligible student enrolled in an eligible course for high school credit if he or she successfully completed the course, as determined by the career and technical preparation program. The district would have to determine the amount of high school credit granted.

The high school credits granted to an eligible student under the bill would have to be counted toward the district's graduation requirements and subject area requirements. Evidence of successful completion of each course and high school credits granted would have to be included in the student's high school record. Subject to the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, a career and technical preparation program would have to give the school district a copy of the student's grade in each course taken for high school credit under the bill. Upon the student's request, his or her high school record and transcript would have to include evidence of successful completion and postsecondary credits granted for a course taken for postsecondary credit. In either case, the student's high school record and transcript would have to indicate that the credits were earned at a career and technical preparation program and identify the program.

If a student enrolled in a career and technical preparation program after leaving high school, the program, in accordance with institutional policy, would

have to award postsecondary credit for postsecondary courses successfully completed by the student for high school credit at that program. A program could not charge a student for credit awarded under this provision.

Provision of Information and Counseling

Each school district would have to provide information to all high school students on the career and technical preparation enrollment options under the bill, including the following:

- enrollment eligibility;
- the programs and types of courses eligible for participation;
- the decision-making process for granting academic credits;
- an explanation of eligible charges that the district would pay, and of financial arrangements for eligible charges and for paying costs not paid by the district;
- eligibility for payment of all or part of eligible charges by the district;
- an explanation that, if the student qualified for payment of all or part of eligible charges by the district, the district would pay that support directly to the program upon being billed by it, and the student would not be responsible for that payment but would be responsible for paying costs not paid under the bill, and could be responsible for repayment to the district if he or she enrolled in a course but did not complete it;
- available support services;
- the need to arrange an appropriate schedule;
- consequences of failing or not completing a career and technical preparation course in which the student enrolled;
- the effect of enrolling in a postsecondary course on the student's ability to complete the required high school graduation requirements;
- an explanation of how the parent or legal guardian of a student in grade 10 or above could request that the student be allowed to take a test or assessment used for State endorsement early in order to qualify as an eligible student; and,

-the academic and social responsibilities that the student and his or her parent or guardian would have to assume.

To the extent possible, a school district would have to provide counseling services to an eligible student and his or her parent or guardian before the student enrolled in a career and technical preparation course under the bill, to ensure that they were fully aware of the benefits, risks, and possible consequences of enrolling in the course. The person providing the counseling would have to encourage the student and his or her parent or guardian also to use available counseling services at the career and technical preparation program before the quarter or semester of enrollment to ensure that anticipated plans were appropriate. A district could provide the required counseling in a group meeting if additional personalized counseling also were made available.

Before enrolling in an eligible course at a career and technical preparation program, an eligible student and his or her parent or guardian would have to file with the program a signed form provided by the district stating that the student was an eligible student and had received the required information and counseling, and that the student understood the responsibilities that would have to be assumed in enrolling in the course. The student and his or her parent or guardian also would have to file with the district a signed form agreeing that, if the student enrolled in but did not complete an eligible course, he or she would repay the district as required in the bill. Upon request, the Department of Career Development (DCD) would have to provide technical assistance to a school district and to a career and technical preparation program in developing appropriate forms and counseling guidelines.

By May 1, 2001, and by March 1 of each succeeding year, a school district would have to provide general information about the career and technical preparation enrollment options under the bill to all pupils in grade eight or higher.

Reporting. Each ISD annually would have to collect from each of its constituent school districts, and provide to the Department of Education at the same time it submitted the annual comprehensive financial report required under the State School Aid Act, information for the immediately preceding school year on all of the following:

-the amount of money spent by the school district for payments required under the bill;

-the number of eligible students who were enrolled in the district and the number of them who enrolled in one or more eligible courses and received payment of all or part of eligible charges, both in the aggregate and by grade level;

-the percentage of the district's enrollment represented by those eligible students, in the aggregate and by grade level; and,

-the total number of eligible courses for which the district made payment under the bill, the number of those courses for which postsecondary credit was granted, the number for which high school credit was granted, and the number that were not completed by the eligible student.

By March 1 each year, the Department of Career Development would have to prepare and submit to the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies and the Department of Management and Budget a summary annual report on this information. The Department of Education would have to work cooperatively with the DCD in preparing this report.

Other Provisions. The bill's provisions concerning enrollment, billing, and payment would not apply to any career and technical preparation courses in which an eligible student was enrolled in addition to being enrolled full-time in his or her school district; to a career and technical preparation course an eligible student was retaking after failing to achieve a satisfactory grade; or to a course contrary to the bill's eligibility provisions. In determining full-time enrollment in a school district under the bill or full-time equated membership under the State School Aid Act, for a pupil enrolled in a career and technical preparation program, the pupil's enrollment in both the program and the school district would have to be counted as enrollment in the school district, and a pupil could not be considered enrolled in a district less than full-time solely because of the effect of his or her enrollment in one or more career and technical preparation courses, including necessary travel time, on the number of class hours provided by the district to the pupil.

A school district would have to make available to an eligible student enrolled in the district copies of all correspondence in the district's possession regarding

the student's participation in a career and technical preparation course. The district would have to keep this correspondence for at least one year.

The bill specifies that it would not require a school district to pay or otherwise provide financial support for transportation or parking costs necessary for an eligible student to participate in a career and technical preparation program. A district would not be liable for any injury incurred by an eligible student that was related to transportation necessary for the student to participate in a program.

An eligible student enrolled in a career and technical preparation program could not participate in intercollegiate athletics while he or she was enrolled in the program. A student who violated this provision would forfeit his or her eligibility under the bill.

A career and technical preparation program could give priority to its postsecondary students when enrolling eligible students in career and technical preparation courses for high school credit only. Once an eligible student had been enrolled in a career and technical preparation course, the program could not displace him or her with another student.

The bill states that it would not restrict the ability of an eligible student or any other pupil to enroll in any career and technical preparation program without tuition and fee support under the bill.

The Department of Career Development could promulgate rules it considered necessary to implement the bill.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Senate Fiscal Agency notes that the bill would have a fiscal impact on local school districts participating in the proposed career and technical preparation program. Students selecting to enroll in this dual enrollment program at an eligible postsecondary educational institution would be eligible to have all or a portion of their tuition paid by the local school district. A district would be required to pay for the portion of the eligible student's tuition for the program equal to the lesser of the amount of the charges, or the prorated percentage of the state portion of the foundation allowance paid on behalf of that student. Any tuition costs exceeding the amount paid by the local school district would be the responsibility of the student.

The exact fiscal impact for a local school district is indeterminate and depends on the number of students from that district who would participate in the program. As a comparison, 6,500 students participated in the current dual enrollment program offered by local school districts, according to fiscal year 1998-99 figures. The estimated total state cost for those students in those programs was just over \$3,000,000. These costs are the amounts paid by local school districts from their foundation allowance revenues for those pupils.

In addition, the Departments of Career Development and Education would have to collect and report data submitted by school districts, as required in the bill. Although this would be an additional responsibility to the departments, the existing funding should be sufficient to cover any additional costs associated with this bill. (5-25-00)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

This legislation will help students transfer more easily from high school to community college and then on to the world of work. The series of transitions between school and work can be a nearly seamless progression, if the career and 'tech prep' vocational education opportunities in schools can be more closely aligned with jobs available in business corporations. However, it is clear that businesses need employees who are differently educated than those prepared by the traditional academic school curriculum. For example, some corporations report there are unfilled jobs in the highly technologic skilled trades, and it seems likely those jobs will continue to stand empty until Michigan's high school students have more opportunities to graduate from state-of-the-art 'tech prep' programs. Employers report that they need literate and numerate workers who can understand and use the most recent design and computing tools. In order to learn these kinds of skills, a student should be able to begin a course of study in high school and then continue beyond high school graduation to study an additional two years in a community college. An explicit dual enrollment policy that encourages well-prepared high schoolers to take course work in both high school and the local community college can give students the enrollment flexibility they need in order to move between the two instructional sites in educationally effective and cost-efficient ways.

For:

It has long been state policy to allow upper level high school students dual enrollment in high school and community colleges (and sometimes, although not as frequently, in universities) for academic course work. This legislation extends that option to career and tech-prep education students, making their studies in high schools and local postsecondary institutions easier to pursue. As amended in the House Education Committee, the bill does *not* allow dual enrollment in high school and proprietary schools, but instead limits the dual enrollment to eligible postsecondary institutions such as community colleges whose high-skill programs are designed in conjunction with corporate employers so they can better prepare youngsters for the world of work where high-paying, high-skill jobs too often go unfilled.

Against:

The repayment provisions in this bill and in House Bill 5786, which would amend the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act in a similar manner, would punish students for attempting to take college-level courses and perhaps failing. These provisions would surely discourage students from less well-off families from taking advantage of the opportunities afforded under the two acts. According to the Department of Education, students signed up for over 10,000 postsecondary courses during the 1998-99 school year. Of those, only about 200 courses were not completed. Figures were not cited as to how many of these were fully, partially or not refunded. But the overall percentage of courses dropped is clearly minimal, thus raising the question as to the significance of the alleged problem of students irresponsibly signing up for courses and then dropping them after the deadline for refunds has passed.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.