



PROPOSED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Last week, the 30-day public comment period on the State Board of Education's proposal to change high school graduation requirements in Pennsylvania concluded. Unless stopped by the General Assembly, by passing harmful language that would halt the regulatory review process, the State Board of Education is now charged with reviewing all comments on its proposal.

At a recent House Education Committee meeting on the Board's proposal, a question arose about the fairness of subjecting Career and Technical Education (CTE) students to the proposed new accountability requirements.

The state academic standards represent the core concepts and competencies that **all** students, regardless of their next steps in life, must master by the end of high school. In today's global skill-based economy, people change jobs at dizzying rates, and jobs change and become more technologically advanced just as fast. All workers – including those in career/technical occupations and trades -- need a strong foundation of academic skills to continue learning and upgrading their job skills to meet the needs of the job market.

CTE students do not deserve a second-rate education, nor do they deserve a second-rate diploma. Long gone are the days when career/technical education – or vo-tech as it was called back then – is a place to send only lower-performing students. CTE students need strong academics to be successful in today and tomorrow's career/technical programs -- which include nanofabrication, health-related technology, electronics, computer and web design, auto technology, and engineering, to name a few. Many of these programs include strong ties to postsecondary education allowing students to obtain credits and industry-recognized credentials, or go on to earn a 2- or 4-year degree.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.papartnerships.org/readyat21/index.asp>

The State Board of Education is proposing regulations that would revise high school graduation requirements to establish consistent statewide measurement of the minimum knowledge and skills that a public high school diploma signifies as well as a system of academic supports to help students achieve.

All young people in Pennsylvania should have the opportunity and education to build productive and successful lives for themselves and their families. Pennsylvania should hold all its high school students -- regardless of where they live, their race, income level, or future education or work-related aspirations -- to the same standards and assess them through comparable, validated tools.

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