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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

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<b>Bill No:</b>	SB 552	<b>Hearing Date:</b>	March 29, 2017
<b>Author:</b>	Fuller		
<b>Version:</b>	February 16, 2017		
<b>Urgency:</b>	No	<b>Fiscal:</b>	Yes
<b>Consultant:</b>	Brandon Darnell		

**Subject:** Career technical education: aptitude test

### SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE), by January 1, 2019, to develop or revise, or contract with an appropriate vendor to develop or revise, a new or existing career technical education (CTE) test for pupils that measures aptitudes, areas of interest, or both, with special emphasis on pupils in grades 6 to 8, inclusive. The bill requires CDE to post the test on its website for the public, including pupils and school districts, to access.

### BACKGROUND

Existing law requires adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to offer courses in CTE designed and conducted for the purpose of preparing youth for gainful employment in the occupations and in the numbers that are appropriate to the personnel needs of the state and the community served and relevant to the career desires and needs of the pupils. (Education Code § 51220)

Existing law establishes various CTE programs for public schools, including but not limited to, regional occupational centers and programs (ROC/Ps), partnership academies, adult education programs, and career technical education programs in high schools and community colleges. (EC § 52300 et seq., §52500 et seq., and §54690 et seq.)

The State Board of Education (SBE) adopted revised CTE standards January 2016 (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/ctemcstandards.asp>), which are organized into 15 industry sectors and identify the academic and technical requirements for different career pathways within each sector. The industry sectors are:

- 1) Agriculture and Natural Resources
- 2) Arts, Media, and Entertainment
- 3) Building and Construction Trades
- 4) Business and Finance
- 5) Education, Child Development, and Family Services
- 6) Energy, Environment, and Utilities

- 7) Engineering and Architecture
- 8) Fashion and Interior Design
- 9) Health Science and Medical Technology
- 10) Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation
- 11) Information and Communication Technologies
- 12) Manufacturing and Product Development
- 13) Marketing Sales and Service
- 14) Public Services
- 15) Transportation

Existing law requires any business, trade or professional association, union, or state or local governmental agency that operates, under the auspices of the local school district, a career preparatory program to award program completers a certificate of completion that supplements a high school diploma. (EC § 52336)

## ANALYSIS

This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) , by January 1, 2019, to develop or revise, or contract with an appropriate vendor to develop or revise, a new or existing career technical education (CTE) test for pupils that measures aptitudes, areas of interest, or both, with special emphasis on pupils in grades 6 to 8, inclusive. The bill requires CDE to post the test on its website for the public, including pupils and school districts, to access.

## STAFF COMMENTS

1. ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “[d]espite the recent emphasis California policymakers and educators have voiced on preparing high school graduates for college and career, most schools in California still focus the bulk of their time and financial resources on college preparatory education, not career education. According to the National Information Center for Higher Education, nearly 40 percent of California high school graduates do not go directly to college (<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?submeasure=63&year=2010&level=nation&mode=data&state=0>), and among those that start, a significant number do not finish. This proves the need for California High Schools to prepare graduates for careers NOT requiring a college degree. While a strong Career Technical Education program can provide pupils some exposure to non-college degree careers, these programs are typically found only on high school campuses, and each campus can only offer a limited number of programs. The limited exposure students have to careers can limit their ideas of what is possible, and this in turn can limit their dreams and opportunities. Contrast this

to a typical high school hallway or counseling office full of college pennants and posters, and the availability of brochures and even recruitment events, and one may see that public schools too often do not provide the sparks to ignite students' imagination with respect to non-college degree careers."

2. **Information to identify options to make decisions.** This bill requires the development of a new, or the revision of an existing, career technical education (CTE) test for pupils that measures aptitudes, areas of interest, or both, with special emphasis on pupils in grades 6 to 8, inclusive. According to the author, this "would help spark students' imaginations and lead them to fulfilling careers. It would provide an avenue for a student to discover his or her own skills and interests, and offer career options to match a student's unique profile." By providing special emphasis on students who have not yet reached high school, this bill could help parents and students identify the CTE areas of interest that best suit their individual skills and areas of interest. Parents and students could then use this information, if they so choose, to identify the high schools or course pathways that best suit their CTE interest areas.
3. **Author amendment.** The author would like to amend the bill to remove references to aptitude. **The committee recommends that the bill amended to reflect the author's intent.**
4. **Purely optional.** This bill requires only that the CTE areas of interest test be posted on the California Department of Education's website in a publicly accessible way. This could enable parents and students to use the test to inform their academic decisions, if they choose to use it. While school districts could access the tests and make it available to their students, the bill does not require students to take the CTE areas of interest test. **The Committee recommends that the bill be amended** to prohibit students from being required to take the CTE areas of interest test, either as a standalone requirement or as a requirement to enroll in any particular CTE course.
5. **Related Legislation.** SB 544 (McGuire) requires the California Department of Education to establish a process for identifying and evaluating locally developed formative assessment tools and other assessments, provide those tools and assessments to local educational agencies for use by educators, and support a regional network to provide support to local educational agencies for the implementation of the comprehensive assessment tools and resources related to the statewide testing program. SB 544 is scheduled to be heard in this Committee on March 29.

## SUPPORT

California Business Education Association

## OPPOSITION

None received.