

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 821 (Gipson)

As Amended August 28, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Eliminates the sunset on the authorization to use completion of a course in career technical education (CTE) to fulfill a course requirement to graduate from high school.

Senate Amendments

Add changes to avoid chaptering out recently enacted legislation.

COMMENTS

CTE graduation requirement option subject to sunset every five years. Current law allows students to fulfill a graduation requirement with a course in VAPA, world languages, or CTE. In 2010, when this option was established, there was some concern that this option would reduce enrollment in VAPA and world languages. Since then, this authorization has been extended twice, in 2016 and 2022, and each time the sunset has been extended no objections were raised. The authorization currently sunsets on July 1, 2027. The Assembly may wish to consider that, after fifteen years, the CTE course option has become institutionalized in school districts and is unlikely to sunset in the future.

Improved outcomes for CTE students. A wide body of research indicates that involvement in CTE coursework provides improved academic outcomes and other benefits to students, including the following:

- 1) Students with greater exposure to CTE are more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in a two-year college, be employed, and earn higher wages;
- 2) The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 93%, compared to an average national graduation rate of 80%;
- 3) Students taking more CTE classes are just as likely to pursue a four-year degree as their peers;
- 4) 91% of high school graduates who earned two to three CTE credits enrolled in college;
- 5) CTE provides the greatest boost to students who need it most – boys and students from low-income families; and

80% of students taking a college preparatory academic curriculum with rigorous CTE met college and career readiness goals, compared to only 63% of students taking the same academic core who did not experience rigorous CTE.

According to the Author

"Career Technical Education (CTE) empowers high school students with the skills and knowledge they need to explore careers, increase employability, and achieve higher graduation rates. Under current law, such students have the option of taking a CTE course to fulfill an

existing high school graduation requirement, but this is subject to sunset. By removing the sunset on this option for students, through AB 821, we ensure that future generations continue to benefit from these transformative opportunities, gaining not only technical expertise but also essential soft skills like critical thinking, communication, and ethical leadership—skills that are vital for success in today's workforce and beyond."

Arguments in Support

Project Lead the Way writes, "Students were first given a five-year authorization to use a CTE course to meet this graduation requirement, beginning with the 2012-13 school year. Since then, this authorization has been extended two additional times, to July 1, 2022 in 2016 and to July 1, 2027 in 2022. Acknowledging that this alternative gives students another choice in their education in order to help them stay engaged during high school, AB 821 would eliminate the need to continually extend this authorization by removing the sunset and, as a result, make the use of a CTE course to meet this requirement permanent.

Research shows that students who complete both an academic and a career technical education sequence of courses in high school have a higher likelihood of being enrolled in postsecondary education and being employed in professional, managerial, or skilled jobs. AB 821 affirms that student access to and completion of CTE courses are a priority for the state."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, negligible state costs.

VOTES:

ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0

YES: Muratsuchi, Hoover, Addis, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Patel

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0-0

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

SENATE FLOOR: 40-0-0

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

SENATE FLOOR: 35-0-5

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Alvarado-Gil, Becker, Padilla, Reyes, Umberg

UPDATED

VERSION: August 28, 2025

CONSULTANT: Tanya Lieberman / ED. / (916) 319-2087

FN: 0001606