
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 1222 (Choi) - Career Technical Education Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program Act

Version: February 19, 2026
Urgency: No
Hearing Date: April 20, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 6 - 0
Mandate: No
Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill establishes a pilot program to provide technical assistance to county offices of education (COEs) and improve the equity and effectiveness of career technical education (CTE) pathways. The bill also requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to designate a lead COE and two pilot regions to receive technical assistance.

Fiscal Impact:

- This bill includes an appropriation of \$4 million from the General Fund to support the development of CTE models, tools, and regional capacity-building efforts. It provides that funding for the pilot is subject to the annual Budget Act and to be allocated to the lead agency.
- The California Department of Education could incur additional, unknown General Fund costs on a one-time basis to designate a COE as the lead agency and select the two pilot regions that will receive intensive technical assistance.

Background: Existing law establishes the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program (CTEIG) to support high-quality CTE programs in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, through ongoing state funding, in partnership with local educational agencies (LEAs) and regional consortia.

Existing law establishes the K-12 Strong Workforce Program (SWP) to expand high-quality CTE in K-12 schools through regional planning and funding aligned with California's Community College SWP.

Existing law establishes the Golden State Pathways Program to promote college and career readiness by funding partnerships between K-12 schools and community colleges that integrate academic coursework with college credit and workforce preparation.

Existing law establishes the California Workforce Development Board as the state's primary workforce policy board, responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing California's workforce development strategy.

Existing law establishes the California Education Interagency Council to serve as a statewide forum for coordinating education and workforce policy across K-12 education, higher education, and labor and workforce development systems. The council is tasked

with aligning education pathways with workforce demand, improving access to CTE and college-to-career pathways, and developing recommendations to the Legislature and Governor regarding CTE, workforce alignment, and student transitions across systems.

Proposed Law: This bill establishes the CTE Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program as a 3-year pilot program to provide technical assistance in CTE with a focus on improving access and outcomes for historically underserved student populations. It requires the SPI to designate, within 6 months of the bill's effective date, a COE to serve as the lead agency and two pilot regions to receive intensive technical assistance.

This bill appropriates \$4 million from the General Fund for the 2026-27 fiscal year and provides that funding for the pilot is subject to the annual Budget Act appropriations, to be allocated to the lead agency.

The bill provides the following requirements for the lead agency:

1. Develop and disseminate exemplary models for inclusive CTE pathways, particularly for students with disabilities, English learners, and other historically underserved populations.
2. Develop frameworks and toolkits to support industry education partnerships and scalable career pathway models.
3. Provide technical assistance, capacity building, and coordination support to COEs within the designated pilot regions.
4. Prioritize support to COEs serving high proportions of underserved students or demonstrating significant equity gaps in CTE access and outcomes.
5. Develop and maintain a public-facing website to share resources, tools, and promising practices.
6. Submit annual reports to the SPI, Governor, and Legislature, and to provide a comprehensive evaluation report prior to the conclusion of the pilot.
7. Begin providing services by the start of the fiscal year following designation.

This bill encourages COEs within the pilot regions to participate and requires participating COEs to designate staff to coordinate CTE technical assistance within their jurisdiction. It also requires school districts and charter schools that elect to receive technical assistance to participate in data collection and reporting, share promising practices, and commit to implementing recommendations and improvement strategies.

The program would be repealed on January 1, 2032.

Staff Comments: The state funds several K–12 CTE competitive grant that include the CTEIG, the K–12 Strong Workforce Program, and the GSPP. These programs provide hundreds of millions of dollars each year to support the development, expansion, and alignment of CTE pathways with postsecondary education and workforce needs. The state also supports a wide range of technical assistance efforts intended to strengthen

CTE pathways and workforce alignment. These include the K-12 component of the SWP, which provides regional technical assistance to support pathway development and employer engagement; the GSPP, which includes dedicated technical assistance providers to support grantees; and additional statewide initiatives such as the California CTE Leadership Project and Perkins-funded support structures.

This bill would establish a new three-year pilot program that is intended to provide a more flexible and cohesive source of technical assistance to support COEs in coordinating CTE efforts across multiple initiatives with a focus on improving equity. According to the author, "Improving and expanding Career Technical Education (CTE) has been a priority for the California State Legislature, as CTE continues to lead students into meaningful high-wage, high demand jobs. However, many local education agencies lack the resources and capacity to create and implement CTE programs that serve all student populations. SB 1222 would create a lead agency that would administer a three-year pilot program to provide technical assistance to local education agencies within two pilot regions designated by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This bill would assist schools that are struggling with developing and implementing CTE programs."

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