



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3317.161 Approval of career-technical education programs.

Effective: September 30, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 96

(A) As used in this section, "lead district" has the same meaning as in section 3317.023 of the Revised Code.

(B)(1) A career-technical education program or a dropout prevention and recovery program of a city, local, or exempted village school district, community school, or STEM school shall be subject to approval under this section in order for the district or school to qualify for state funding for the program. Approval granted under this section shall be valid for the five fiscal years following the fiscal year in which the program is approved and may be renewed. Approval shall be subject to annual review under division (E) of this section.

(2) If a district or school becomes a new member of a career-technical planning district, its career-technical education programs shall be approved or disapproved by the lead district of the career-technical planning district during the fiscal year in which the district or school becomes a member of the career-technical planning district. Any program of the district or school that was approved by the department of education and workforce for an approval period that includes the fiscal year in which the district or school becomes a new member of the career-technical planning district shall retain its approved status during that fiscal year.

(3) If an existing member of a career-technical planning district develops a new career-technical education program, that program shall be approved or disapproved by the lead district of the career-technical planning district prior to the first fiscal year for which the district or school is seeking funding for the program.

(4) Except as provided in division (B)(2) of this section, if a career-technical education program was approved by the department prior to September 29, 2013, that approval remains valid for the unexpired remainder of the approval period specified by the department. Approval of that program may then be renewed in accordance with this section on a date prior to the expiration of the approval period.



(C)(1) The lead district of a career-technical planning district shall approve or disapprove for a five-year period each career-technical education program of the city, local, and exempted village school districts, community schools, and STEM schools that are assigned by the department to the career-technical planning district. The lead district's decision to approve or disapprove a program shall be based on requirements for career-technical education programs that are specified in rules adopted by the department. These requirements shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- (a) Demand for the career-technical education program by industries in the state;
- (b) Quality of the program;
- (c) Potential for a student enrolled in the program to receive the training that will qualify the student for industry credentials or post-secondary education;
- (d) Admission requirements of the lead district;
- (e) Past performance of the district or school that is offering the program;
- (f) Traveling distance;
- (g) Sustainability;
- (h) Capacity;
- (i) Availability of the program within the career-technical planning district;
- (j) In the case of a new program, the cost to begin the program.

(2) If a program is approved, the lead district shall notify the department of its decision. If a program is disapproved, the lead district shall notify the district or school of its decision.

If the lead district disapproves the program or does not take any action to approve or disapprove the



program, the district or school may appeal the lead district's decision or failure to take action to the department.

(D)(1) Upon receiving notification of a lead district's approval of a district's or school's career-technical education program, the department shall review the lead district's decision and determine whether to approve or disapprove the program. The department shall notify the district or school and the lead district of the district's or school's career-technical planning district of its determination.

(2) Upon receiving an appeal from a district or school of a lead district's disapproval of a career-technical education program or failure to take action to approve or disapprove the program, the department shall review the lead district's disapproval or failure to take action. The department shall decide whether to approve or disapprove the program as a result of this review. The department shall notify the lead district and the appealing district or school of its determination.

(3) In conducting a review under division (D)(1) or (2) of this section, the department shall consider the criteria prescribed under division (C)(1) of this section.

(4) If the department approves a program under division (D)(1) or (2) of this section, it shall authorize the payment to the district or school of the funds attributed to the career-technical students enrolled in that program in the next fiscal year according to a payment schedule prescribed by the department.

(5) The department's decisions under divisions (D)(1) and (2) of this section shall be final and not appealable.

The department shall authorize a payment for any dropout prevention and recovery program offering career-technical education that is in its first year of operation and that submits an application in the fiscal year for which the application was submitted.

(E) The department and the lead district of each career-technical planning district shall conduct an annual review of each career-technical education program in the lead district's career-technical planning district that receives approval under this section. Continued funding of the program during the five-year approval period shall be subject to the school's compliance with any directives for



performance improvement that are issued by the department or the lead district as a result of any review conducted under this section.