



Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director  
9 Trotters Ridge Court, Catonsville, MD 21228  
410-925-2183  
pssamed@gmail.com  
www.pssam.org

---

BILL: Senate Bill 617  
TITLE: Free College, Career Skills, and Youth Apprenticeship Act of 2019  
DATE: March 6, 2019  
POSITION: OPPOSE  
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
CONTACT: Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director, PSSAM  
Email: [pssamed@gmail.com](mailto:pssamed@gmail.com); Cell: 410-925-2183

Senate Bill 617 establishes a certain college and career readiness standard; altering the grade by which students must be assessed in college and career readiness, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, and according to a certain method; requiring that each public high school provide access to certain pathways and certain counseling services; establishing the Career and Technology Education Committee; requiring the Committee to establish certain goals in certain years and report certain information to the General Assembly; etc.

PSSAM **opposes** Senate Bill 617.

Local superintendents are focused on providing strong college and career readiness programs for all graduating students. Career Technology Programs (CTE) have been expanding and we know there are many students that will not be entering college after graduation. We have placed a high priority on our CTE programs to provide our students with many more options during high school. We appreciate the intent of Senate Bill 617, but we believe it is ill-timed.

The Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) has been working for several years on developing policies and strategies that will ultimately redefine our current education policies and practices. As a part of their work, the Kirwan Commission has been extensively studying all components of career and technology education. Their preliminary report included comprehensive recommendations. Their final report is expected to be released very shortly. PSSAM believes a more prudent path is to focus on the Kirwan Commission recommendations to create world class career and technology programs in all local school systems.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **opposes** Senate Bill 617 and requests an unfavorable committee report.