

*Performance Standards for Secondary  
School Vocational Education*

April 1989

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**Performance Standards for  
Secondary School Vocational Education**

**Background Paper**

April 1989


Science, Education, and Transportation Program  
Office of Technology Assessment  
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## FOREWORD

Following nearly a decade of education reforms aimed at raising the performance of American high school students in academic subjects, there has emerged a broad consensus for improving the quality of vocational programs as well. Because so many students take vocational courses, regardless of their career plans, and because secondary school vocational training can affect job productivity and performance, the content and management of vocational programs warrant careful attention.

To assist Congress in reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, the House Committee on Education and Labor asked OTA to explore the possibility of instituting specific requirements for performance measurement of the Nation's secondary school vocational programs. OTA examined the technical feasibility and utility of performance standards based on labor market indicators and scores on occupational competency tests, and looked at other possible measures as well.

This Background Paper contains the results of OTA's analysis. Throughout the study OTA sought and received the assistance of many individuals and organizations in the business, education, and government communities. Their thoughtful contributions and criticisms were invaluable, although their participation does not necessarily reflect their endorsement of the contents of the report, for which OTA bears sole responsibility.



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