STATE OF NEW YORK

1925

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. MAHER, E. BROWN, DeSTEFANO, BRABENEC, McDONOUGH, BEEPHAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Economic Development

AN ACT to amend the economic development law, in relation to establishing the sector partnership enhancement and reinforcement program; and making an appropriation therefor

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The economic development law is amended by adding a new article 28 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 28

SECTOR PARTNERSHIP ENHANCEMENT AND REINFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Section 500. Short title.
501. Definitions.
502. Sector partnership enhancement and reinforcement program.
503. Local sector partnership duties and responsibilities.
504. Local sector partnership formation grant.
505. Local sector partnership enhancement grant.
506. Community college sector partnership exploration grant.

§ 500. Short title. This article shall be known and may be cited as the "sector partnership enhancement and reinforcement program act".

§ 501. Definitions. For the purposes of this article:

1. "Community college" means a college established and operated pursuant to the provisions of article one hundred twenty-six of the education law which provides two-year postsecondary programs in general and receives financial assistance from the state.

2. "Local sector partnership" means a workforce collaborative, within an economic development region as established by the department pursuant to article eleven of this chapter, focused on achieving the goal of meeting shared human resources needs and consisting of multiple employ-

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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ers within an industry sector, in combination with representatives of one or more of the following:

(a) a labor organization, where appropriate;

(b) a local workforce development board;

(c) a postsecondary education institution;

(d) a community college;

(e) an adult basic education provider;

(f) a school district;

(g) the state or a local government;

(h) a chamber of commerce or other economic development organization;

(i) a community based organization or other not-for-profit organization; or

(j) any other entity as determined eligible by the department.

§ 502. Sector partnership enhancement and reinforcement program. The department, in consultation with the department of labor, the state education department, the New York state higher education services corporation, the New York state workforce investment board, and representatives of local workforce development boards, shall establish a sector partnership enhancement and reinforcement program, the purpose of which shall be to:

1. upon request, assist in the identification of target industry clusters and employers for creation of new local sector partnerships throughout the state;

2. support and encourage contact and cooperation between local sector partnerships already in existence and those looking to create a new local sector partnership;

3. serve as a coordinator or convener pursuant to subdivision one of section five hundred three of this article on behalf of employers within an industry sector and the appropriate state and local agencies or not-for-profit organizations to facilitate the creation and support of local sector partnerships;

4. provide technical assistance, including counseling and direction from department staff in forming and sustaining a local sector partnership, professional development opportunities for members of a local sector partnership, customized labor market and economic data upon request, and similar assistance as to be determined by the department to local sector partnerships; and

5. provide and administer grants pursuant to sections five hundred four, five hundred five, and five hundred six of this article to new and existing local sector partnerships.

§ 503. Local sector partnership duties and responsibilities. A local sector partnership shall:

1. designate one of the member entities or a representative from the department as the convener of the local partnership. The convener shall assume responsibility for recruiting membership to a local sector partnership, organizing meetings, fulfilling required reporting requirements pursuant to subdivision two of this section, and for designating a fiscal agent to oversee grant funds received pursuant to sections five hundred four, five hundred five, and five hundred six of this article. The convener may perform additional duties as determined by the local sector partnership;

2. report performance information as determined by the department, including an annual financial statement prepared according to generally accepted accounting principles, to the department by December first of each year;

3. develop a comprehensive plan for addressing any identified skills gap in the sector in order to be eligible for a grant pursuant to section five hundred four, section five hundred five, or section five hundred six of this article; and

4. perform additional duties and responsibilities as determined by the department.

§ 504. Local sector partnership formation grant. 1. The department shall award grants to emerging local sector partnerships, or local sector partnerships created within the last five years of the effective date of this article, to fund planning activities including, but not limited to, building and promoting membership in a local sector partnership, initial costs related to research identifying sector skill gaps and factors contributing to such gaps, and developing a plan to close any existing skills gap as identified by the local sector partnership.

2. Local sector partnership formation grants shall not be less than fifty thousand dollars and shall not exceed one hundred thousand dollars.

3. The first fifty percent of the total grant amount shall be made available immediately upon notification of such grant award. The remaining fifty percent of the grant shall be available to a local sector partnership as a two-to-one match for funds raised.

4. For the purposes of this grant, matching funds include, but are not limited to: cash funds raised; equipment costs, including computers, training equipment, software, subscriptions, and other items directly related to partnership operations; and facility costs, including acquisition, rent, utilities, and other costs incurred directly related to partnership operations.

5. For the purposes of this grant, matching funds shall not include: salaries and fringe benefits provided in-kind by the lead applicant, fiscal agent, or partnership member organizations; salaries and fringe benefits paid by the lead applicant, fiscal agent, or partnership member organizations to training or educational program participants; and funding granted through other programs administered by the department.

§ 505. Local sector partnership enhancement grant. 1. The department shall award grants to local sector partnerships which have already completed planning activities as identified by the department for implementation activities including, but not limited to: skills training; establishing a secondary to postsecondary education workforce pipeline; establishing career pathways for adults; creating industry-based certification programs; developing curriculum; promoting participation in any workforce training or education program; and other activities that prepare or assist in providing workers for the industry sector.

2. Local sector partnership enhancement grants shall not be less than fifty thousand dollars and shall not exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars.

3. Grants pursuant to this section shall be available to a local sector partnership as a two-to-one match for funds raised by the local sector partnership.

4. For the purposes of this grant, matching funds include, but are not limited to: cash funds raised; equipment costs, including computers, training equipment, software, subscriptions, and other items directly related to partnership operations; and facility costs, including acquisition, rent, utilities, and other costs incurred directly related to partnership operations.

5. For the purposes of this grant, matching funds shall not include: salaries and fringe benefits provided in-kind by the lead applicant,

fiscal agent, or partnership member organizations; salaries and fringe benefits paid by the lead applicant, fiscal agent, or partnership member organizations to training or educational program participants; and funding granted through other programs administered by the department.

§ 506. Community college sector partnership exploration grant. 1. The department shall award grants to community colleges seeking to establish local sector partnerships for recruitment activities including, but not limited to: developing a plan for creating and convening a local sector partnership with employers in targeted industry clusters; related marketing costs for advertising the potential creation of sector partnerships; financial incentives for recruiting employers in targeted industry clusters to join a new local sector partnership; and other activities that assist in the creation of a new local sector partnership.

2. Community college sector partnership exploration grants shall not be less than fifty thousand dollars and shall not exceed five hundred thousand dollars.

3. Grants pursuant to this section shall be made available immediately upon notification of such grant award.

§ 2. The sum of up to fifteen million dollars ($15,000,000), is hereby appropriated to the department of economic development for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act to be funded by grants under the workforce investment act, federal Public Law 105-220, and the workforce innovation and opportunity act, federal Public Law 113-128. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the commissioner of the department of economic development in the manner prescribed by law.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.