

STATE OF NEW YORK

2118

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 15, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. RA, BROOK-KRASNY, CHANG, NOVAKHOV -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the labor law, in relation to establishing the youth apprenticeship program; and making an appropriation therefor (Part A); to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the enhanced regents professional diploma (Part B); and to amend the tax law, in relation to establishing a youth apprenticeship tax credit (Part C)

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

1 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "learning
2 for work act".
3 § 2. Legislative findings and intent. According to a recent college
4 and career readiness study released by the New York state education
5 department, only thirty-five percent of high school graduates are
6 college or career ready. This lack of preparedness has driven many high
7 school graduates into low-paying jobs, or college degree programs that
8 they are not interested in, fail to lead to careers and result in an
9 unreasonably high amount of student debt. For many current and future
10 high school students, the traditional pathway of a basic high school
11 education and then on to a four-year college may not be the correct
12 route to take. These students would benefit from a program that would
13 prepare them for employment immediately upon graduating high school.
14 Therefore, the legislature finds it necessary to establish this "learn-
15 ing for work" program in our high schools that will create a youth
16 apprenticeship program, an enhanced regents professional diploma with a
17 designation in a specified occupational area and a tax credit for
18 employers who take part in the youth apprenticeship program. This would
19 further the goals of limiting the accumulation of unsustainable student
20 debt, and ensuring all students in the state of New York are prepared to
21 enter the twenty-first century workforce.

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

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1 § 3. This act enacts into law major components of legislation which
2 are necessary to implement the "learning for work act". Each component
3 is wholly contained within a Part identified as Parts A through C. The
4 effective date for each particular provision contained within such Part
5 is set forth in the last section of such Part. Any provision in any
6 section contained within a Part, including the effective date of the
7 Part, which makes a reference to a section "of this act", when used in
8 connection with that particular component, shall be deemed to mean and
9 refer to the corresponding section of the Part in which it is found.
10 Section five of this act sets forth the general effective date of this
11 act.

12 PART A

13 Section 1. The labor law is amended by adding a new article 23-C to
14 read as follows:

15 ARTICLE 23-C

16 YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

17 Section 832. Definitions.

18 832-a. Youth apprenticeship program.

19 832-b. Local partnership duties and responsibilities.

20 832-c. Youth apprenticeship program outcome requirements.

21 832-d. Rules and regulations.

22 § 832. Definitions. For the purposes of this article, the following
23 terms shall have the following meanings:

24 1. "Local partnership" means any combination of one or more school
25 districts, other public agencies, community colleges, not-for-profit
26 organizations, individuals, businesses or other persons, who have agreed
27 to be responsible for implementing and coordinating a local youth
28 apprenticeship program and have received formal recognition from the
29 department.

30 2. "Public agency" means a county, city, village, town or school
31 district or an agency of this state or of a county, city, village, town
32 or school district.

33 § 832-a. Youth apprenticeship program. 1. The department shall estab-
34 lish a youth apprenticeship program. The youth apprenticeship program
35 shall be a one or two year program beginning in grade eleven or twelve
36 and combine academic classroom coursework with mentored on-the-job
37 training in a specified occupational area. Specific requirements for
38 each youth apprenticeship program shall be determined by the respective
39 local partnership responsible for implementing and coordinating a local
40 youth apprenticeship program.

41 2. The state apprenticeship and training council, the state workforce
42 investment board, the board of regents, and the state education depart-
43 ment shall assist the department in providing the youth apprenticeship
44 program under subdivision one of this section.

45 3. The department shall approve occupations and maintain a list of
46 approved occupations for the youth apprenticeship program.

47 4. The youth apprenticeship program created under subdivision one of
48 this section shall not affect any apprenticeship program that is
49 governed by article twenty-three of this chapter except that an appren-
50 ticeship program that is governed by article twenty-three of this chap-
51 ter may grant credit toward the completion of an apprenticeship for the
52 successful completion of a youth apprenticeship under subdivision one of
53 this section.

1 § 832-b. Local partnership duties and responsibilities. 1. From fund-
2 ing under the workforce investment act, Public Law 105-220, and the
3 workforce innovation and opportunity act, Public Law 113-128, the
4 department may award grants to applying local partnerships for the
5 implementation and coordination of local youth apprenticeship programs
6 that are approved by the commissioner. A local partnership that is
7 awarded a grant under this subdivision may use the grant moneys awarded
8 for any of the following implementation and coordination activities:

9 (a) Recruiting employers to provide on-the-job training and super-
10 vision for youth apprentices and providing technical assistance to those
11 employers.

12 (b) Recruiting students to participate in the local youth apprentice-
13 ship program and monitoring the progress of youth apprentices partic-
14 ipating in the program.

15 (c) Coordinating youth apprenticeship training activities within
16 participating school districts and among participating school districts,
17 postsecondary institutions and employers.

18 (d) Coordinating academic, vocational and occupational learning,
19 school-based and work-based learning and secondary and postsecondary
20 education for participants in the local youth apprenticeship program.

21 (e) Assisting employers in identifying and training workplace mentors
22 and matching youth apprentices and mentors.

23 (f) Any other implementation or coordination activity that the depart-
24 ment may direct or permit the local partnership to perform.

25 2. A local partnership that is awarded a grant under subdivision one
26 of this section shall not use any of the grant moneys awarded to provide
27 funding to a business that is operated for profit or to a nonprofit
28 organization that represents business interests, and shall only be used
29 for the implementation of subdivision one of this section.

30 3. The amount of a grant awarded under subdivision one of this section
31 shall not exceed one thousand dollars per youth apprentice. A local
32 partnership that is awarded a grant under subdivision one of this
33 section shall provide matching funds equal to at least twenty-five
34 percent of the grant amount awarded.

35 § 832-c. Youth apprenticeship program outcome requirements. 1. The
36 following outcomes are expected of a local youth apprenticeship program
37 that is funded pursuant to subdivision one of section eight hundred
38 thirty-two-b of this article:

39 (a) At least eighty percent of the youth apprentices who participate
40 in the program shall receive an enhanced regents professional diploma
41 pursuant to section two hundred eight-b of the education law on
42 completion of the youth apprenticeship.

43 (b) At least fifty percent of the youth apprentices who participate in
44 the program shall be offered employment by the employer that provided
45 the on-the-job training for the youth apprentice on completion of the
46 youth apprenticeship.

47 2. Any student taking part in a youth apprenticeship program who
48 receives an enhanced regents professional diploma pursuant to section
49 two hundred eight-b of the education law and is either not offered, or
50 chooses not to seek, employment in their specified occupational area,
51 shall receive a minimum of fifteen credit hours to be applied in pursuit
52 of a postsecondary degree at a state university of New York or city
53 university of New York institution.

54 § 832-d. Rules and regulations. The department shall promulgate all
55 rules and regulations as shall be necessary to administer this article.

1 § 2. The sum of up to five million dollars (\$5,000,000), is hereby
2 appropriated to the department of labor for the purpose of carrying out
3 the provisions of this act to be funded by grants under the workforce
4 investment act, Public Law 105-220, and the workforce innovation and
5 opportunity act, Public Law 113-128. Such moneys shall be payable on the
6 audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved
7 by the commissioner of the department of labor in the manner prescribed
8 by law.

9 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

10 PART B

11 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 208-b
12 to read as follows:

13 § 208-b. Enhanced regents professional diploma. 1. The board of
14 regents shall create an enhanced regents professional diploma to
15 acknowledge the professional skills and specific occupational training
16 students obtain in the course of their study. Such degree will include
17 designations as determined by the commissioner that denote the profes-
18 sional skills and specific occupational training obtained by a student.
19 The commissioner shall promulgate regulations regarding the requirements
20 for an enhanced regents professional degree to include:

21 a. completion of a technical assessment;

22 b. completion of a work-skills employability profile;

23 c. completion of a work-based learning experience; and

24 d. meeting all requirements necessary to receive a regents diploma.

25 2. The commissioner, in conjunction with the state apprenticeship and
26 training council, the state workforce investment board, and the depart-
27 ment of labor shall establish professional skill and occupational train-
28 ing designations that may be attached to an enhanced regents profes-
29 sional diploma that shall denote the professional skills a student has
30 obtained throughout the course of such student's studies.

31 3. The commissioner, in conjunction with the state apprenticeship and
32 training council, the state workforce investment board, and the depart-
33 ment of labor shall design a series of technical assessments to test the
34 skills and knowledge students have obtained in their work-based learning
35 experience. The commissioner shall be authorized to include any person
36 or entity that is part of a local partnership of the youth apprentice-
37 ship program, as defined in section eight hundred thirty-two of the
38 labor law, in any and all efforts to design technical assessments.

39 4. The commissioner, in conjunction with the state apprenticeship and
40 training council, the state workforce investment board, and the depart-
41 ment of labor shall create a work-skill employability profile for use by
42 employers and/or educators to document a student's professional skills
43 and specific occupational training.

44 5. The board of regents shall promulgate such regulations of the
45 commissioner as may be necessary to establish an enhanced regents
46 professional diploma, implement the requirements herein, and establish
47 standards for work-based learning experiences including requirements for
48 verification and eligibility.

49 6. The youth apprenticeship program as defined in article
50 twenty-three-C of the labor law shall be considered an eligible work-
51 based learning experience.

52 7. Students first entering ninth grade in the two thousand twenty-
53 five--two thousand twenty-six school year and thereafter shall be eligi-
54 ble to earn an enhanced regents professional diploma.

1 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

2 PART C

3 Section 1. Section 210-B of the tax law is amended by adding a new
4 subdivision 61 to read as follows:

5 61. Youth apprenticeship tax credit. (a) Allowance of credit. A
6 taxpayer shall be allowed a credit against the tax imposed by this arti-
7 cle provided that such taxpayer takes part in the youth apprenticeship
8 program, pursuant to article twenty-three-C of the labor law.

9 (b) Amount of credit. The amount of the credit shall be equal to one
10 thousand five hundred dollars for each apprentice the participating
11 employer sponsors.

12 (c) Application of credit. The credit allowed under this subdivision
13 for any taxable year shall not reduce the tax due for that year to less
14 than the higher of the amounts prescribed in paragraph (d) of subdivi-
15 sion one of section two hundred ten of this article.

16 § 2. Section 606 of the tax law is amended by adding a new subsection
17 (qqq) to read as follows:

18 (qqq) Youth apprenticeship tax credit. (1) Allowance of credit. A
19 taxpayer shall be allowed a credit against the tax imposed by this arti-
20 cle provided that such taxpayer takes part in the youth apprenticeship
21 program, pursuant to article twenty-three-C of the labor law.

22 (2) Amount of credit. The amount of the credit shall be equal to one
23 thousand five hundred dollars for each apprentice the participating
24 employer sponsors.

25 (3) Application of credit. If the amount of credit allowed under this
26 subsection for any taxable year exceeds the taxpayer's tax for such
27 year, the excess will not be treated as an overpayment of tax and will
28 not be credited or refunded in accordance with the provisions of section
29 six hundred eighty-six of this article.

30 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to taxable
31 years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

32 § 4. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivi-
33 sion, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of
34 competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect,
35 impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in
36 its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section
37 or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judg-
38 ment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of
39 the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such
40 invalid provisions had not been included herein.

41 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that
42 the applicable effective dates of Parts A through C of this act shall be
43 as specifically set forth in the last section of such Parts.