



2017-2018 General Assembly

SENATE BILL 257: Appropriations Act of 2017, Sec. 7.23F: Sixth and Seventh Grade Career and Technical Education Program Expansion Grant Program

Committee:
Introduced by:
Analysis of: Sec. 7.23F of S.L. 2017-57

Date: August 25, 2017
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Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *S.L. 2017-57, Sec. 7.23F establishes the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program (Program). The Program expands Career and Technical Education (CTE) by prioritizing the inclusion of students in sixth and seventh grade through grants administered by the NC Education and Workforce Innovation Commission (Commission).*

The Program will award competitive grants to local school administrative units (LEAs) of up to \$700,000 for the 2017-2018 fiscal year and up to \$1 million for the 2018-2019 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years, to the extent funds are available. Funds must only be used for employing additional licensed personnel in CTE areas, career development coordination areas, and support services necessary for expanding CTE to sixth and seventh grade students, and may be used for multiple schools in an LEA. The funds will not revert and may be awarded for a maximum of seven years.

LEAs must include the following information in their applications for the Program: (i) a plan for expansion of the CTE program to sixth and seventh grade students, including specific programs to be expanded, the significance of CTE in the LEA, and how the grade expansion would enhance the education program and the community; (ii) a request for funds, description of how the funds would be used, and other sources of funds available for the program; (iii) a proposed seven-year budget with details on use of funds to add personnel, increase career development efforts, and provide support services; and (iv) a strategy to achieve meaningful analysis of program outcomes due to receipt of grant funds.

For the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the Commission must accept applications for grants until November 1. For subsequent fiscal years that funds are made available for the Program, the Commission must accept applications until August 1. Selection criteria must consider diversification among the applicant pool, including geographic locations, location of industries in the LEA, and size of student population served. The Commission must first allocate funds to applicants who received grant funds for the prior fiscal year before awarding funds to new applicants. The Commission must recommend grant recipients to the State Board of Education (SBE), which will approve the recipients of grant awards after consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent). The Commission, in consultation with the Superintendent, must establish rules regarding any requirements for continued eligibility, including timely and accurate reporting.

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By August 1 of each year during the life of the grant, the recipient LEA must submit a report for the preceding year in which grant funds were expended to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Division of CTE. This report must provide at least the following information: (i) use of grant funds and expenditures, including use of funds for CTE programs and courses that have been expanded to include sixth and seventh grade students; (ii) number of students enrolled in CTE courses as part of the expansion; (iii) number of students who subsequently enrolled in CTE courses in high school; (iv) number of students who subsequently participated in internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeship programs; (v) number of students who subsequently earned college credit and approved industry certification and credentials; and (vi) any other information the Division of CTE deems necessary.

The Superintendent must provide a report to the Commission by October 15 annually based on the reported information, including how the grant recipients compare to CTE programs statewide and whether the programs are aligned with the Master Plan for CTE adopted by the SBE. The Commission must then include the Program in its annual report which is due on or before April 30 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the SBE, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina.

This section became effective July 1, 2017.