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Subject: NVC: Gateway to Careers Act Introduces

NAEPDC



News, Views, and Clues

February 8, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

For your information, Senators Hassan, Kaine, Shaheen and Reed have introduced the Gateway to Careers Act, which may offer funding to WIOA Title II Providers.

On February 8th, Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH), along with Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and Jack Reed (D-RI) introduced the Gateway to Careers Act—legislation aimed at supporting career pathways for nontraditional students through dedicated federal grant funding. The grants, administered by the U.S Department of Education in consultation with the U.S Department of Labor would be awarded on a competitive basis to institutions that are working in partnership to serve students experiencing barriers to postsecondary access and completion.

Today, 80% of jobs in the U.S require some form of postsecondary education and training, yet many Americans are unable to enter the higher education system due to a lack of direct support services, including basic skills instruction, transportation and childcare, and comprehensive career counseling. This opportunity gap often leaves individuals without the skills they need to succeed in today’s labor market. In response to this, educational institutions along with industry partners have been working to establish career pathways — 21st-century learning models that combine support services with academic instruction. Despite their value, there is currently no dedicated federal funding for these pathways.

The Gateway to Careers Act would help bridge this gap by:

- Authorizing a new grant program in the Higher Education Act entitled the “Career Pathways Grant Program,” for distribution to eligible career pathway partnerships. As defined by the legislation, career pathway partnerships can consist of:
 - An educational institution, including a two-year public institution of higher education, an area career and technical education school that provides postsecondary level instruction or a consortium of these entities;
 - One or more workforce development partner, including a local board, an industry association, and/or a community-based organization;

- A Secondary or Adult Education Partner—such as a local education agency, an eligible provider as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), or a career and technical education agency as defined by The Perkins Act.
- Defining the allowable uses of the grant funding allocated to these eligible institutions, which include:
 - Creating or expanding dual-enrollment opportunities for secondary students or disconnected youth;
 - Implementing strategies that help adult and other nontraditional students access skills and recognized postsecondary credentials;
 - Providing direct support services such as childcare, transportation, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, assistance in obtaining health insurance, and assistance in obtaining federal nutrition and/or housing benefits;
 - Allocating emergency grants to help students who are facing financial hardships;
 - Offering career pathways navigation and case management services;
 - Other activities identified by eligible institutions as necessary to support the development of implementation of career pathway programs.

Additionally, partnerships receiving grant funding would be responsible for reporting their program outcomes to the Secretary of Education on a yearly basis.

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A Resource for Adult Education State Directors and their Staff Members

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