

## **Youth Career Connect Grants**

The purpose behind President Obama's proposal for the Youth Career Connect Grants is to redesign high schools in the U.S. to teach relevant skills that are needed in today's ever-changing economy. The grants available through this program aim at bringing high schools, colleges, and various businesses together to better prepare and equip high school students with the skills they will utilize in post-secondary life.

### **Program Objectives:**

- Provide an "industry relevant education.
- Create both an academic and career-focused learning experience.
- Strengthen the program so that it is sustainable once grant-funding runs out.

### **Funding:**

The funding for these grants will be provided by the Department of Education and the Department of Labor and will make up *100 million dollars*. A segment of the funding will come from the partial revenue from the H-1B Visa program. As of right now, 25-40 individual grants will be awarded to schools/communities that meet the required criteria in the application. Schools/communities who are awarded grants must match the grant amount with a minimum of 25 percent. This can be structured as a progressive match amount, so it does not all have to be paid for up front.

Funding restrictions include:

- No land purchases with grant money
- No more than 15 percent of grant money to be used on renovations
- No more than 10 percent of grant money to be used on administrative costs
- Funding can not be used for individual salaries or bonuses
  - However, they can be used to pay for vendors and their goods/services
- Funding may be used to pay for participant's wages or stipends

### **Program Components:**

The Youth Career Connect Grant aims to restructure the traditional high school experience to put more focus on how a student's experience in the classroom can translate into a post-secondary job or education. The proposal includes a three year, structured program for each individual. Year one consists of researching various career paths that may stimulate interest in certain individual. Year two includes introducing the

individual to job-shadowing and observation of a certain career. Year three also includes additional job-shadowing, but also incorporates more opportunities for the individual to get involved with hands-on learning.

The Department of Education and Department of Labor stress a “work-based” learning environment. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Work experience
- Field trips
- Job-shadowing
- Internships

In order for this program to be successful, the Department of Education and Department of Labor promote that employers be engaged in this process through work-based learning and mentoring. The student will also be required to participate in individualized career and academic counseling.

For those students hoping to enter the workforce immediately after high school, this program will better equip them with the necessary skills to be successful as well as possibly being awarded an industry recognized credential. Students wishing to attend any type of post-secondary education may be eligible to receive post-secondary credit toward a degree or certificate.

### **Program Evaluation:**

All schools or communities receiving a Youth Career Connect Grant must participate in the evaluation process. The evaluations will be funded by the Department of Labor, and conducted by a third party contractor.

There are three components to the evaluation process:

- Analysis of participant characteristics and short-term as well as long-term outcomes, including after the end of the grant period.
- Implementation analysis in all grantee sites.
- In selected grantee locations, outcome or impact analysis, which may use either a non-experimental design or experimental design. (random assignment)

The type of data that will be collected may include, but is not limited to:

- High school attendance
- Annual dropout rate
- Courses enrolled in along with grades and credits received

- Scored on state, district, or school administered assessments of reading and math
- Information on dual enrollment in post-secondary education
- Demographic information such as gender, race, English proficiency, and the extent at which one knows an additional language
- Whether the student is eligible for free or reduced-price school lunches
- Whether the student has an individualized education program