

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA

ONE HUNDRED SECOND LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1079

Introduced by Mello, 5; Council, 11; Harms, 48.

Read first time January 18, 2012

Committee: Education

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to education; to state findings; to define terms;
2 to provide for grants for bridge programs as prescribed;
3 and to provide duties for the State Department of
4 Education and the Department of Health and Human
5 Services.
6 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. The Legislature finds that:

2 (1) Nebraska faces a skills gap of educated workers to
3 serve key roles in high-demand industries;

4 (2) Nebraska must develop innovative education and
5 training solutions in order to fill these roles and compete in a
6 global economy; and

7 (3) Bridge programs, in which adult learners earn
8 postsecondary educational credentials in an expedited manner, are a
9 proven solution to this problem.

10 Sec. 2. For purposes of this act:

11 (1) Bridge program means a structured career pathway
12 program, developed in partnership between the provider of the Adult
13 Education Program established pursuant to section 79-11,133 and a
14 community college, which assists students in obtaining academic,
15 employability, and technical skills needed to enter and succeed in
16 postsecondary education and training and the labor market; and

17 (2) Department means the State Department of Education.

18 Sec. 3. The Legislature shall appropriate \$XXX to the
19 department from the Education Innovation Fund to provide grants to
20 community colleges to establish bridge programs. Such programs shall:

21 (1) Provide English reading and writing and math skills
22 required to succeed in a postsecondary credentialing or degree
23 program;

24 (2) Involve a partnership among a provider of basic
25 skills education and training under the Adult Education Program, a

1 nonprofit social services organization, and a community college in
2 Nebraska;

3 (3) Lead to the attainment of college credit and a
4 recognized postsecondary educational credential or an industry-
5 recognized credential;

6 (4) Be open only to low-income participants who are co-
7 enrolled in adult-education, developmental education, or English as a
8 second language and in a community college;

9 (5) Target the specific workforce needs of an
10 occupational sector within the state and provide services aimed at
11 improving education, skills, and employment prospects for low-income
12 adults;

13 (6) Use educational best practices, including, but not
14 limited to, contextualized instructional strategies, team teaching,
15 modularized learning, or reduced student-teacher ratios; and

16 (7) Provide for supportive services needed for student
17 educational and employment success, including, but not limited to,
18 job coaching and personal needs.

19 Sec. 4. The department shall establish an application
20 process for awarding grants for bridge programs which meet the
21 requirements of section 3 of this act. In awarding such grants, the
22 department shall give priority to:

23 (1) Community college applicants which leverage
24 additional funding through local, philanthropic, or federal funding,
25 including, but not limited to, participation in the state

1 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training
2 plan established pursuant to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of
3 2008, 7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq., funding under the federal Workforce
4 Investment Act, 29 U.S.C. 2832 et seq., as such act existed on
5 January 1, 2012, funding under the College Access Challenge Grant
6 program established pursuant to the federal Higher Education Act of
7 1965, 20 U.S.C. 1141, as such section existed on January 1, 2012,
8 funding under the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
9 program established in 42 U.S.C. 601 et seq., as such section existed
10 on January 1, 2012, and funding under the aid to dependent children
11 program; and

12 (2) Programs serving recipients of public assistance.

13 Sec. 5. A recipient of a bridge program grant under
14 section 3 of this act shall collect and provide to the department
15 data illustrating the outcomes of participants, including:

16 (1) Participants' education levels, income, and
17 employment status upon entry into the bridge program;

18 (2) The total number of participants beginning the
19 program, earning college credit, earning industry-recognized
20 credentials, and earning recognized postsecondary credentials;

21 (3) The employment rates of participants six months,
22 twelve months, and twenty-four months after leaving the program; and

23 (4) The number of participants pursuing additional
24 education six months, twelve months, and twenty-four months after
25 leaving the program.

1 Sec. 6. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and
2 regulations to carry out sections 1 to 5 of this act.

3 Sec. 7. The Department of Health and Human Services shall
4 cooperate with applicants and recipients under sections 1 to 5 of
5 this act pursuing funding under the state Supplemental Nutrition
6 Assistance Program Employment and Training plan established pursuant
7 to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, 7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.,
8 as such act and sections existed on January 1, 2012, the federal
9 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program established in 42
10 U.S.C. 601 et seq., as such section existed on January 1, 2012, and
11 funding under the aid to dependent children program.