

Assembly Bill No. 2827

CHAPTER 313

An act to add Article 5 (commencing with Section 9900) to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, relating to employment development, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor September 2, 2000. Filed with Secretary of State September 7, 2000.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2827, Cardoza. Employment Development Department: Jobs for California Graduates Program.

Existing law provides for various employment development programs administered by the Employment Development Department.

This bill would permit the department to contract with a specified nonprofit organization meeting specified criteria to manage grant programs designed to help eligible at-risk youth complete their secondary education and acquire the skills necessary to successfully transition into the workforce or enroll in postsecondary education.

This bill would appropriate \$500,000 from the General Fund to the department for the purposes of the program, and declare the intent of the Legislature that moneys necessary for funding the program in future fiscal years be appropriated in the annual Budget Act.

Appropriation: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) Recent studies show that as many as 50 percent or more of youth drop out of high school prior to graduation in many areas of the state.

(b) Youth who face multiple social and economic barriers are most at risk of dropping out of high school and failing to transition successfully into the workforce.

(c) Because of the financial constraints placed on schools in providing the necessary individualized attention, youth with multiple social and economic barriers often fail to succeed in even the best educational systems.

(d) Youth who do not complete their secondary education often lack the skills necessary to qualify for most available job openings. Many youths who do graduate often still lack fundamental work skills and attributes that employers are seeking.



(e) The earning potential of a high school graduate is 23 percent more than a youth who does not complete his or her secondary education.

(f) Youths who lack the fundamental skills to obtain a quality job are more likely to be involved in substance abuse or criminal activities, threatening themselves and everyone around them.

(g) With the booming California economy, employers are facing a critical shortage in the labor market and are forced to compete for qualified entry-level employees.

(h) The Legislature has an interest in providing assistance to those youths who can benefit most from the individualized attention and transitional services needed to help them complete their secondary education and successfully advance into the workplace.

(i) While many of the education programs serving at-risk youth are designed to serve all youth, most are not designed with an accountability system that enables state and local policymakers to quantify the results of the program. Thus, millions of taxpayer dollars are spent every year without a reliable mechanism for determining the return on the taxpayer's dollar.

(j) To ensure that California's most at-risk youth receive the help they need to complete their secondary education and to gain basic employability skills, and that taxpayers and policymakers can monitor the return on their investment in publicly supported programs, it is in the interest of the state to support a national model program for at-risk youth that has demonstrated a strong performance record in successfully achieving these outcomes.

(k) Jobs for California Graduates (JCG), the pilot project based on Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), a national model program for at-risk youth, has demonstrated remarkable success. The local program in Merced County has been operating for the last 10 years with success rates of 90 percent graduation and over 80 percent job or college enrollment.

SEC. 2. Article 5 (commencing with Section 9900) is added to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, to read:

Article 5. Jobs for California Graduates Program

9900. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this article to support the expansion of the Jobs for California Graduates pilot project in Merced into a regional system of local programs based on the Jobs for America's Graduates model. The Jobs for California Graduates nonprofit, public-private partnership will create a network of local programs to help California's at-risk youth complete their secondary education and acquire the basic skills necessary to successfully transition into the workforce or enroll in postsecondary education.



(b) The director of the Employment Development Department, from funds appropriated for this purpose to the Jobs for California Graduates Program, may make grants to applicants for the purpose of carrying out programs as authorized by this article. The grants shall be used to support new and existing Jobs for California Graduates Programs in the central valley region in one or more of the following counties: Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Madera, and Kern. The director shall develop criteria for ranking grant applications, and performance standards and auditing procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the grants. The director may contract with a qualified nonprofit corporation designated by the national organization, Jobs for America's Graduates, to provide technical assistance to Jobs for California Graduates local programs.

(c) The regional system of Jobs for California Graduates local programs shall be designed to accomplish all of the following goals:

- (1) To decrease absenteeism rates for at-risk youth.
- (2) To improve the performance of at-risk youth in school and in the workplace.
- (3) To improve secondary education completion rates.
- (4) To improve employability skills of at-risk youth.
- (5) To improve employment placement rates for at-risk youth.
- (6) To improve enrollment rates of at-risk youth in postsecondary education and training.

9901. (a) In order to encourage a regional system of long-lasting, self-sustaining model local programs, communities served pursuant to this article shall contribute in-kind and financial resources in direct support of the model local program, according to the following schedule:

(1) During its initial year of implementation, a Jobs for California Graduates local program may receive state funds in an amount equal to 100 percent of the costs of implementing each Jobs for California Graduates Program site, but not to exceed sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000).

(2) During any year subsequent to the initial year of implementation, a model local program may receive state funds in the amount equal to 75 percent of the costs of implementing the model local program, but not to exceed forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000).

(b) Community partners providing matching resources to the model local programs may include private nonprofit corporations, community-based organizations, workforce investment agencies, school districts, and other public and private sources.

9902. Local affiliates of the Jobs for California Graduates Program shall include all of the following elements:

(a) (1) A trained youth specialist employed year-round providing individual and group instruction to 25 to 45 eligible youth recruited



and selected by a school-based advisory committee comprised of faculty, administrators, and counselors.

(2) The youth specialist shall provide individual attention to students to help them overcome barriers preventing them from receiving a high school diploma or securing employment, or both, or pursuing a postsecondary education that will lead to a career.

(3) The youth specialist shall provide informal guidance to students on academic, career, and life decisions and, based on the individual needs of students, connect them to professional counseling services to address more serious barriers, such as mental health problems or drug abuse.

(4) The youth specialist shall be actively involved in intensive, one-on-one employer marketing and job development activities to identify entry-level job opportunities for students upon graduation. Likewise, the youth specialist shall assist graduates in the exploration of postsecondary education opportunities and help them navigate the financial aid process to pursue these opportunities.

(b) Youth shall be taught a minimum of 37 employment competencies designed to prepare them to secure a quality entry-level job or pursue a postsecondary education, or both, upon completion of their secondary education.

(c) Placement services shall be provided to students during the summer months or partnerships developed with summer youth employment programs to support yearlong learning. Youth specialists shall maintain contact with youth during the summer months.

(d) A student-led organization, associated with a state and national association, shall build on the competency-based curriculum and provide the opportunity for students to develop, practice, and refine their leadership and team membership skills.

(e) It shall serve as a school-based “one-stop center” for participating at-risk youth to ensure that they receive appropriate academic and social services from available resources in the school and community.

(f) It shall provide no less than 12 months of followup and support on the job and in postsecondary education after leaving the school.

(g) It shall provide computerized tracking of youth served, services delivered and performance outcomes, such as graduation rate, positive outcome rates, aggregate employment rate, full-time jobs rate, full-time placement rate, further education rate, wages, and return to school rate, at local and state levels.

(h) It shall provide continuous improvement of results through the ongoing professional development of managers, supervisors, and specialists.

9903. (a) Entities eligible to conduct a Jobs for California Graduates local program shall include, but need not be limited to,



local education agencies, community colleges, and nonprofit organizations with an interest in serving at-risk youth.

(b) To maintain eligibility after the initial year of implementation, participating entities shall conduct the Jobs for California Graduates Program in accordance with Jobs for America's Graduates performance standards, receiving no less than a "Meets Standards" rating on an accreditation review.

9904. To be eligible to receive services through a Jobs for California Graduates local program under this article, a youth shall meet at least two of the following criteria:

(a) One or more years behind modal grade for one's age group, with particular emphasis on those two or more years behind modal grade.

(b) Below average academic grade point average relative to students in his or her class.

(c) Above average number of absences during the past school year in comparison to other students in the school.

(d) Placed on probation, suspended, or expelled from school one or more times during the past two years.

(e) Pregnant or parenting teen.

(f) Physically or mentally challenged.

(g) Involved with substance abuse or criminal activities.

(h) Member of an economically disadvantaged family.

(i) Lives with only one or neither of his or her natural parents.

(j) Receives little or no academic or social support from home or family.

(k) Mother has not graduated from high school.

(l) Closest friends have limited educational expectations. For example, they do not expect to graduate from high school or have already dropped out of high school.

9905. (a) For purposes of establishing and expanding these programs, the department shall, to the extent feasible, make local grants available throughout the region.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), it is the intent of the Legislature that Jobs for California Graduates local programs be conducted in a broad range of settings, including urban, suburban, and rural districts, which are representative of all California youth during the initial year of the regional program, in order to test the effectiveness of the model local programs throughout the state.

9907. (a) The department shall submit an annual report to the Legislature on the performance outcomes of the Jobs for California Graduates local programs on an annual basis.

(b) The department shall report the following outcomes at the end of the 12-month followup period:

(1) Secondary education completion rate as compared to the Jobs for America's Graduates standard of 90 percent for senior participants.



(2) Positive outcomes rate, such as youth employed, enrolled in a postsecondary institution, or serving in the military, or all of these, as compared to the Jobs for America's Graduates standard of 80 percent positive outcomes for graduates.

(3) Full-time placement rate, such as youth engaged in full-time employment, full-time military, or combining postsecondary education with employment.

(4) All other participant outcomes as required by the Governor under Section 122(h) of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

9908. State funds made available pursuant to this article shall be used to carry out both of the following:

(a) The Jobs for California Graduates local program elements specified in Section 9902.

(b) Regional management and technical assistance activities, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(1) Operation of an office, including the hiring of staff, that shall be responsible for managing and monitoring model local program compliance.

(2) Conducting research and evaluation of all Jobs for California Graduates local programs, retaining a third-party provider as appropriate.

(3) Making available regional training and development opportunities for consistent, effective implementation of the model local programs.

(4) Conducting educational and outreach activities to engage private and public sector employers, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, the military, state and local elected officials, community and social service organizations, and other interested parties.

(5) Conducting regional activities for students, including, at a minimum, a leadership development conference and a career development conference.

(6) Providing for the continuous improvement of model local program performance outcomes.

(7) Developing and maintaining state and local partnerships with private and public employers, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, and community and social services organizations.

(8) Providing other support and oversight to promote the continuous improvement of Jobs for California Graduates local programs.

(9) Directly operating local programs as appropriate.

SEC. 3. (a) The sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Employment Development Department for the purposes of the regional Jobs for California Graduates Program established pursuant to Article 5



(commencing with Section 9900) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, as added by Section 2 of this act.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that moneys necessary for funding the regional youth development program in future fiscal years be appropriated in the annual Budget Act.

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