

Section-by-Section Summary of H.919 – As Introduced

H.919 – An act relating to workforce development

Sec. 1. Findings and Intent

Intent of act:

(1) to commit to a redesign of Vermont’s workforce development and training system through a concerted three-year effort led by the Commissioner of Labor in collaboration with key administration partners, the education and training communities, and other stakeholders from business and government.

(2) to create a framework for this three-year process that will result in a more coherent, efficient, and effective workforce development system within which:

(A) all Vermonters who want to work and all employers who want workers can connect, through education and training, with what they need to thrive; and

(B) stakeholders and programs, both inside and outside State government, are optimally connected and aligned.

Sec. 2. State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) – Public Engagement Process

Sec. 2 creates foundation for a public engagement process to redesign the State’s workforce development system.

(a) SWDB shall, in cooperation with DOL, ACCD, AOE, AHS, AAFM, ANR, and AOT, to conduct a public engagement process:

- due by February 1, 2020:
- to establish a vision and shared goals for meeting Vermont’s 21st century workforce education, training, recruitment, and retention needs;
- the vision and goals will serve as the basis for an action plan to revitalize Vermont’s workforce development system

(b) SWDB may create a social network map of workforce service deliver providers, employers, workforce program administrators, and industry representatives to:

- (1) develop baseline data about WD participation
- (2) analyze connectivity between people and WD programs
- (3) identify opportunities to achieve greater program alignment

(c) SWDB shall identify resources necessary to maintain social network map

(d) SWDB may conduct interviews of service providers, employers, employees, and WD participants

(e) SWDB may take steps to improve understanding about the WD system and WIOA

(f) SWDB, with DOL, ACCD, AOE, AHS, AAFM, ANR, and AOT, shall review State methods of engaging employers and evaluate tools to facilitate employer access to and retention of workers.

(g) SWDB shall review local and regional services and how to foster equitable provision of services and better regional collaboration with employers and partners.

(h) SWDB, following the public engagement process, may recommend steps to align funding sources to promote WD opportunities, new innovative programs, pilot projects, etc.

(i) DOL, with SWDB, shall facilitate information sharing with WD community during engagement process and redesign of the WD system.

Sec. 3. State Workforce Development; Career Pathways; Career Technical Education Recommendations

Sec. 3 addresses promotion, alignment, and duties relating to Career Pathways, CTE, apprenticeships, and similar work-based learning opportunities.

(a) Defines “Career Pathways”

(b) AOE, with SWDB, shall promote policies that support introduction of CTE opportunities, career readiness, and career awareness to middle school students.

(c) AOE, with SWDB, shall promote collaboration among middle schools and regional CTE centers that may result in:

(1) CTE courses and lessons to introduce Career Pathways and CTE to middle schoolers

(2) exposure to career opportunities;

(3) exposure to CTE programs

(d) AOE shall approve up to four pilot projects in a variety of CTE settings that model a unified funding structure or a unified governance structure, or both, designed to streamline the delivery of educational experiences to both high school students and CTE students

(e) Based on results of pilot projects, AOE shall recommend policies that:

(1) support access to CTE pre-tech for 9/10 grades

(2) allow 10th grade access to CTE programs

(f) AOE, with SWDB, shall ensure CTE centers provide programs of study aligned with an approved Career Pathway, and with a registered apprenticeship program when appropriate.

(g) AOE, with DOL and ACCD, shall implement a review process for Career Pathways to consider relevance, regional participation, pathways to postsecondary education and training, and ability gain credentials of value, credits, degrees, and employment

(h) AOE shall report Career Pathways review regularly to SWDB

(i) SWDB may identify funding opportunities to leverage to develop community-based Career Pathways responsive to local demands

(j) AOE shall ensure high school students have opportunity for meaningful work-based learning when supported by PLP

(k) The General Assembly shall create a permanent, classified position within the Agency of Education to perform the functions currently performed by the limited-service Career Pathways Coordinator position.

(l) AOE and DOL shall support coordination and alignment between regional CTEs and postsecondary schools to provide WET to secondary and adult students gain degree or stackable credential of value

(m) DOL shall be responsible for adult career technical education in the state, with AOE technical and program assistance.

Sec. 4. SWDB; Strengthening and Aligning Workforce Training Programs

Sec. 4 imposes SWDB duties relating to expanding and improving workforce training opportunities that lead to valuable, recognized credentials.

(a) SWDB shall:

- encourage, promote, and support the creation of registered apprenticeship programs, preapprenticeship programs, paid internships, occupational trainings, and other work-based and on-the-job learning opportunities that lead to industry-recognized certificates and credentials;

- consider ways to meet employers' immediate and long-term employment needs in a variety of ways, e.g., expanding apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and returnships

(b) SWDB shall create a process for identifying, monitoring, and evaluating occupational trainings and industry-recognized credentials.

(c) SWDB shall maintain a current list of recognized credentials and associated requirements, training programs, and costs.

(d) SWDB with OPR shall work to increase recognition of professional skills and credentialing across states, in addition to supporting professional paths that involve more than one industry-recognized, State-recognized, or federally recognized credential and rules adopted by the Office.

Sec. 5. SWDB; Growing the Size and Quality of the Workforce

Sec. 5 imposes duties relating to growing the size of the workforce and improving the quality of the workforce.

(a) DOL, ACCD, AOE, AHS, with SWDB, shall increase labor force participation, recruit and relocate new works, and assist businesses in locating and retraining workers.

(b) To do this, they shall engage stakeholders, identify targets/methods, leverage State and federal resources, and create metrics for success.

(c) SWDB may examine incentives to encourage workforce participation, including unemployment insurance waivers, income tax reductions, exemption of State tax on Social Security, housing and transportation vouchers.

Sec. 6. Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project

Sec. 6 makes findings and statements of support concerning the VTPMP:

- a statewide public and private partnership among the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation, Franklin/Grand Isle Workforce Investment Board, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Vermont Business Roundtable
- the purpose of which is to coordinate the network of training providers to deliver industry-recognized, State-recognized, and federally recognized credentials, job training, and workforce education in targeted job areas, sectors, and industries that connect to the skills employers are looking for when filling available positions.

Sec. 7. Results-Based Monitoring

Sec. 7 imposes duties relating to collecting adequate data and creating processes for evaluating the effectiveness of the workforce development system.

- (a) DOL, with GAC and SWDB, shall develop a framework to evaluate workforce education, training, and support programs and services and:
 - (1) create population-level indicators based on desired outcomes for the workforce development delivery system;
 - (2) along with social network mapping work that the Board may pursue, support program and service alignment of State-grant-funded projects with the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Plan;
 - (3) align with the Board's vision;
 - (4) note performance measures that already exist in the workforce system and identify where State-specific measures would help monitor progress in achieving the State's goals; and
 - (5) identify gaps in service delivery and areas of duplication in services.
- (b) SWDB shall review data currently collected and identify a process to improve collection and reporting of data.
- (c) SWDB may create a process and a timeline to collect program-level data for the purposes of updating the State's workforce system inventory.
- (d) SWDB may develop tools for program and service delivery providers that support continuous improvement using data-driven decision making, common information-sharing systems, and a customer-focused service delivery system.

Sec. 8 – Amendments to 10 V.S.A. Chapter 22A

Sec. 8 makes certain statutory changes within the workforce development chapter of Title 10 relating to expanding and improving the workforce, aligning Career Pathways and training, improving coordination within the system, and creating a “returnship” program.

§ 540 – Workforce Education and Training Leader

(1)(I) – Comm. of Labor, with SWDB, shall - with the assistance of the Secretaries of Commerce and Community Development, of Human Services, of Education, of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and of Transportation and of the Commissioner of Public Safety, develop and implement a coordinated system to recruit, relocate, and train workers to ensure the labor force needs of Vermont’s businesses are met.

(8) Comm. of Labor shall coordinate intentional outreach and connections between students graduating from Vermont’s colleges and universities and employment opportunities in Vermont.

§ 541a - SWDB

(2) SWDB shall regularly:

- (A) Review and approve State-endorsed Career Pathways
- (B) Publicize the State-endorsed Career Pathways

(3)(A) SWDB shall have authority to approve State-endorsed and industry-recognized credentials and certificates that are aligned with the Career Pathways.

(B)-(C) By July 1, 2019, SWDB shall design a review process that ensures:

- (i) business and industry are participants and are engaged early in the process;
- (ii) the credential-review process involves relevant stakeholders;
- (iii) credentials are differentiated based on rigor and industry demand; and
- (iv) systems are designed to be responsive to the changing needs of industry.

§ 543 – WET Fund; Grant Programs

(b)(4) WETF Funding shall be used for (4) assistance to small businesses for recruiting, including building connections with secondary and postsecondary institutions and others to locate, hire, and retain workers from among Vermont’s students and graduates;

(f)(3) – Comm. of Labor, with SWDB, may grant WETF awards to (3) Vermont Strong Returnship Program.

(g) Career Pathways. WETF programs resulting in a credit, certificate, or credential shall demonstrate alignment with a Career Pathway.

(h) Expanding offerings. A regional career and technical education center that develops an adult technical education program of study using funding under this section shall:

- (1) make the program materials available to other regional career and technical education centers and adult technical education programs;
- (2) to the extent possible, align the program with subsequent programs offered through the Vermont State College System, the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, or an accredited independent college located in Vermont; and
- (3) respond to current or projected occupational demands.

§ 545 – Vermont Strong Returnship Program

– created to provide an on-the-job learning experience working with an employer where an individual may, but does not necessarily, receive academic credit, financial remuneration, a stipend, or any combination of these.

- for individuals who are returning to the workforce after an extended absence or are seeking a limited-duration on-the-job work experience in a different occupation or occupational setting

- Funding awarded through the Program may be used to build and administer coordinated and cohesive programs and to provide participants with a stipend during the returnship, based on need

Sec. 9. Reservation of Funds; Appropriations

Sec. 9 makes specific reservations of funding and General Fund appropriations.

(a) – DOL shall reserve \$80,000 from existing funds to assist the SWDB in performing the duties specified in this act

(b) - \$100,000 for Vermont Strong Returnship Program

(c) - \$100,000 to DOL to implement the Vermont College Graduate Placement and Small Business Recruitment Initiative to provide small businesses with support and resources to more effectively recruit new employees from among graduates of Vermont's colleges and universities.

Sec. 10. Reporting

Sec. 10 imposes certain reporting requirements.

(a) – 1/15/19 – SWDB concerning implementation of act

(b) – 1/15/19 – DOL, with AOE and SWDB, on apprenticeships

Sec. 11. Effective Date – 7/1/2018