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H.79

Introduced by Representatives Partridge of Windham, Bartholomew of
Hartland, Bock of Chester, Fegard of Enosburgh, Graham of
Williamstown, Norris of Shoreham, O'Brien of Tunbridge,
Smith of New Haven, and Strong of Albany

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Agriculture; farm-to-school; grants; eligibility

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to provide that
organizations administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school
programs are eligible for grant assistance from the Farm-to-School Program at
the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

An act relating to eligibility for farm-to-school grant assistance

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

~~Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 4721 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 4721. LOCAL FOODS GRANT PROGRAM~~

~~(a) There is created in the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets the
Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School Program to execute, administer, and award
local grants for the purpose of helping Vermont schools develop farm-to-~~

1 ~~of programs that will sustain relationships with local farmers and producers,~~

2 enrich the educational experience of students, improve the health of Vermont
3 children, and enhance Vermont's agricultural economy.

4 (b) A school, a school district, a consortium of schools, a consortium of
5 school districts, ~~or a registered or licensed child care providers provider, or an~~
6 organization administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school
7 programs may apply to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets for a
8 grant award to:

9 (1) fund equipment, resources, training, and materials that will help to
10 increase use of local foods in child nutrition programs;

11 (2) fund items, including local food products, gardening supplies, field
12 trips to farms, gleanings on farms, and stipends to visiting farmers, that will
13 help educators to use hands-on educational techniques to teach children about
14 nutrition and farm-to-school connections;

15 (3) fund professional development and technical assistance, in
16 partnership with the Agency of Education and farm-to-school technical service
17 providers, to help teachers, child nutrition personnel, organizations
18 administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school programs, and
19 members of the farm-to-school community educate students about nutrition
20 and farm-to-school connections and assist schools and licensed or registered
21 ~~child care providers in developing a farm-to-school program, and~~

1 ~~(4) fund technical assistance or support strategies to increase~~
2 participation in federal child nutrition programs that increase the viability of
3 sustainable meal programs.

4 (c) The Secretaries of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education and
5 the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with farmers, child nutrition staff,
6 educators, organizations administering or assisting the development of farm-
7 to-school programs, and farm-to-school technical service providers jointly
8 shall adopt procedures relating to the content of the grant application and the
9 criteria for making awards.

10 (d) The Secretary shall determine that there is significant interest in the
11 school community before making an award and shall give priority
12 consideration to schools, school districts, and registered or licensed child care
13 providers that are developing farm-to-school connections and education, that
14 indicate a willingness to make changes to their child nutrition programs to
15 increase student access and participation, and that are making progress toward
16 the implementation of the Vermont School Wellness Policy Guidelines
17 developed by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Agency of
18 Education, and the Department of Health, updated in June 2015 or of the
19 successor of these guidelines.

20 ~~(e) No award shall be greater than \$15,000.00.~~

1 ~~Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

2 ~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.~~

Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 4721 is amended to read:

§ 4721. LOCAL FOODS GRANT PROGRAM

(a) There is created in the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets the Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School Program to execute, administer, and award local grants for the purpose of helping Vermont schools develop farm-to-school programs that will sustain relationships with local farmers and producers, enrich the educational experience of students, improve the health of Vermont children, and enhance Vermont's agricultural economy.

(b) A school, a school district, a consortium of schools, a consortium of school districts, ~~or a registered or licensed child care providers provider,~~ or an organization administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school programs may apply to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets for a grant award to:

(1) fund equipment, resources, training, and materials that will help to increase use of local foods in child nutrition programs;

(2) fund items, including local food products, gardening supplies, field trips to farms, gleaning on farms, and stipends to visiting farmers, that will help educators to use hands-on educational techniques to teach children about nutrition and farm-to-school connections;

(3) *fund professional development and technical assistance, in partnership with the Agency of Education and farm-to-school technical service providers, to help teachers, child nutrition personnel, organizations administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school programs, and members of the farm-to-school community educate students about nutrition and farm-to-school connections and assist schools and licensed or registered child care providers in developing a farm-to-school program; and*

(4) *fund technical assistance or support strategies to increase participation in federal child nutrition programs that increase the viability of sustainable meal programs.*

(c) *The Secretaries of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education and the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with farmers, child nutrition staff, educators, organizations administering or assisting the development of farm-to-school programs, and farm-to-school technical service providers jointly shall adopt procedures relating to the content of the grant application and the criteria for making awards.*

(d) *The Secretary shall determine that there is significant interest in the school community before making an award and shall give priority consideration to schools, school districts, and registered or licensed child care providers that are developing farm-to-school connections and education, that indicate a willingness to make changes to their child nutrition programs to*

increase student access and participation, and that are making progress toward the implementation of the Vermont School Wellness Policy Guidelines developed by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Agency of Education, and the Department of Health, updated in June 2015 or of the successor of these guidelines.

(e) No award shall be greater than ~~\$15,000.00~~ 20 percent of the total annual amount available for granting, with the exception of awards to service providers that may exceed the cap at the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.