



TO: House Committee on Corrections and Institutions
FROM: Sarah Buxton, State Director of Workforce Development
Vermont Department of Labor
RE: Adult CTE Equipment Grant Pilot; H.901
DATE: February 20, 2020

Attachments: 2019 Adult CTE Equipment Grant Application

Background: In 2018, Governor Scott proposed the creation of the Adult Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant Pilot Program to promote the expansion of Adult Career and Technical Education opportunities throughout the state. A key component, and heralded success, of this initiative has been the subsequent coordination between CTE centers, and now partners like the Department of Corrections, which has yielded deeper alignment in programs and service delivery. In FY 2019, \$400,000 was allocated to support the program. In FY 2020-2021, a total of \$600,000 has been allocated.

Grant Award Update:

Applicant/Grantee	Amount	Status
Riverbend Career and Technical Center	\$277,000	Awarded
Center for Technology, Essex	\$21,000	Awarded
Hannaford Career Center	\$42,628	Awarded
North County Career Center	\$29,475	Awarded
Southwest Career Development Center	\$63,500	Awarded
Total	\$433,603	Awarded
<i>St. Johnsbury Career & Technical Education Center</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>in conversation</i>

Current Program Language:

ADULT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION EQUIPMENT GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

(a) The General Assembly hereby establishes a pilot grant program to authorize the Department of Labor, in consultation with the State Workforce Development Board, to administer the Adult Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant Pilot Program to support the purchase of equipment necessary for the delivery of occupational training for students enrolled in a postsecondary course offered by Vermont's Career and Technical Education Centers.

(b) Career and Technical Education Centers are the only eligible applicants for grants awarded under the Program. Grants may only be awarded to applicants who demonstrate how use of the grant-funded equipment will be shared with at least one other Career and Technical Education Center, the Department of Corrections, or an accredited post-secondary college or university located in Vermont.

(c) An applicant's training program shall qualify for a grant described in subsection (a) of this section if it includes all of the following requirements:

- (1) meets current occupational demand, as evidenced by current labor market information;
- (2) aligns with a career pathway or set of stackable credentials involving a college or university accredited in Vermont;
- (3) is supported with a business or industry partnership;

- (4) sets forth how equipment will be maintained, insured, shared, and transported, if applicable; and
- (5) is endorsed by the Adult Career and Technical Education Association.

(d) Grants awarded under this program shall be used to purchase capital eligible equipment. Grants shall not be used to support curriculum development, instruction, or program administration.

(e) On or before July 15, 2018, the Department shall develop and publish a simplified grant application that meets the criteria described in subsection (b) of this section. The Department shall consult with the Agency of Education and the State Workforce Development Board in reviewing applications and selecting grantees.

(f) Grantees shall have ownership over any share of equipment purchased with the use of these funds. Any equipment purchased from this program may also be used by secondary career technical education programs.

H.901 Proposal Discussion: This pilot program was proposed to provide resources and incentives for adult career and technical education programs so that they may expand their offerings of technical skill trainings and the availability of the trainings to post-secondary students through requirements to share equipment with other centers. While the funding has certainly met a physical need, the value of this initiative extends beyond value of the dollars invested in equipment. Two parts of this program design have helped move Adult Career and Technical Education programs toward greater alignment as a system:

- The requirement to partner with other regional CTEs in delivering programming with the equipment
- The requirement that the Adult Career and Technical Education Association (ACTEA) review and recommend applications.

The conversations about center priorities, interests, strengths, and weaknesses that surround both steps have helped create stronger peer support and identify areas of synergy that are still growing. Adding new collaborators to the pilot in 2019 bolstered collaborative conversations – especially with connections between future connections unrelated to equipment between DOC, CTEs, VDOL, and AOE.

A personal observation of the program as it moves through year two: CTE directors and adult program coordinators seem to be navigating a fair degree of transition. I am not surprised to see a lull in applications at the moment as these key leaders are heavily engaged in either implementing current programs related to the grant, or are in various phases of applying for or standing up different grants with VDOL. I do expect to see a few more applications before the end of this fiscal year.

VDOL has considered H.901 and is supportive of minor modifications to program that would allow one or more of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) to be a direct applicant for the equipment funds. We recommend limiting the amount that they could receive to 50% of total amount appropriated, ensuring that their application include a partnership with a regional CTE center to share either space, equipment, etc., and that there is an articulated pathway from one or more programs at the regional CTE center to the VSC receiving the equipment.

Proposed Amendments to Program Language:

ADULT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION EQUIPMENT GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

(a) The General Assembly hereby establishes a pilot grant program to authorize the Department of Labor, in consultation with the State Workforce Development Board, to administer the Adult Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant Pilot Program to support the purchase of equipment

necessary for the delivery of occupational training for students enrolled in a postsecondary course offered by Vermont's Career and Technical Education Centers or a Vermont State College.

(b) Career and Technical Education Centers or a Vermont State College are the only eligible applicants for grants awarded under the Program. No more than 50% of the allocated funding under this provision may be awarded to the Vermont State Colleges.

(c) Grants may only be awarded to applicants who demonstrate how use of the grant-funded equipment will be:

(1) In the case of a Career and Technical Education Center applicant, shared with at least one other Career and Technical Education Center, the Department of Corrections, or an accredited post-secondary college or university located in Vermont, or

(2) In the case of a Vermont State College applicant, shared with at least one other Career and Technical Education Center or, if not shared, demonstrate an alignment in programming offered at a Career and Technical Education Center that results in an expanded career pathway in partnership with an adult career and technical education program.

(d) An applicant's training program shall qualify for a grant described in subsection (a) of this section if it includes all of the following requirements:

- (1) meets current occupational demand, as evidenced by current labor market information;
- (2) aligns with a career pathway or set of stackable credentials involving a college or university accredited in Vermont;
- (3) is supported with a business or industry partnership;
- (4) sets forth how equipment will be maintained, insured, shared, and transported, if applicable; and
- (5) is endorsed by the Adult Career and Technical Education Association.

(e) Grants awarded under this program shall be used to purchase capital eligible equipment. Grants shall not be used to support curriculum development, instruction, or program administration.

(f) On or before July 15, 2018, the Department shall develop and publish a simplified grant application that meets the criteria described in subsection (b) of this section. The Department shall consult with the Agency of Education and the State Workforce Development Board in reviewing applications and selecting grantees.

(g) Grantees shall have ownership over any share of equipment purchased with the use of these funds. Any equipment purchased from this program may also be used by secondary career technical education programs.