



TO: Roger Breed, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Donlynn Rice, Senior Administrator, Rich Katt CTE Director

SUBJECT: Grant to Building Bright Futures, Inc

Proposed Board Action:

Grant the Commissioner the authority to provide a continuation grant to Building Bright Futures, Inc. to provide funding for activities to promote gender nontraditional careers and provide support services for at-risk students as required and funded by the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

Background Information:

This is a continuation grant that will help Building Bright Futures, Inc. expand their efforts to provide college and career ready services to at-risk students in Douglas and Sarpy counties. It will target individuals that are interested in gender non-traditional careers, but will also focus on career counseling, academic support and technical skill attainment. The attached proposal provides the details of the grant. A grant was awarded in 2010 for a two-year period. This grant will allow Building Bright Futures, Inc. to continue their work for an additional two years.

This grant will satisfy the required use of funds as defined in Section 112, (A)(2)(B) of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 that requires a minimum of \$60,000 be expended on services that prepare individuals for gender non-traditional fields. The additional \$20,000 also addresses other required and permissive uses of funds as defined in Section 124(b) (6) and (8) and Section 124 (c) (8), (9), and (12).

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AAuthorizing statutory and/or regulatory authority:
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
Section 3.Definitions:
(20) NON-TRADITIONAL FIELDS.—The term ‘non-traditional fields’ means occupations or fields of work, including careers in computer science, technology, and other current and emerging high skill occupations, for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in each such occupation or field of work.

(29) SPECIAL POPULATIONS.—The term ‘special populations’ means—
(A) individuals with disabilities;
(B) individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children;
(C) individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
(D) single parents, including single pregnant women;
(E) displaced homemakers; and
(F) individuals with limited English proficiency.

(31) SUPPORT SERVICES.—The term ‘support services’ means services related to curriculum modification, equipment modification, classroom modification, supportive personnel, and instructional aids and devices.

SEC. 112. WITHIN STATE ALLOCATION.
(a) IN GENERAL.—From the amount allotted to each State under section 111 for a fiscal year, the eligible agency shall make available—
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(1) not less than 85 percent for distribution under section 131 or 132, of which not more than 10 percent of the 85 percent may be used in accordance with subsection (c);

(2) not more than 10% to carry out State leadership activities described in section 124, of which

(A) an amount equal to not more than 1 percent of the amount allotted to the State under section 111 for the fiscal year shall be made available to serve individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions and institutions that serve individuals with disabilities; and

(B) not less than \$60,000 and not more than \$150,000 shall be available for services that prepare individuals for non-traditional fields;

SEC. 124. STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—From amounts reserved under section 112(a)(2), each eligible agency shall conduct State leadership activities.

(b) REQUIRED USES OF FUNDS.—The State leadership activities described in subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an assessment of the career and technical education programs carried out with funds under this title, including an assessment of how the needs of special populations are being met and how the career and technical education programs are designed to enable special populations to meet State adjusted levels of performance and prepare the special populations for further education, further training, or for high skill, high wage, or high demand occupations;

(2) developing, improving, or expanding the use of technology in career and technical education that may include—

(A) training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, and administrators to use technology, including distance learning;

(B) providing career and technical education students with the academic and career and technical skills (including the mathematics and science knowledge that provides a strong basis for such skills) that lead to entry into technology fields, including non-traditional fields; or

(C) encouraging schools to collaborate with technology industries to offer voluntary internships and mentoring programs;

(3) professional development programs, including providing comprehensive professional development (including initial teacher preparation) for career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors at the secondary and postsecondary levels, that support activities described in section 122 and—

(A) provide in-service and preservice training in career and technical education programs—

(i) on effective integration and use of challenging academic and career and technical education provided jointly with academic teachers to the extent practicable;

(ii) on effective teaching skills based on research that includes promising practices;

(iii) on effective practices to improve parental and community involvement; and

(iv) on effective use of scientifically based research and data to improve instruction;

(B) are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom, and are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;

(C) will help teachers and personnel to improve student achievement in order to meet the State adjusted levels of performance established under section 113;

(D) will support education programs for teachers of career and technical education in public schools and other public school personnel who are involved in the direct delivery of educational services to career and technical education students to ensure that teachers and personnel—

(i) stay current with the needs, expectations, and methods of industry;

(ii) can effectively develop rigorous and challenging, integrated academic and career and technical education curricula jointly with academic teachers, to the extent practicable;

(iii) develop a higher level of academic and industry knowledge and skills in career and technical education; and

(iv) effectively use applied learning that contributes to the academic and career and technical knowledge of the student; and

(E) are coordinated with the teacher certification or licensing and professional development activities that the State carries out under title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965;

(4) supporting career and technical education programs that improve the academic and career and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical components of such career and technical education programs, through the integration of coherent and relevant content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education, to ensure achievement in—

(A) the core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965); and

(B) career and technical education subjects;

(5) providing preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high skill, high wage occupations;

(6) supporting partnerships among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and, as appropriate, other entities, such as employers, labor organizations, intermediaries, parents, and local partnerships, to enable students to achieve State academic standards, and career and technical skills, or complete career and technical programs of study, as described in section 122(c)(1)(A);

- (7) serving individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions and institutions that serve individuals with disabilities;
- (8) support for programs for special populations that lead to high skill, high wage, or high demand occupations; and
- (9) technical assistance for eligible recipients.
- (c) PERMISSIBLE USES OF FUNDS.—The leadership activities described in subsection (a) may include—
- (1) improvement of career guidance and academic counseling programs that assist students in making informed academic and career and technical education decisions, including—
- (A) encouraging secondary and postsecondary students to graduate with a diploma or degree; and
- (B) exposing students to high skill, high wage occupations and non-traditional fields;
- (2) establishment of agreements, including articulation agreements, between secondary school and postsecondary career and technical education programs in order to provide postsecondary education and training opportunities for students participating in such career and technical education programs, such as tech prep programs;
- (3) support for initiatives to facilitate the transition of subbaccalaureate career and technical education students into baccalaureate degree programs, including—
- (A) statewide articulation agreements between associate degree granting career and technical postsecondary educational institutions and baccalaureate degree granting postsecondary educational institutions;
- (B) postsecondary dual and concurrent enrollment programs;
- (C) academic and financial aid counseling; and
- (D) other initiatives—
- (i) to encourage the pursuit of a baccalaureate degree; and
- (ii) to overcome barriers to participation in baccalaureate degree programs, including geographic and other barriers affecting rural students and special populations;
- (4) support for career and technical student organizations, especially with respect to efforts to increase the participation of students who are members of special populations;
- (5) support for public charter schools operating career and technical education programs;
- (6) support for career and technical education programs that offer experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry for which students are preparing to enter;
- (7) support for family and consumer sciences programs;
- (8) support for partnerships between education and business or business intermediaries, including cooperative education and adjunct faculty arrangements at the secondary and postsecondary levels;
- (9) support to improve or develop new career and technical education courses and initiatives, including career clusters, career academies, and distance education, that prepare individuals academically and technically for high skill, high wage, or high demand occupations;
- (10) awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients—
- (A) for exemplary performance in carrying out programs under this Act, which awards shall be based on—
- (i) eligible recipients exceeding the local adjusted levels of performance established under section 113(b) in a manner that reflects sustained or significant improvement;
- (ii) eligible recipients effectively developing connections between secondary education and postsecondary education and training;
- (iii) the adoption and integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and technical coursework;
- (iv) eligible recipients' progress in having special populations who participate in career and technical education programs meet local adjusted levels of performance; or
- (v) other factors relating to the performance of eligible recipients under this Act as the eligible agency determines are appropriate; or
- (B) if an eligible recipient elects to use funds as permitted under section 135(c)(19);
- (11) providing for activities to support entrepreneurship education and training;
- (12) providing career and technical education programs for adults and school dropouts to complete their secondary school education, in coordination, to the extent practicable, with activities authorized under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act;
- (13) providing assistance to individuals, who have participated in services and activities under this title, in continuing the individuals' education or training or finding appropriate jobs, such as through referral to the system established under section 121 of Public Law 105–220;
- (14) developing valid and reliable assessments of technical skills;
- (15) developing and enhancing data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes;
- (16) improving—
- (A) the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in the teaching profession; and

(B) the transition to teaching from business and industry, including small business; and
(17) support for occupational and employment information resources, such as those described in section 118.

Estimated Cost:

The Grant Award would authorize \$80,000 each year for two years. Year two would be dependent upon availability of federal funds.

Supporting Documentation Included:

Building Bright Futures

"Meeting the Academic Needs of Nontraditional and At-Risk Students"

January 1, 2012–December 31, 2013

Through a partnership between Building Bright Futures and the Nebraska Department of Education, school districts and community partners, this project will provide academic supports that target college and career readiness for students in Douglas & Sarpy Counties who are pursuing nontraditional careers and at-risk youth who are not on track to graduate or are near disengagement from high school.

Building Bright Futures

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is an Omaha non-profit organization, established in 2006, whose long-range mission is to improve academic performance, raise graduation rates, increase civic and community responsibility, and ensure that all students are prepared for postsecondary education. BBF develops partnerships with existing providers and school districts, and creates evidence-based programs to develop a comprehensive, community-based network of services.

Goals of Building Bright Futures

- Improve academic achievement
- Increase the number of students who graduate from high school prepared for work or postsecondary education
- Provide postsecondary educational opportunities to every economically disadvantaged high school graduate in the Douglas and Sarpy County area
- Increase civic participation and community responsibility

BBF has identified the following shared outcomes as a foundation for success in school and life.

- 1) Students will attend school 96% of the time.
 - 2) Students will meet or exceed standards in Reading, Math and Writing, measured with annual Nebraska State Accountability Test scores (NeSA) for grades 3-8 and grade 11.
 - 3) Students will maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above annually for grades 7-12.
 - 4) Students will graduate from high school.
 - 5) Students' behavior will preclude any suspensions or expulsions.
 - 6) Students will participate in service learning as a means to demonstrate civic participation and community responsibility.
- Additionally, community stakeholders will define the outcomes of kindergarten readiness and college & career readiness.

BBF's primary program areas:

- Early Childhood – Efforts support teen parents in school and those who have dropped out of school, and support early childcare centers in the BBF ECS Network of Excellence.
- Health – Efforts support youth at risk of being unsuccessful due to a lack of access to quality health care and information by providing health care services and referrals to appropriate health care providers.
- Academic Supports & Student Engagement – Efforts encompass two ideas at the most basic level: students must be in school to have a chance of demonstrating achievement, and students must have access to supports both in school and when they are not in school. This includes the following:
 - Student Engagement, Attendance & Service Learning - designed to identify and assist students with chronic absenteeism to stay in school by addressing the issues tied to absenteeism.
 - Mentoring - links at-risk youth with a significant adult and builds a pool of diverse mentors to serve a diverse student population through the Midlands Mentoring Partnership.
 - After School - connects at-risk middle school youth with out-of-school activities that support improved academic achievement, enhancing relevancy and engagement, in collaboration with local provider partners.

▫ Academic Supports and Re-Engagement - includes various supports and interventions essential for building the academic foundation for nontraditional students to be successful in high school, postsecondary education and in most careers. BBF's re-engagement center – The D2 Center | Directions Diploma – serves disengaged and out-of-school youth ages 15-20, providing the opportunity for re-engagement in an educational program.

Project Background

This project began in January, 2010 with a focus on establishing a comprehensive, coordinated model for implementation of specific strategies toward college and career readiness for students pursuing nontraditional careers and at-risk students from Douglas and Sarpy Counties. These efforts were carried out through Building Bright Futures' programmatic focus areas and 15 pilot schools in this two-county area. Progress toward this goal was realized through collaboration with school districts and community providers and included the establishment of BBF's re-engagement center, The D2 Center | Directions Diploma. Serving youth ages 15-20 who are at-risk and are disengaged and out-of-school, the D2 Center provides youth with an opportunity for re-engagement in an educational pathway toward graduation.

The project will now heighten its efforts toward working with youth who are pursuing nontraditional careers and will target such at-risk student populations as pregnant and parenting teens (moms and dads) who are enrolled in BBF's Teen & Young Parent Program. Through BBF's D2 Center, these teens will benefit from opportunities that support academic achievement and completion of their high school education. Other target populations include students who are over age/under credit, students from low-income families, youth referred by county court due to chronic absenteeism, and English Language Learners (ELL).

During this period of performance, efforts will be expanded into BBF's 23 pilot schools in Omaha, Millard and Ralston Public Schools.

Through this proposal, at-risk youth and students pursuing nontraditional careers will receive academic supports needed to pursue a pathway toward high school graduation. This includes access to a system of nontraditional, elective credit-bearing and experiential learning opportunities that can be applied toward high school graduation by students at various grade levels, including youth enrolled in after-school programs – with a specific focus on disengaged, off-track and out-of-school youth and enhancing nontraditional career pathways. Additionally, the project will include expansion of several existing tools and strategies to increase awareness among students and parents of the resources available to improve academic achievement. This includes expanding the use of Nebraska Career Connections, an on-line tool that identifies career goals and heightens student awareness of related career opportunities; access to tutor.com, a free on-line tutoring resource for youth holding an Omaha Public Library card; and the Avenue Scholars Foundation, which offers education and relationship support for low-income students. This project will include presentations, training and other hands-on activities among targeted populations to increase awareness of these academic supports and the various nontraditional career options available to youth.

Project Strategies

Strategies toward college and career readiness support the Nebraska Department of Education plan for "Overcoming Barriers to Career Education for Special Populations: A Strategic Plan for Nebraska."

- Emphasize college and career readiness among elementary and secondary schools by providing structured, on-going career guidance for students and parents. (Strategy A).
- Provide a broad range of extended learning opportunities (ELOs) for secondary students (Strategy C).
- Expand availability of student support programs that target college and career readiness (Strategy D).

Project Objectives

- Expand efforts toward implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated model into 23 pilot schools that link school and community in closing achievement gaps and strengthening postsecondary education readiness for low-income youth in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. (Strategy D)
- Expand the use of a school improvement framework, such as Making Middle Grades Work and High Schools that Work in BBF's pilot schools to include a focus on college and career readiness. (Strategy A and D)
- Expand the use of Nebraska Career Connections by schools and community partners with at-risk students, students pursuing nontraditional careers and parents in the 2-county area. (Strategy A & C)
- Expand the use of tutor.com by students attending school in the two-county area. (Strategy A & C)
- Expand the Math Teacher Assistant (MTA) program through increased numbers of MTAs and participating teachers in Omaha, Millard and Ralston middle schools. (Strategy A & C)
- Implement a data collection and reporting process that connects all students, including at-risk students and students pursuing nontraditional careers, with services and supports aligned with BBF program areas. (Strategy A, C and D)

For Additional Information on this item:

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