

As Reported by the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

Sub. H. B. No. 98

Representatives Santucci, Williams

Cosponsors: Representatives Fischer, John, Klopfenstein, Claggett, Mullins,  
Thomas, D., Workman, Daniels

To enact section 3301.25 of the Revised Code to  
establish the Community Connectors Workforce  
Program and to make an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3301.25 of the Revised Code be  
enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 3301.25. (A) The department of education and  
workforce shall establish the community connectors workforce  
program to support connecting students to jobs, internships, and  
career professionals in their communities.

(B) (1) The department shall oversee the program, and each  
educational service center shall administer the program for the  
school districts that have entered into a contract with the  
educational service center under division (B) of section  
3313.843 of the Revised Code. Each educational service center  
shall, to the extent that funds are appropriated by the general  
assembly to do so, employ or contract for services with at least  
one, but not more than three, individuals to work as directors  
in high schools in the districts that have entered into a  
contract with the educational service center under division (B)

of section 3313.843 of the Revised Code. Each educational 20  
service center shall determine the number of directors it 21  
employs or contracts with under this section. 22

(2) Educational service centers shall determine any 23  
eligibility or application requirements for the directors, 24  
however the director shall have experience in job placement, 25  
school counseling, or primary and secondary education. 26

(C) Directors identified under division (B) of this 27  
section shall do all of the following: 28

(1) Collaborate with local OhioMeansJobs centers and other 29  
community partners, as identified by the director, to identify 30  
available jobs, apprenticeships, and internships in the 31  
community, and engage students in career mentoring with 32  
community members; 33

(2) Determine the number of students that may participate 34  
in the program at the district or school; 35

(3) Create an application and procedures to apply for the 36  
program and, as a part of the application procedures, interview 37  
students and administer an aptitude test, as selected by the 38  
director, to assess their professional skills to determine a 39  
student's eligibility and preparedness to participate in the 40  
program; 41

(4) Consider a student's graduation plan developed under 42  
section 3313.617 of the Revised Code when placing that student 43  
in a job, apprenticeship, or internship through the program; 44

(5) Offer dedicated and regular classroom instruction to 45  
the maximum number of students possible in soft skills and 46  
professional skills training, including problem-solving, time 47  
management, creative and critical thinking, communication and 48

civility, and ethics. If a district or school currently offers 49  
similar instruction the director shall collaborate with those 50  
instructors, other appropriate school officials that have 51  
commensurate experience, and professionals who support the 52  
development of career and life pathways in the school. Students 53  
may use instruction under division (B) (4) of this section to 54  
qualify for the OhioMeansJobs-readiness seal established under 55  
section 3313.6112 of the Revised Code. 56

(6) Report to the educational service center that employs 57  
or contracts with the director and to the department of 58  
education and workforce all of the following: 59

(a) The number of students participating in the program; 60

(b) The number of students who are placed in jobs, 61  
apprenticeships, or internships through the program; 62

(c) The number of students who receive soft skills and 63  
professional skills training offered by the director. 64

(D) Any business or organization that employs a student 65  
through the program shall comply with the applicable minor labor 66  
laws prescribed under section 4109.02 of the Revised Code. 67

**Section 2.** All items in this act are hereby appropriated 68  
as designated out of any moneys in the state treasury to the 69  
credit of the designated fund. For all operating appropriations 70  
made in this act, those in the first column are for fiscal year 71  
2026 and those in the second column are for fiscal year 2027. 72  
The operating appropriations made in this act are in addition to 73  
any other operating appropriations made for these fiscal years. 74

**Section 3.** 75

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A	EDU DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE				
B	General Revenue Fund				
C	GRF	200556	Community Connectors Workforce Program	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000
D	TOTAL GRF General Revenue Fund			\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000
E	TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS			\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS 77

The foregoing appropriation item 200556, Community 78  
Connectors Workforce Program, shall be used for the Community 79  
Connectors Workforce Program created in section 3301.25 of the 80  
Revised Code. 81

Of the foregoing appropriation item 200556, Community 82  
Connectors Workforce Program, \$4,000,000 in each fiscal year 83  
shall be allocated equally among educational service centers. 84

Of the foregoing appropriation item 200556, Community 85  
Connectors Workforce Program, \$4,000,000 in each fiscal year 86  
shall be allocated to educational service centers in proportion 87  
to the number of students in each center's student count 88  
calculated under division (G) (1) of section 3313.843 of the 89  
Revised Code. 90

**Section 4.** Within the limits set forth in this act, the 91  
Director of Budget and Management shall establish accounts 92  
indicating the source and amount of funds for each appropriation 93  
made in this act, and shall determine the manner in which 94

appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures from	95
operating appropriations contained in this act shall be	96
accounted for as though made in, and are subject to all	97
applicable provisions of, the main operating appropriations act	98
of the 136th General Assembly.	99