

HOUSE BILL NO. 295

INTRODUCED BY F. ANDERSON

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROMOTING WORK-BASED LEARNING IN MONTANA PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CREATING A TEMPORARY WORK-BASED LEARNING INNOVATION PROGRAM; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

WHEREAS, Montana has a shortage of career and technical education teachers; and
WHEREAS, Montana has a shortage of skilled workers overall; and
WHEREAS, the percentage of young people working has declined in recent decades; and
WHEREAS, a great amount of learning can take place outside classroom walls, and especially in work settings; and

WHEREAS, students applying skills they have learned at school in a work setting reinforces the relevancy of those skills; and

WHEREAS, increased collaboration between school districts and employers creates a win-win situation, more effectively utilizes resources, and most importantly increases opportunities for students; and

WHEREAS, a small number of school districts successfully implementing high-quality work-based learning approaches offers the greatest likelihood of more school districts following their lead.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Work-based learning innovation program -- grants. (1) The purpose of this section is to encourage school districts to collaborate with employers and workforce development entities to implement high-quality work-based learning.

(2) The superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with workforce development entities, shall create a work-based learning innovation program to stimulate the development of work-based learning in Montana schools.

(3) The work-based learning innovation program must involve:
(a) conducting a statewide awareness campaign to promote understanding and interest in work-based learning for teachers, administrators, parents, students, employers, and policymakers;



- 1 (b) providing information, guidance, and technical support to school districts and employers on
2 implementing high-quality work-based learning;
- 3 (c) selecting a cohort of no more than 20 school districts that have demonstrated a commitment to
4 implementing high-quality work-based learning in one or more schools to participate in the program. In selecting
5 school districts, the superintendent shall strive to include districts of varying sizes and locations to serve as
6 models for other districts in the future. The superintendent shall include, at a minimum, the following selection
7 criteria:
- 8 (i) evidence that the district has begun collaboration with area employers and workforce development
9 entities to identify:
- 10 (A) workforce sectors in the area that are experiencing a skilled workforce shortage; and
11 (B) opportunities for students to engage in work-based learning in the high-need sectors identified in
12 subsection (3)(c)(i)(A); and
- 13 (ii) evidence of commitment by area employers to partner in providing work-based learning opportunities
14 for students.
- 15 (d) convening representatives of the cohort described in subsection (3)(c) for:
- 16 (i) developing sequenced and actionable plans to implement or expand work-based learning;
17 (ii) identifying barriers and possible solutions in implementing work-based learning;
18 (iii) sharing insights and disseminating information; and
19 (iv) any other purpose considered necessary by the superintendent and members of the cohort;
- 20 (e) partnering with employers, workforce development entities, and other organizations in any manner
21 that supports work-based learning, as determined by the superintendent and members of the cohort;
- 22 (f) providing financial support in the form of equitably distributed grants to districts to support district
23 efforts to implement high-quality work-based learning; and
- 24 (g) using the knowledge gained from the experiences of the cohort to develop recommendations and
25 guidance for other districts interested in innovating in a similar manner.
- 26 (4) On or before September 15, 2020, the superintendent shall report to the education interim committee
27 on the progress made through the work-based learning innovation program and on any legislative changes that
28 would benefit innovations related to work-based learning.
- 29 (5) The legislature acknowledges that innovation is often disruptive to existing systems and urges entities
30 whose current structures may impede work-based learning innovations in Montana's elementary and secondary

1 schools to reexamine those structures and develop flexibilities so that school districts' ability to innovate is not
2 impeded.

3 (6) For the purposes of this section, "work-based learning" means an approach to education that
4 emphasizes providing students with real-life work experiences during the school year and over the summer in
5 which students can apply academic and technical skills and develop their employability.

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7 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation.** There is appropriated \$500,000 from the general fund to
8 the office of public instruction for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, for the work-based learning innovation
9 program established in [section 1].

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11 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
12 integral part of Title 20, chapter 7, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, apply to [section 1].

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14 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2019.

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16 **NEW SECTION. Section 5. Termination.** [This act] terminates June 30, 2021.

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