

CHAPTER 403

AN ACT concerning the establishment of Work and Learn Consortiums by certain educational institutions and supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.18A:54-42 Definitions relative to Work and Learn Consortiums.

1. As used in this act:

“Guided pathway” means a set map of courses that are clearly identified and aligned with further education and career advancement. A guided pathway shows a student the entire program of study from its beginning to its end.

“Program” means a program operated by a Work and Learn Consortium established pursuant to section 2 of this act.

“Stackable credentials” means industry-recognized, short-term credentials and certificates that count toward a higher-level certificate or degree so that individuals may advance in employment and training over the course of their careers.

“Stop-out point” means a point at which a student may exit a program with an industry-valued credential, with the opportunity to re-enter the program without penalty or loss of progress.

C.18A:54-43 Work and Learn Consortium.

2. a. A county college and a county vocational school district shall enter into a Work and Learn Consortium for the purpose of creating certificate and degree programs that lead to employment in industries in which there is a high demand for qualified employees. The consortium shall work in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the local workforce investment board to address the highest areas of labor demand in New Jersey as identified by the department.

b. The purpose of the programs developed by a consortium shall be to: foster collaboration between academic and non-academic entities; provide students with an opportunity to earn stackable credentials that will increase the likelihood of employment in industries of high demand and future growth in the State; develop a guided pathway for students to earn those credentials; and allow enrolled students to choose among multiple program stop-out points.

C.18A:54-44 Components of Work and Learn Consortium.

3. A Work and Learn Consortium shall include the following components:

a. The county vocational school district shall award the high school diploma, provide training, and award early certificates.

b. The county college shall:

(1) award certificates and the associate degree;

(2) coordinate the program’s internship component;

(3) develop the guided pathway;

(4) provide student advising services and student support services; and

(5) award prior learning assessment credits for experience and knowledge acquired while working.

c. The local workforce investment board shall:

(1) identify business and industries that have a workforce demand; and

(2) assist in the recruitment of persons who are unemployed or want to change career.

The local workforce investment board shall have a satellite location on the county college campus.

d. A Work and Learn Consortium shall work to form partnerships with:

- (1) four-year public or independent institutions of higher education to provide additional certificates and baccalaureate degrees under the stackable credentials program;
- (2) the local chamber of commerce in order to identify business and industry partners and to market and promote the consortium; and
- (3) business and industry in order to identify industry trends and required certifications, credentials, and training, and to provide internships to enrolled students.

e. There shall be an advisory board for each Work and Learn Consortium program. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development , the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Department of Education shall provide support to the advisory board, and shall share trend analysis data related to economic growth.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 21, 2020.