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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

**H.B. 98**  
**136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

## Bill Analysis

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**Version:** As Reported by House Workforce and Higher Education

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Santucci and Williams

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### SUMMARY

- Establishes the Community Connectors Workforce Program designed to connect students to jobs, internships, and career professionals in their communities.
- Requires educational service centers to administer the program, including employing directors in high schools where the program services are offered.
- Makes an appropriation.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Program oversight

The bill requires the Department of Education and Workforce to establish and oversee the Community Connectors Workforce Program; however, educational service centers (ESCs) are tasked with administering the program for the districts that have entered into a contract with the ESC. If the General Assembly appropriates funds for this program, each ESC must employ or contract for services with at least one, but not more than three, directors to work in the high schools that have entered into a contract with the ESC. The ESCs are responsible for determining the appropriate number of directors and any eligibility or application requirements for the directors, except that the bill requires the directors to have experience in job placement, school counseling, or primary and secondary education.<sup>1</sup>

#### Director responsibilities

Under the bill, the directors must:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3301.25(A) and (B).

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3301.25(C).

1. Collaborate with local OhioMeansJobs centers and other community partners to identify jobs, apprenticeships, and internships in the community, and engage students in career mentoring with community members;
2. Determine the number of students that may participate in the program at the district or school;
3. Create an application and interview process to assess a student's preparedness to participate in the program;
4. Consider a student's graduation plan when placing that student in a job, apprenticeship, or internship through the program;
5. Offer dedicated and regular classroom instruction to the maximum number of students possible in soft skills and professional skills training, including problem solving, time management, creative and critical thinking, communication and civility, and ethics, which may be used to qualify a student for the OhioMeansJobs-readiness graduation seal. If a district already offers similar instruction, the director must collaborate with the instructors, other appropriate school officials that have commensurate experience, and professionals who support the development of career and life pathways in the school;<sup>3</sup>
6. Make a report to the ESC and the Department.

## **Reporting requirements and compliance**

The bill requires the program directors to report to the ESC and the Department the following:

1. The number of students participating in the program;
2. The number of students who are placed in jobs, apprenticeships, or internships through the program; and
3. The number of students who receive soft skills and professional skills training through the director.

Additionally, the bill requires any business or organization that employs a student through the program to comply with minor labor laws.<sup>4</sup>

## **Funding**

The bill appropriates \$8 million from the General Revenue Fund for the program in each of FYs 2026 and 2027. The bill requires \$4 million each fiscal year to be allocated equally among ESCs and \$4 million to be allocated to ESCs in proportion to the number of students in each center's student count.

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<sup>3</sup> R.C. 3313.6112, not in the bill.

<sup>4</sup> R.C. 3301.25(D); R.C. 4109.02, not in the bill.

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## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-12-25
Reported, H. Workforce and Higher Education	05-14-25

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