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S.B. 117
(1_135_2688)
135th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for S.B. 117's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: In House Finance

Primary Sponsors: Sens. Cirino and McColley

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill transfers about \$4.7 million cash from the GRF to the State Board of Education Licensure Fund (Fund 4L20) to support the State Board of Education's operating expenses.
- The bill appropriates \$2 million from the GRF in FY 2025 for the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) to support the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-secondary Regional Partnerships Program.
- The bill may increase the administrative costs of DEW and the Ohio Department of Higher Education to develop and implement the program. At least some of the additional costs related to administering the program may be offset by a portion of the bill's appropriation.
- School districts, other public schools, and state institutions of higher education that choose to participate in the program will incur costs to carry out their regional partnership's activities. Presumably, most or all of these costs will be offset by the state grants supported by the bill's appropriation.

Detailed Analysis

GRF cash transfer to the State Board of Education Licensure Fund

The bill transfers \$4.7 million cash from the GRF to the State Board of Education Licensure Fund (Fund 4L20) to shore up Fund 4L20's cash balance. This fund, supported by license fees paid by teachers and other school staff, is used by the State Board of Education to pay its operating expenses, which are primarily associated with the issuance and renewal of educator credentials, investigating and disciplining cases of educator misconduct, and participating in the Retained

Applicant Fingerprint Database (RAPBACK), a continuous criminal record monitoring service overseen by the Attorney General’s Office. License fees were last increased in 2008. The fund’s expenditures generally have exceeded its revenues each year since FY 2015. Fund 4L20 expenditures increased in FY 2024 to pay for new State Board costs as a stand-alone agency that Fund 4L20 did not support prior to the transfer of state K-12 governance to the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) in H.B. 33. Since the beginning of FY 2024, the fund’s cash balance has decreased from \$5.6 million to \$3.1 million currently.

Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-secondary Regional Partnerships Program

Overview

The bill creates the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-secondary Regional Partnerships Program to support and establish early childhood to post-secondary regional partnerships across the state to increase educational attainment and economic mobility outcomes for children and adults. A partnership must consist of prenatal-to-five early learning programs, primary and secondary schools, out-of-school time providers, post-secondary institutions, and workforce and community partners that are located in the same region. DEW, in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), will be responsible for administering the program, including distributing grants to eligible applicants, though DEW is primarily responsible for implementation of the program. Beginning January 1, 2025, the bill requires the Department of Children and Youth to join the collaboration.

In essence, the bill codifies and renames the Regional Education Partnership Grant Program. The General Assembly funded this program with \$2 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds appropriated for FY 2022 in H.B. 169 of the 134th General Assembly. DEW used the funds to distribute grants to support regional collaboration pilot programs among early learning, primary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, and workforce partners that align educational resources with regional in-demand jobs and workforce skills. According to DEW, the grants supported 11 partnerships. These partnerships and their managing partner (per DEW, the entity coordinating and leading the partnership’s work on a daily basis) are listed in the “**Appendix**” at the end of this fiscal note.

Program funding

The bill appropriates \$2 million in FY 2025 from GRF line item 200545, Career-Technical Education Enhancements, for DEW to support the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-secondary Regional Partnerships Program. Presumably, most or all of the appropriation will be distributed as grants to support existing partnerships and establish new ones. The bill requires DEW and ODHE to work to ensure that at least one partnership exists within each of the six different regions determined by JobsOhio. Partnerships applying for the grant program must be able to demonstrate their commitment to addressing all areas of the education and workforce continuum over time, including a commitment to measure and report targeted attainment outcome metrics, as well as how it will align its mission and work with other entities in the region relating to education, business, and health. Each qualifying partnership will then be required to report on the region’s performance metrics in a range of specified areas. The bill provides discretion to DEW and ODHE in determining the amount of the grants. As a point of reference, DEW set the maximum grant award for the Regional Education Partnership Grant Program at

\$200,000 for new or emerging partnerships and \$150,000 for established partnerships. The bill does not require local matching funds in order to receive a grant. However, it is worth noting that, when evaluating Regional Education Partnership Grant Program applications, DEW awarded bonus points to applicants that contributed matching funds.

DEW and ODHE may incur administrative costs to develop and administer the program. Administrative functions required by the bill consist of convening quarterly meetings of a cohort of regional partnerships to discuss best practices, grant administration, and reporting the program's progress and outcomes. At least some of any new administrative costs may be offset by DEW using a portion of the bill's appropriation for that purpose.

School districts, other public schools, and state institutions of higher education that choose to participate in the partnerships will incur costs associated with facilitating their partnership's activities, as well as reporting on the performance metrics for their region. The bill gives qualifying applicants flexibility in how they operate their regional partnerships, so costs may vary depending on the partnership's services and activities. Presumably, most or all of these costs will be offset by the grants the partnerships receive. As another point of reference, Regional Education Partnership grant recipients were able to use the funds for (1) staffing and professional development, (2) membership into national networks focused on increasing educational attainment, (3) facility rental and virtual tools to host partnership activities, (4) strategic planning facilitators or project management support, (5) development of communication materials, (6) services and programming for students, (7) professional learning opportunities for educators, employers, and other community members, (8) data analytics and data sharing, (9) limited technology or software needs, and (10) other uses approved by DEW.

Synopsis of Fiscal Effect Changes

- The substitute bill (I_135_2688) removes all provisions of the Senate-passed (previous) bill, which were enacted as part of H.B. 33, the main operating appropriations act of the 135th General Assembly. The previous bill appropriated a total of \$12 million in each of FY 2024 and FY 2025 from GRF appropriation line item 235533, Program and Project Support, in the Ohio Department of Higher Education's (ODHE) budget, to establish five independent academic units within Cleveland State University, Miami University, the Ohio State University, the University of Cincinnati, and the University of Toledo.
- The substitute bill adds the provisions creating the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-secondary Regional Partnerships Program and appropriating \$2 million from the GRF in FY 2025 for the Department of Education and Workforce to support it.
- The substitute bill adds the provision transferring \$4.7 million cash from the GRF to the State Board of Education Licensure Fund (Fund 4L20).

Appendix

H.B. 169 Regional Education Partnership Grant Recipients	
Partnership	Managing Partner
Learn to Earn Dayton	Learn to Earn Dayton
Pickaway Works Regional Education Partnership	Pickaway WORKS
Office for Advancing Strategy Partnerships Institutional Relations and Economy (ASPIRE)	Miami University
Cradle to Career Cincinnati	YMCA of Greater Cincinnati
Southern Ohio K-6 Careers	Ohio Valley Educational Service Center
Fairfield 33 Development Alliance	Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development
West Central Ohio Regional Education Partnership	Edison State Community College
Northwest Ohio Regional Education Partners	Toledo Tomorrow
East Central Ohio Regional Partnership	Cambridge Area YMCA Family Center
Gallia-Jackson-Vinton-Meigs Regional Partnership	Gallia Jackson Vinton JVSD
Summit Education Initiative	Summit Education Initiative