



September Funding Tip

The Finance Project is pleased to announce the next installment in a series of [monthly funding tips](#) for youth programs. These tips cover different financing strategies to help programs finance and sustain their work.

Tip: Access Education Dollars to Support Workforce Development Services for Youth

State and local education dollars can provide a stable source of funding to youth programs that support workforce development, particularly those that provide alternative education pathways, blend academic and workforce development services, and integrate school-to-work activities. Connecting Activities (CA), for example, is an initiative of the Massachusetts state education department that aims to drive and sustain the statewide school-to-career system. CA provides paid worksite learning experiences to high school students participating in school-to-career initiatives, with priority given to those who are academically at-risk. Funds for the program flow to local workforce investment boards and pay for staff to recruit employers, prepare and place students in work-based learning, and structure those experiences. State funds leverage dollars that employers pay in student wages. In fiscal year 2005, \$4.1 million in state funds leveraged nearly \$35 million in employer-paid wages.

Youth workforce development program leaders might also want to partner with charter schools as another means to finance their programs. States with charter schools laws can provide per-pupil funding that is used to support programs that offer academic and workforce development services to at-risk and out-of-school youth. Coupled with other government and private funds, these dollars can help to create a diversified funding portfolio.

Example from the Field: Accessing Funds at the Local Level to Support School-to-Work Activities

The Workplace Learning Connection, a nonprofit organization located in Iowa, serves as an intermediary among schools, businesses, and communities to provide career education and school-to-work activities for students in elementary, middle, and high schools. The organization serves 7 counties and 33 school districts, providing activities such as internships, job shadows, career days, and the Teacher@Work professional development program. The Workplace Learning Connection receives financial support from its major stakeholder groups—government, businesses, and school districts—which help create a stable funding base. To support activities, the organization has negotiated a fee-for-service program with elementary schools, a per-pupil fee of \$3.00 per middle school student and \$5.00 per high school student with the school districts it serves. Partner businesses match school district contributions in each county served. The organization also receives county economic or community development funds from county boards of supervisors on a four-cents-per-capita basis, according to population data from the 2000 census.

For more information, visit <http://www.kirkwood.edu/site/index.php?d=127>

For more information on this financing strategy and the various strategies in accessing funding to support workforce development services for youth, see the Finance Project's publication, *Finding Resources to Support Workforce Development Services for Youth*, http://www.financeproject.org/publications/workforce_youth.pdf.

Within the [Youth Programs Resource Center](#) you will also find an [online clearinghouse](#), jointly developed by The Finance Project and The Forum for Youth Investment. The clearinghouse contains a wealth of information and resources for supporting and sustaining youth programs and initiatives. It is designed to help you learn about data, tools, policies, practices, financing strategies, coordination efforts and technical assistance resources developed by organizations in the field that aim to improve the lives of youth.