



ASTD POLICY BRIEF

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ASTD Policy Brief Summer 2010

ASTD Programs Approved by Workforce Investment Boards

ASTD has become an approved training provider in the District of Columbia, Missouri, New York, and Virginia. This means that customers in these states who have received public funding for training through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) may take these courses using their training vouchers or other public funding. One recent addition is the approval of a bundled offering of CPLP preparation and testing fees.

Check with the staff at your local One Stop Career Center to find out more details about eligibility to apply for funding, especially if you have been in a job transition. You can search for your closest One Stop Center at www.careeronestop.org. For more information about ASTD's approved courses, contact Jennifer Homer at ASTD: jhomer@astd.org.

ASTD Continues to Monitor Key Training Legislation

To help members and learning professionals stay current on activity at the U.S. federal level, ASTD tracks and reports on legislation and regulations that affect training. More information about the bills tracked is included here: www.astd.org/publicpolicy. ASTD continues to meet with key Congressional contacts to discuss these areas:

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

One of the largest pieces of legislation of interest to field is the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the landmark legislation originally passed in 1998 to streamline and coordinate workforce training programs at the federal level. While WIA reauthorization has not succeeded in recent years, there is a great deal of momentum behind it this year.

During the past several months, ASTD has met with staff on the Senate's Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the House of Representatives' Education and Labor Committee to offer training expertise on WIA reauthorization. There is a draft bill for reauthorization on the House side (HR 4271), and staffers from the Senate's HELP committee have indicated they are working on a draft bill.

Section 127 of the IRS Code

Section 127 is set to expire at the end of this year. Section 127 allows employers to exclude from an employee's wages up to \$5,250 per year for payment or reimbursement of tuition, fees, book

and other supplies. This also includes certain undergraduate and graduate-level education. Employees who receive these benefits can exclude up to \$5,250 from their taxable income. Employers who use this benefit can deduct these costs as a business expense when determining their income tax liability.

Section 127 was originally enacted in 1978 and since that time, Congress has periodically renewed it, in some cases retroactively after it had expired. It is set to expire at the end of 2010. Currently there are two bills—S 2851 and HR 5600—that call to make Section 127 permanent , among other education provisions. ASTD is engaged in a coalition, The Coalition to Preserve Employer Provided Education Assistance (CPEPEA) that supports the extension of Section 127. More information may be found at www.cpepea.com.

Federal Supervisor Training Act

Originally introduced in the Senate in 2009 (S 674), the Federal Supervisor Training Act would require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to issue guidance to federal agencies on competencies supervisors are expected to meet in order to effectively manage—and be accountable for managing—the performance of employees. It would require each agency to:

- 1) develop competencies to assess the performance of each supervisor
- 2) assess the overall capacity of the supervisors in the agency to meet such guidance
- 3) develop and implement a supervisor training program to strengthen issues identified during an assessment
- 4) measure the effectiveness of that program in improving supervisor competence.

In June, a companion bill was introduced in the House of Representatives (HR 5522), and it is gaining support. Recently, the House Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce took up the bill for discussion.

“Congressional Conversations” to Be Held at the ASTD Chapter Leaders Conference

On Thursday, September 30th, ASTD chapter leaders will be able to visit their member of Congress or a representative from the staff. The task at hand: to reach out to federal leadership and create awareness about the important role of the learning and development field in workforce-related initiatives.

Congressional Conversations is a preconference workshop on September 30th during the [ASTD Chapter Leaders Conference \(ALC\)](#) taking place in Arlington, Virginia on October 1-2. More information about registering for this event is available at: <http://alc2010.eventbrite.com/>. ASTD Public Policy is hosting a series of preparatory webcasts for chapter leaders to provide an orientation to the event, how to set up an appointment with a legislator or staffer, and what to expect during the visit. Questions may be directed to ASTD Public Policy: Jennifer Homer (jhomer@astd.org) or Michael Ferraro (ferraro@trainingsolutions.com).