

H.91

AN ACT RELATING TO THE ROZO MCLAUGHLIN
FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND INTENT

(a) Representative Rosemary “Rozo” McLaughlin was a dedicated, hardworking legislator who devoted herself to improving the health and welfare of Vermont’s children. She was instrumental in developing the ideas for and details of the local foods mini-grant program. Thanks largely to her persistent shepherding of the bill through the legislative process, the program was enacted into law in 2006.

(b) Therefore, it is the intent of this act to honor Representative McLaughlin’s hard work and dedication by establishing the local foods mini-grant program as a permanent program and by renaming it the Rozo McLaughlin farm-to-school program.

Sec. 2. 6 V.S.A. chapter 211 is added to read:

CHAPTER 211. THE ROZO MCLAUGHLIN

FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM

§ 4721. LOCAL FOODS GRANT PROGRAM

(a) There is created in the agency of agriculture, food and markets the Rozo McLaughlin farm-to-school program to award local grants for the purpose of

helping Vermont schools develop relationships with local farmers and producers.

(b) A school, a school district, a consortium of schools, or a consortium of school districts may apply to the secretary of agriculture, food and markets for a grant award to:

(1) fund equipment, resources, training, and materials that will help to increase use of local foods in the school food service program;

(2) fund items, including local farm products, that will help teachers to use hands-on educational techniques to teach children about nutrition and farm-to-school connections; and

(3) provide professional development and technical assistance to help teachers educate students about nutrition and farm-to-school connections.

(c) The secretary and the commissioner of education, in consultation with farmers, food service workers, and educators, shall jointly adopt rules relating to the content of the grant application and the criteria for making awards.

(d) The secretary shall determine that there is significant interest in the school community before making an award and shall give priority consideration to schools and school districts that are developing farm-to-school connections and education and that are making progress toward the implementation of the Vermont nutrition and fitness policy guidelines developed by the agency of agriculture, food and markets, the department of

education, and the department of health, dated November 2005 or of the successor of these guidelines.

(e) No award shall be greater than \$15,000.00.

§ 4722. FARM ASSISTANCE; SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD
AND MARKETS

(a) The secretary of agriculture, food and markets shall work with existing programs and organizations to develop and implement educational opportunities for farmers to help them to increase their markets through selling their products to schools and state government agencies and participating in the federal food commodities program, including the federal Department of Defense Fresh program, and selling to regulated child care programs participating in the adult and child food program.

(b) For the purposes of this section and section 4723 of this title, the secretary may provide funds to one or more technical assistance providers to provide farm-to-school education and teacher training to more school districts and to assist the secretary and commissioner of education to carry out farmer and food service worker training.

§ 4723. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FOOD SERVICE
PERSONNEL

(a) The commissioner of education shall offer expanded regional training sessions for public school food service personnel and child care resource

development specialists as funds are made available. Training shall include information about strategies for purchasing, processing, and serving locally grown foods, as well as information about nutrition, obesity prevention, coping with severe food allergies, and food service operations. The commissioner may use a portion of the funds appropriated for this training session to pay a portion of or all expenses for attendees and to develop manuals or other materials to help in the training.

(b) The commissioner of education shall train people as funds are made available to provide technical assistance to school food service personnel and use a portion of the funds appropriated for this purpose to enable the trained people to provide technical assistance at the school and school district levels.

(c) Training provided under this section shall promote the policies established in the Vermont nutrition and fitness policy guidelines developed by the agency of agriculture, food and markets, the department of education, and the department of health, dated November 2005, or the guidelines' successor.