President Obama on Monday announced the winners of his Youth CareerConnect program, part of his long-touted goal of reshaping high schools to make sure students are properly prepared for the rigors of college and a rapidly evolving job market.

The program, which he announced in his 2013 State of the Union Address, is intended to encourage school districts to integrate classroom and work experiences, so students graduate with some practical experience.

Overall, 24 school systems, community colleges and educational agencies were named as winners of $107 million in grants.

The president traveled to Bladensburg High School in Maryland -- not far from the nation's capital -- to announce the awards. The high school is part of the Prince George's County school system, which won a $7 million award to expand the capacity of its Health & Biosciences Academy.

With the help of the grant, students at Bladensburg who concentrate on health professions will be able to earn industry-recognized certifications in the fields of nursing and pharmacy, and biomedical students will earn college credit from the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the Rochester Institute of Technology.

"We challenged America's high schools ... "What can you do to make sure your students learn the skills that businesses are looking for in high demand fields?,"" Obama said. "Part of the reason we have to do this now is because other countries, they've got a little bit of a lead on us in this area."

Some of the other winners announced by White House on Monday include:

The Los Angeles Unified School District will get a $7 million grant to build out new career academies in six high schools that will focus on healthcare, biotechnology and other technology-related industries.

The New York City Department of Education will get a nearly $7 million grant to fund two new early college high schools similar to IBM PTECH models that offer associate's degrees while still in in high school. The grant will also expand diesel mechanic registered apprenticeship and create a dental hygienist apprenticeship.

Clinton, S.C., is receiving a $6.8 million grant to reshape three high schools to prepare students for skilled jobs in computer science and engineering.

The Metropolitan School District of Pike Township in Indianapolis is receiving a $7 million grant to expand its career academies in advanced manufacturing and logistics, working in partnership with Conexus, an advanced manufacturing collaborative, and EmployIndy to provide work-based learning opportunities.
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