

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 2589

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DEAN, MARTIN AND WILSON

[Passed April 8, 2017; in effect ninety days from passage.]

1 AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new
2 section, designated §18-5-15g; and to amend said Code by adding thereto a new article,
3 designated §18-21A-1, §18-21A-2, §18-21A-3, §18-21A-4, §18-21A-5, §18-21A-6; and
4 §18-21A-7, all relating to vocational education; requiring county boards to permit students
5 who are homeschooled or attend private schools to enroll and take classes at the county's
6 vocational schools; creating the Middle School Technical Education Program Act; setting
7 forth findings and purpose; requiring participating middle schools to use existing resources
8 to implement the pilot program; providing for instructor qualifications; allowing principals
9 or vice-principals, on a voluntary basis, to participate as a guest instructor or speaker;
10 requiring pilot program to be a one semester elective course except middle schools with
11 alternative scheduling systems can adapt the program to meeting scheduling needs;
12 requiring certain entities within fifty miles that receive state funding to provide speakers
13 upon request; requiring guest speakers to be scheduled weekly to introduce students to a
14 particular career and to prepare students to pursue the featured career by providing
15 information on certain specified topics; allowing organization of field trips to introduce
16 students to potential career paths; requiring course to include instruction on certain
17 minimum skill sets required to discover and take advantage of employment opportunities;
18 requiring course to include instruction on certain minimum skill sets required to discover
19 and take advantage of educational opportunities; requiring as condition of successful
20 course completion, students to outline his or her plan to become employable following
21 high school or post-secondary school; requiring State Board of Education to establish
22 guidelines for middle schools to submit a request for the schools admission; allowing state
23 board to admit middle schools into the program; requiring admission on first come, first
24 serve basis; declaring goal that a minimum of ten middle schools participate each year;
25 allowing state board to solicit additional middle schools to participate under certain
26 condition; prohibiting the state board from requiring participation; requiring students to

27 receive a West Virginia STEP Certificate upon successful completion; and requiring
28 annual report to the legislative oversight commission on education accountability.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new
2 section, designated §18-5-15g; and that said code be amended by adding thereto a new article,
3 designated §18-21A-1, §18-21A-2, §18-21A-3, §18-21A-4, §18-21A-5, §18-21A-6 and §18-21A-
4 7, all to read as follows:

ARTICLE 5. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-5-15g. Vocational education classes for homeschooled and private schooled students.

1 County boards shall permit students who are homeschooled or attend private schools to
2 enroll and take classes at the county's vocational schools, if the county offers vocational classes
3 either itself or through a joint vocational program or service with another county or counties:
4 *Provided*, That such students will be treated equally for admission purposes with applicants
5 enrolled in public school. These students may not be charged more than public school students
6 of compulsory school age.

**ARTICLE 21A. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM FOR MIDDLE
SCHOOL STUDENTS.**

§18-21A-1. Short title.

1 This article may be cited as the Middle School Technical Education Program Act or the
2 Middle School STEP Act.

§18-21A-2. Legislative findings.

1 (a) Career and technical education prepares students to be both college and career ready
2 by providing core academic, technical and employability skills.

3 (b) High-quality career and technical education programs not only ensure that coursework
4 is aligned with rigorous academic standards and post-secondary expectations, but are built to
5 address specific skills needed in certain career pathways.

6 (c) Eighty percent of students taking a college preparatory academic curriculum with
7 rigorous career and technical education courses met college and career readiness goals,
8 compared to only sixty-three percent of students taking the same academic core who did not
9 experience rigorous career and technical education courses.

10 (d) Furthermore, a 2008, study from American College Testing showed that if students are
11 not on target for college and career readiness by the end of eighth grade the impact may be nearly
12 irreversible. The level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade has a larger
13 impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than any
14 other academic factor.

15 (e) Given the importance of career and technical education programs in fostering college
16 and career readiness, and the determinative impact that eighth grade achievement has on future
17 academic and professional success, it is essential that middle school students are informed about
18 and prepared to take advantage of career and technical education programs in their local
19 communities.

§18-21A-3. Purpose.

1 The purpose of the pilot program shall be to better prepare seventh and eighth grade
2 students to take advantage of West Virginia’s Career and Technical Education programs and to
3 improve students’ college and career readiness prior to high school. For the purposes of this
4 article, “middle school” means any school containing the seventh and eighth grade levels.

§18-21A-4. Organization of special pilot program.

1 (a) *Funding.* – Participating middle schools shall use existing resources to implement the
2 pilot program.

3 (b) *Instructor Qualifications.* – Qualified instructors include, but are not limited to, teachers,
4 counselors and other middle school staff possessing a post-secondary degree. Instructors are
5 not required to obtain any additional certification or license to instruct the course. Nothing in this

6 article or chapter eighteen-a or this code prohibits principals or vice-principals, on a voluntary
7 basis, from participating in the program as a guest instructor or speaker.

8 (c) *Elective Course.* – The pilot program shall be a one semester elective course:
9 *Provided,* That middle schools with alternative scheduling systems may adapt the program to suit
10 their scheduling needs.

11 (d) *Local Partners.* – High schools, vocational schools, community colleges, public
12 universities and any other institute of higher learning that receives funding from the State of West
13 Virginia shall provide speakers to participating middle schools upon the middle school's request:
14 *Provided,* That the entity providing the speaker is located within fifty miles of the requesting middle
15 school.

§18-21A-5. Curriculum.

1 (a) *Guest Speakers.* – Course instructors shall schedule weekly guest speakers to
2 introduce students to a particular career and to prepare students to pursue the featured career by
3 providing relevant information on:

- 4 (1) Education requirements;
- 5 (2) Cost of education;
- 6 (3) Availability of education;
- 7 (4) Average salary;
- 8 (5) Average longevity; and
- 9 (6) Transferability of skills.

10 Instructors are encouraged to invite professionals excelling in fields where training is
11 available at the local career and technical education school.

12 (b) *On-Site Research.* – Instructors may organize field trips to visit local employers, job
13 fairs, high schools, vocational schools, community colleges, technical schools, public and private
14 universities and other post-secondary academic institutions to introduce students to potential
15 career paths via on-site presentations and experiential learning.

16 (c) *Career Skills*. – The course shall include instruction on skill sets required to discover
17 and take advantage of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to:

- 18 (1) Performing a job search;
- 19 (2) Developing a résumé;
- 20 (3) Preparing for a job interview; and
- 21 (4) Developing and deploying personal networks to find job opportunities.

22 (d) *Academic Skills*. – The course shall include instruction on skill sets required to discover
23 and take advantage of educational opportunities, including, but not limited to:

- 24 (1) Researching admissions requirements for vocational schools, community colleges,
25 technical schools, public and private universities and other post-secondary academic institutions;
- 26 (2) Researching employment rates and average salaries for graduates of vocational
27 schools, community colleges, technical schools, public and private universities and other post-
28 secondary academic institutions;
- 29 (3) Researching employment rates and average salaries for specific degrees, certifications
30 and majors from post-secondary academic institutions;
- 31 (4) Researching state, federal and private scholarship and grant opportunities; and
- 32 (5) Preparing a college or technical school application.

33 (e) *Personal Graduation Plan*. – For successful completion of the course, a student shall
34 create a “Personal Graduation Plan” outlining his or her plan to become employable following high
35 school or post-secondary school.

§18-21A-6. Admission process for middle schools.

1 (a) *Authority*. – The state board shall establish guidelines for middle schools to submit a
2 request for the school’s admission in the pilot program and the state board may admit middle
3 schools into the pilot program.

4 (b) *Admissions*. – Middle schools may volunteer to implement the program by submitting
5 a request to the state board and admission shall be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

6 (c) *Minimum School Participation.* – It is the goal of the pilot program that a minimum of
7 ten middle schools participate each year during the pilot program’s existence. If ten middle
8 schools have not been admitted into the program by July 1 preceding the academic year, the
9 state board may solicit additional middle schools to participate in the pilot program to meet the
10 minimum participation goal, but may not require the participation of any middle school.

§18-21A-7. Certification and monitoring.

1 (a) *Certificate of Completion.* – Students shall receive a West Virginia STEP Certificate
2 verifying their participation in the pilot program upon successful completion of the course.

3 (b) *Monitoring.* – The state board shall report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on
4 Education Accountability each year on the graduation, post-secondary participation, and to the
5 extent practicable, job placement rates, in the aggregate, of students that have received a West
6 Virginia STEP Certificate following successful completion of the pilot program.

The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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Chairman, House Committee

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Chairman, Senate Committee

Originating in the House.

In effect ninety days from passage.

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Clerk of the House of Delegates

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Clerk of the Senate

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Speaker of the House of Delegates

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President of the Senate

The within this the.....
day of, 2017.

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Governor