

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 685

BY SENATORS CLINE, BOLEY, CLEMENTS, AND ROBERTS

[Introduced February 3, 2020; referred
to the Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18-2-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to required courses of instruction; and requiring that cursive be taught in West Virginia
 3 schools from the second grade through eighth grade.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-9. Required courses of instruction.

1 (a) In all public, private, parochial and denominational schools located within this state
 2 there shall be given, prior to the completion of the eighth grade, at least one year of instruction in
 3 the history of the State of West Virginia. The schools shall require instruction in cursive writing
 4 beginning with the second grade and continue reinforcement in cursive writing skills through the
 5 completion of the eighth grade. The schools shall require regular courses of instruction by the
 6 completion of the 12th grade in the history of the United States, in civics, in the Constitution of the
 7 United States and in the government of the State of West Virginia for the purpose of teaching,
 8 fostering and perpetuating the ideals, principles and spirit of political and economic democracy in
 9 America and increasing the knowledge of the organization and machinery of the government of
 10 the United States and of the State of West Virginia. The state board shall, with the advice of the
 11 state superintendent, prescribe the courses of study covering these subjects for the public
 12 schools. It shall be the duty of the officials or boards having authority over the respective private,
 13 parochial and denominational schools to prescribe courses of study for the schools under their
 14 control and supervision similar to those required for the public schools. To further ~~such~~ this study,
 15 every high school student eligible by age for voter registration shall be afforded the opportunity to
 16 register to vote pursuant to §3-2-22 of this code.

17 (b) The state board shall cause to be taught in all of the public schools of this state the
 18 subject of health education, including instruction in any of the grades six through 12 as considered
 19 appropriate by the county board, on: (1) The prevention, transmission and spread of acquired
 20 immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually transmitted diseases; (2) substance abuse,

21 including the nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, tobacco products and other potentially
22 harmful drugs, with special instruction as to their effect upon the human system and upon society
23 in general; (3) the importance of healthy eating and physical activity to maintaining healthy weight;
24 and (4) education concerning cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid, including instruction in
25 the care for conscious choking, and recognition of symptoms of drug or alcohol overdose. The
26 course curriculum requirements and materials for the instruction shall be adopted by the state
27 board by rule in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Resources. The state
28 board shall prescribe a standardized health education assessment to be administered within
29 health education classes to measure student health knowledge and program effectiveness.

30 (c) An opportunity shall be afforded to the parent or guardian of a child subject to
31 instruction in the prevention, transmission and spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome
32 and other sexually transmitted diseases to examine the course curriculum requirements and
33 materials to be used in the instruction. The parent or guardian may exempt the child from
34 participation in the instruction by giving notice to that effect in writing to the school principal.

35 (d) After July 1, 2015, the required instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation in
36 subsection (b) of this section shall include at least 30 minutes of instruction for each student prior
37 to graduation on the proper administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the
38 psychomotor skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The term "psychomotor
39 skills" means the use of hands-on practicing to support cognitive learning. Cognitive-only training
40 does not qualify as "psychomotor skills". The CPR instruction must be based on an instructional
41 program established by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross or another
42 program which is nationally recognized and uses the most current national evidence-based
43 Emergency Cardiovascular Care guidelines and incorporates psychomotor skills development
44 into the instruction. A licensed teacher is not required to be a certified trainer of cardiopulmonary
45 resuscitation to facilitate, provide or oversee such instruction. The instruction may be given by
46 community members, such as emergency medical technicians, paramedics, police officers,

47 firefighters, licensed nurses and representatives of the American Heart Association or the
48 American Red Cross. These community members are encouraged to provide necessary training
49 and instructional resources such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation kits and other material at no
50 cost to the schools. The requirements of this subsection are minimum requirements. A local
51 school district may offer CPR instruction for longer periods of time and may enhance the
52 curriculum and training components, including, but not limited to, incorporating into the instruction
53 the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED): *Provided*, That any instruction that results in
54 a certification being earned must be taught by an authorized CPR/AED instructor.

55 (e) A full week of classes during the week selected by the county board of education shall
56 be recognized as "Celebrate Freedom Week". The purpose of Celebrate Freedom Week is to
57 educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the
58 values on which this country was founded.

59 Celebrate Freedom Week must include appropriate instruction in each social studies class
60 which:

61 (1) Includes an in-depth study of the intent, meaning and importance of the Declaration of
62 Independence, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Constitution of the United States with an
63 emphasis on the Bill of Rights;

64 (2) Uses the historical, political and social environments surrounding each document at
65 the time of its initial passage or ratification; and

66 (3) Includes the study of historical documents to firmly establish the historical background
67 leading to the establishment of the provisions of the Constitution and Bill of Rights by the founding
68 fathers for the purposes of safeguarding our Constitutional republic.

69 The requirements of this subsection are applicable to all public, private, parochial and
70 denominational schools located within this state. Nothing in this subsection creates a standard
71 or requirement subject to state accountability measures.

72 (f) Beginning the 2018-2019 school year, students in the public schools shall be

73 administered a test the same as or substantially similar to the civics portion of the naturalization
74 test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services between their ninth and 12th
75 grade years as an indicator of student achievement in the area of civics education. The test
76 results may be reported in the aggregate to the county board for evaluation by the board's
77 curriculum director and reported to the board members. Nothing in this subsection creates a
78 standard or requirement subject to state accountability measures.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require that cursive be taught in West Virginia schools from the second grade through eighth grade.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.