

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 3221

FISCAL
NOTE

By Delegate Dillon

[Introduced February 02, 2023; Referred to the
Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18-31-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to
2 extending Hope Scholarship Program to preschool students.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 31. HOPE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

§18-31-2. Definitions.

1 The following words have the meanings ascribed to them unless the context clearly
2 indicates a different meaning:

3 (1) "Account" or "scholarship" means a Hope Scholarship account, awarded pursuant to
4 this article, to which funds are allocated by the board to the parent or parents of an eligible Hope
5 Scholarship student in order to pay qualifying education expenses to educate the student pursuant
6 to the requirements and conditions of this article;

7 (2) "Board" means the Hope Scholarship Board created pursuant to §18-31-3 of this code;

8 (3) "Curriculum" means a complete course of study for a particular content area or grade
9 level, including any supplemental materials required by the curriculum;

10 (4) "Education service provider" means a person or organization that receives payments
11 from Hope Scholarship accounts to provide educational goods and services to Hope Scholarship
12 students;

13 (5) "Eligible recipient" means a child who:

14 (A) Is a resident of this state; and

15 (B) Is enrolled full-time and attending a preschool program or a public elementary or
16 secondary school program in this state for at least 45 calendar days during an instructional term at
17 the time of application and until an award letter is issued by the board under §18-31-5(c) of this
18 code, or enrolled full-time in a preschool program or a public elementary or secondary school
19 program in this state for the entire instructional term the previous year, or is eligible at the time of
20 application to enroll in a kindergarten program in this state pursuant to §18-8-1a of this code,
21 except that if on July 1, 2024, the participation rate of the combined number of students in the

22 Hope Scholarship Program and students eligible who have applied to participate in the Hope
23 Scholarship program during the previous school year is less than five percent of net public school
24 enrollment adjusted for state aid purposes for the previous school year, then, effective July 1,
25 2026, a child is considered to meet the requirements of this paragraph if he or she is enrolled,
26 eligible to be enrolled, or required to be enrolled in a preschool or kindergarten program or public
27 elementary or secondary school program in this state at the time of application;

28 (6) "Hope scholarship funds" means the moneys deposited in a Hope Scholarship
29 student's account in accordance with the requirements of this article.

30 (7) "Hope scholarship student" means a student who receives a scholarship pursuant to
31 this article;

32 (8) "Parent" means a biological parent, legal guardian, custodian, or other person with
33 legal authority to act on behalf of an eligible recipient or Hope Scholarship student;

34 (9) "Participating school" means any private school that provides education to elementary
35 and/or secondary students and has notified the board of its intention to participate in the program
36 and comply with the program's requirements;

37 (10) "Resident school district" means the county school district in which the student
38 resides; and

39 (11) "Treasurer" means the West Virginia State Treasurer.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to extend Hope Scholarship Program to preschool students.

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