

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4948

By Delegate E. Pritt

[Introduced January 19, 2024; Referred to the
Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18A-3-3a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, all
2 relating to removing all fees associated with teacher licensure, certification, and registering
3 the completion of continuing education credit hours.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 3. SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

§18A-3-3a. Payment of tuition, registration and other fees for teachers; maximum payment per teacher; removal of all fees for teacher licensure, certification, and continuing education.

1 (a) The West Virginia Department of Education shall promulgate rules to administer the
2 reimbursement of tuition, registration and other required fees for coursework completed by
3 teachers in accordance with the provisions of this section. The rules shall provide for
4 reimbursement for courses completed toward both certification renewal and additional
5 endorsement in a shortage area.

6 (b) As used in this section, the following words and phrases have the meanings ascribed to
7 them:

8 (1) "Teacher" has the meaning provided in section one, article one, chapter eighteen of this
9 code.

10 (2) "Shortage area" shall be defined by state board policy to indicate the subject areas for
11 which an insufficient number of teachers are available.

12 (3) "Certification" and "certificate" mean a valid West Virginia:

13 (A) Professional teaching, service or administrative certificate, or its equivalent; or

14 (B) Provisional professional teaching, service or administrative certificate, or its
15 equivalent.

16 (4) "Requirements for certification renewal" are those requirements of the state
17 Department of Education as provided in section three of this article.

18 (5) "Requirements for additional endorsement" are those requirements of the state
19 Department of Education as provided in section three of this article.

20 (6) "State institution of higher education" has the meaning provided in section two, article
21 one, chapter eighteen-b of this code.

22 (c) To the extent of funds appropriated for the purposes specified in this section, payment
23 shall be made to any teacher who:

24 (1) Holds either a valid West Virginia:

25 (A) Certificate; or

26 (B) First class permit for full-time employment; and

27 (2) Is seeking:

28 (A) An additional endorsement in a shortage area, and either resides in the state or is
29 employed regularly for instructional purposes in a public school in the state; or

30 (B) Certification renewal, and has a continuing contract with a county board.

31 (d) The payment shall be made as reimbursement for the tuition, registration and other
32 required fees for any course completed at:

33 (1) Any college or university within the state; or

34 (2) A college or university outside the state if prior approval is granted by the department.

35 (e) A course is eligible for reimbursement if it meets the requirements for:

36 (1) An additional endorsement in a shortage area; or

37 (2) Certification renewal.

38 (f) If funds appropriated for the purposes specified in this section are insufficient for the
39 reimbursement of all eligible courses within the limits provided in this section, the West Virginia
40 Department of Education shall make the reimbursements for courses for additional endorsement
41 in a shortage area and certification renewal in a shortage area first.

42 (g) Payment made for any single fee may not exceed the amount of the highest
43 corresponding fee charged at a state institution of higher education.

44 (h) Reimbursement for courses completed toward certification renewal is limited to fifteen
45 semester hours of courses for any teacher. Reimbursement for courses completed toward
46 additional endorsement in a shortage area is limited to fifteen semester hours of courses for any
47 teacher.

48 (i) The West Virginia Department of Education shall seek funding from sources other than
49 general revenue appropriation, including, but not limited to, workforce investment funds.

50 (j) No provision of this section may be construed to require any appropriation or any
51 specific amount of appropriation for the purposes specified in this section, or to require the
52 department to expend funds for those purposes from any other amounts appropriated for
53 expenditure by the department.

54 (k) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary, by January 30, 2025,
55 the West Virginia Department of Education shall remove all fees associated with teacher
56 licensure, certification, and registering the completion of continuing education credit hours.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to remove all fees associated with teacher licensure, certification, and registering the completion of continuing credit hours.

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