

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 519

By Senators Maynard and Karnes

[Introduced January 23, 2024; referred
to the Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §15-1B-24 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to the Mountaineer Challenge Academy; and permitting cadets to enroll in accredited
 3 virtual instructional courses online, or to attend accredited courses in person, in order to
 4 obtain a West Virginia Education Information System Number from the State Board of
 5 Education.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1B. NATIONAL GUARD.

§15-1B-24. Mountaineer Challenge Academy; expansion; cooperation of state executive agencies.

1 (a) Subject to the agreement entered into between the United States Secretary of Defense
 2 and the Governor to establish, organize, and administer the Mountaineer Challenge Academy
 3 pursuant to 32 U.S.C. § 509, the Governor shall:

4 (1) Expand the capacity of the Mountaineer Challenge Academy location in Preston
 5 County to accept cadets up to its maximum capacity;

6 (2) Expand the Mountaineer Challenge Academy to a second location in Fayette County;
 7 and

8 (3) To the extent necessary to accomplish the requirements set forth in this subsection and
 9 to maximize the use of federal funds, pursue an amendment to the agreement entered into with
 10 the United States Secretary of Defense pursuant to 32 U.S.C. § 509.

11 (b) The Mountaineer Challenge Academy, operated by the Adjutant General at Camp
 12 Dawson, is hereby acknowledged to be a program of great value in meeting the educational needs
 13 of at-risk youth throughout the state. Further, the Mountaineer Challenge Academy is hereby
 14 designated as a special alternative education program as is further provided pursuant to section
 15 §18-2-6 of this code. It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature that the Mountaineer Challenge
 16 Academy should enjoy the full cooperation of the executive agencies of state government in
 17 carrying out its program.

18 To this end, the State Board of Education shall, notwithstanding any other provision in this
19 code to the contrary:

20 (1) Include the Mountaineer Challenge Academy in the child nutrition program;

21 (2) Provide the names and mailing addresses of all high school dropouts in the state to the
22 director of the Mountaineer Challenge Academy annually; and

23 (3) Provide for Mountaineer Challenge Academy graduates to participate in the adult basic
24 education program, including permitting a cadet to enroll in accredited virtual instructional courses
25 online or to attend accredited courses, in person, in order to obtain a West Virginia Education
26 Information System Number (WVEIS#), from the state board, which is required before a high
27 school diploma may be granted.

28 (c) Further cooperation with the Mountaineer Challenge Academy is encouraged by the
29 Legislature for the purpose of assisting the Mountaineer Challenge Academy to achieve its
30 mission and help prepare young people for productive adulthood.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to permit cadets the Mountaineer Challenge Academy; to enroll in accredited virtual instructional courses online or to attend accredited courses, in person, in order to obtain a West Virginia Education Information System Number (WVEIS#), from the state board of education.

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