

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

House Bill 2879

By Delegates Holstein, J. Cannon, Chiarelli, and
Hornby

Introduced February 24, 2025; referred to the
Committee on Education then Finance

FISCAL
NOTE

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
 2 designated §18C-10-1, §18C-10-2, §18C-10-3, and §18C-10-4, relating to the creation of
 3 the West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Act; providing for a short title;
 4 providing for legislative findings and purpose; establishing the West Virginia Math &
 5 Science Teacher Scholarship Act; and setting forth the amount of scholarship money to be
 6 paid to educators who satisfy the thresholds; setting forth criteria and creating a sunset
 7 provision.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 10. WEST VIRGINIA MATH & SCIENCE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP ACT.

§18C-10-1. Short title.

1 This article shall be known and may be cited as the "West Virginia Math & Science Teacher
 2 Scholarship Act."

§18C-10-2. Legislative findings and purpose.

1 (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:

2 (1) Every West Virginia student should have access to education and training that will lead
 3 directly to quality employment opportunities within the state. For West Virginia to retain and attract
 4 teachers and educators in this particular field, our state must ensure that qualified teachers within
 5 West Virginia are incentivized to stay and work in West Virginia schools.

6 (2) West Virginia currently faces a shortage of educators, particularly with those who have
 7 specialized training in the mathematics and science fields, which has likely contributed to
 8 underperformance in student test scores.

9 (b) The purpose of this article is to provide existing and upcoming West Virginia educators
 10 with incentives to remain in West Virginia and pursue a career in educating students in the fields of
 11 mathematics and science through the creation of a scholarship program designed to recruit and
 12 retain teachers in mathematics and science.

§18C-10-3. West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Act; funding.

1 (a) There is hereby created a scholarship program known as the "West Virginia Math &
2 Science Teacher Scholarship", which shall be administered by the vice chancellor for
3 administration pursuant to §18B-4-2.

4 (b) The scholarship program shall be available to all West Virginia certified teachers with
5 specializations in a mathematics or science field. If any teacher is employed in a K-12 public
6 school in this state for a minimum of three years and while employed in a STEM position, then they
7 shall be eligible for up to \$2,000 in debt relief through this scholarship. If a teacher has been
8 employed in a school in this state for a minimum of six years and holds a mathematics or science
9 specialization, then that teacher shall be eligible for up to \$4,000 in debt relief, or for an additional
10 amount of \$2,000 if the six-year option was taken after their initial three years of employment.

11 (c) Funding for this program shall be appropriated through a line item in the budget.

§18C-10-4. Eligibility requirements; agreements; sunset provision.

1 (a) To be eligible for the West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Program, an
2 individual shall satisfy the following requirements:

3 (1) Be a citizen of the United States and have been a resident of West Virginia for at least
4 one year immediately preceding the date of application for the scholarship;

5 (2) Have completed at least a master's degree in education, with a specialization in
6 Mathematics or Science;

7 (3) Be employed by a kindergarten through 12 public school in this state for a minimum of
8 three years for the initial \$2,000 and six years for the additional \$2,000;

9 (4) Fill a position that qualifies as mathematics or science position under West Virginia
10 Department of Education standards; and

11 (5) Have available debt to qualify, as scholarship funds to recipients shall not exceed any
12 debt owed at the time of award. Applicants who have a debt balance of less than the award
13 amount will not receive the full amount offered.

14 (b) The West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Program shall begin in January

15 2026 and shall sunset in January 2036.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Act. The bill provides for a short title. The bill provides for legislative findings and a purpose. The bill provides for the West Virginia Math & Science Scholarship Program and sets forth the amount of scholarship money to be paid to educators who satisfy the thresholds. The bill sets forth criteria and creates a sunset provision.

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