

# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18-5B-5

## **§18-5B-5. Approval of innovation zone plans; waiver of statutes, policies, rules or interpretations.**

(a) Each school, group of schools, subdivision or department of a group of schools or subdivision or department of a school designated or seeking designation as an innovation zone shall:

(1) Submit its innovation zone plan to each employee regularly employed at the school if the employee's primary job duties would be affected by the implementation of the plan. An innovation zone plan is approved by school employees when approved by a vote by secret ballot as provided in section six of this article;

(2) Submit its innovation zone plan as approved by vote of school employees to the county superintendent and board for review. The county board shall within sixty days of receipt of the plan review the plan and with recommendations from the county superintendent report its support or concerns, or both, and return the plan and report to the school principal, faculty Senate and local school improvement council; and

(3) Submit its innovation zone plan as approved by vote of the school employees eligible to vote on the plan along with the report of the county board to the state board and state superintendent for review. The county board shall be given an opportunity to present its concerns with the plan, if any, to the state board during its review. Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, the state board and state superintendent shall approve or disapprove the plan within sixty days of receipt, subject to the following:

(A) No exceptions to county or state board rules, policies or interpretations are granted unless both the state superintendent and the state board approve the plan at least conditionally pursuant to subsections (b) and (c) of this section; and

(B) If the plan is disapproved, the state superintendent, the state board or both, as applicable, shall communicate the reasons for the disapproval to the school, the group of schools, the subdivision or department of a group of schools or the subdivision or department of a school and shall make recommendations for improving the plan. The school, the group of schools, the subdivision or department of a group of schools or the subdivision or department of a school may amend the plan pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

(b) Upon the approval of an innovation zone plan by the state board and state superintendent, all exceptions to county and state board rules, policies and interpretations listed within the plan are granted, subject to the limitations contained in subdivision (B), subparagraph (2), subsection (a) of section four of this article.

(c) If an innovation zone plan, or a part thereof, may not be implemented unless an exception

to a statute is granted by Act of the Legislature, the state board and state superintendent may approve the plan, or the part thereof, only upon the condition that the Legislature acts to grant the exception. If the state board and state superintendent approve a plan on that condition, the state board and state superintendent shall submit the plan with the request for an exception to a statute, along with supporting reasons, to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability. The commission shall review the plan and exemption request and make a recommendation to the Legislature regarding the exception requested.

(d) The rule promulgated by the state board pursuant to section three of this article shall include a process for amending or revising an innovation zone plan. The process shall require that any amendments or revisions to an innovation zone plan are subject to the approval requirements of subsection (a) of this section.