

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18-1-4

§18-1-4. Vision 2020: An Education Blueprint for Two Thousand Twenty.

(a) This section, together with section one-a, article one, chapter eighteen-b of this code and article one-d of said chapter, shall be known as and may be cited as Vision 2020: An Education Blueprint for Two Thousand Twenty.

(b) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Goals" means those long-term public purposes which are the desired end result and only may include those items listed in subsection (e) of this section;

(2) "Objectives" means the ends to be accomplished or attained within a specified period of time for the purpose of meeting the established goals; and

(3) "Strategies" means specific activities carried out by the public education system which are directed toward accomplishing specific objectives.

(c) The Legislature finds that:

(1) The measure of a thorough and efficient system of education is whether students graduate prepared to meet the challenges of the future as contributing members of society and that these challenges change, becoming ever more complex and involving a global context more than at any other time in the history of our nation;

(2) The state recently has embraced and is implementing the Partnership for 21st Century Skills model for teaching and learning including six key elements (core subjects, 21st Century content, learning and thinking skills, information and communications technology literacy, life skills and 21st Century assessments) to help better prepare students for the challenges of the 21st Century;

(3) Published national studies by several organizations routinely examine various elements of state education systems and selected underlying socioeconomic variables and rate and rank West Virginia and the other states, the District of Columbia and the territories based on the measurement systems and priorities established by the organizations, and these measurement systems and priorities change;

(4) While the state should take pride in studies that show West Virginia is among the leaders in several of its efforts and is making progress, its students often outperforming expectations based on typical indicators of the likelihood for student success, such as the income and education levels of their parents, it should also recognize that the state must do even more to ensure that high school graduates are fully prepared for post-secondary education or gainful employment;

(5) Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide for the establishment of a clear plan that includes goals, objectives, strategies, indicators and benchmarks to help guide the state's policymakers on the continuous development of the state's education system for the 21st Century.

(d) As part of Vision 2020: An Education Blueprint for Two Thousand Twenty, the state board shall establish a plan in accordance with the provisions of this section for submission to and consideration by the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability. The plan shall include only the goals, objectives, strategies, indicators and benchmarks for public education set forth in this section and that meet the requirements of this section. To add clarity and avoid confusion, the goals for public education set forth in the plan pursuant to this section are the exclusive goals for public education. The plan shall include:

- (1) The goals set forth in this section and no other goals;
- (2) At least the objectives set forth in this section and specified periods of time for achieving those objectives and any other objectives that may be included in the plan;
- (3) Strategies for achieving the specific objectives;
- (4) Indicators for measuring progress toward the goals and objectives established in this section; and
- (5) Benchmarks for determining when the goals and objectives have been achieved.

(e) The plan shall include the following list of exclusive goals for the public education system in West Virginia:

- (1) Academic achievement according to national and international measures will exceed national and international averages. These national and international measures should include scores on assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the ACT, the SAT and the Programme for International Assessment (PISA);
- (2) The public education system will prepare fully all students for post-secondary education or gainful employment;
- (3) All working-age adults will be functionally literate;
- (4) The public education system will maintain and promote the health and safety of all students and will develop and promote responsibility, citizenship and strong character in all students; and
- (5) The public education system will provide equitable education opportunity to all students.

(f) The plan also shall include at least the following policy-oriented objectives:

(1) Rigorous 21st Century curriculum and engaging instruction for all students. – All students in West Virginia public schools should have access to and benefit from a rigorous 21st Century curriculum that develops proficiency in core subjects, 21st Century content, learning skills and technology tools. These students also should have that curriculum delivered through engaging, research-based instructional strategies that develop deep understanding and the ability to apply content to real-world situations;

(2) A 21st Century accountability and accreditation system. – The prekindergarten through twelve education system should have a public accrediting system that: (i) Holds local school districts accountable for the student outcomes the state values; and (ii) provides the public with understandable accountability data for judging the quality of local schools. The outcomes on which the system is based should be rigorous and should align with national and international standards such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the ACT, the SAT and the Programme for International Assessment (PISA). The broad standards established for these outcomes should include a focus on: (A) Mastery of basic skills by all students; (B) closing the achievement gap among student subgroups; and (C) high levels of proficiency in a wide range of desired 21st Century measures and processes. The system for determining school and district accreditation should include school and district self analysis and generate appropriate research-based strategies for improvement. It also should allow opportunities to create innovative approaches to instructional delivery and design. Thus, the system will incorporate processes for encouraging innovation, including streamlined applications for waivers to state board policy, financial support for successful initiatives and recognition of those practices that can be brought to a district or statewide scale. The primary goal of the accreditation system is to drive school improvement. This 21st Century accountability and accreditation system also should include the methods of addressing capacity set forth in section five, article two-e of this chapter;

(3) A statewide balanced assessment process. – State, district, school and classroom decisionmaking should be grounded in 21st Century balanced assessment processes that reflect national and international rigorous performance standards and examine student proficiency in 21st Century content, skills and technology tools. A balanced assessment system includes statewide summative assessments, local benchmark assessments and classroom assessments for learning;

(4) A personnel allocation, licensure and funding process that aligns with the needs of 21st Century school systems and is supported by a quality coordinated professional development delivery system. – Increased accountability demands, as well as the focus on 21st Century learning, require a reexamination of traditional approaches to personnel allocation, licensure and funding. Creating schools of the 21st Century requires new staffing roles and staffing patterns. It also requires ongoing professional development activities focused on enhancing student achievement and achieving specific goals of the school and district strategic plans. Thus, schools should have the ability to access, organize and deliver high quality embedded professional development that provides staff with in-depth sustained and supported learning. Effective school improvement should allow opportunity for staff to collectively learn, plan

and implement curricular and instructional improvements on behalf of the students they serve;

(5) School environments that promote safe, healthy and responsible behavior and provide an integrated system of student support services. - Each school should create an environment focused on student learning and one where students know they are valued, respected and safe. Furthermore, the school should incorporate programs and processes that instill healthy, safe and responsible behaviors and prepare students for interactions with individuals of diverse racial, ethnic and social backgrounds. School and district processes should include a focus on developing ethical and responsible character, personal dispositions that promote personal wellness through planned daily physical activity and healthy eating habits consistent with high nutritional guidelines and multicultural experiences that develop an appreciation of and respect for diversity;

(6) A leadership recruitment, development and support continuum. - Quality schools and school systems of the 21st Century cannot be created without high-quality leaders. Thus, West Virginia should have an aligned leadership professional development continuum that attracts, develops and supports educational leadership at the classroom, school and district level. This leadership development continuum should focus on creating: (i) Learning-centered schools and school systems; (ii) collaborative processes for staff learning and continuous improvement; and (iii) accountability measures for student achievement;

(7) Equitable access to 21st Century technology and education resources and school facilities conducive to 21st Century teaching and learning. - A quality educational system of the 21st Century should have access to technology tools and processes that enhance effective and efficient operation. Administrators should have the digital resources to monitor student performance, manage a variety of data and communicate effectively. In the classroom, every teacher in every school should be provided with the instructional resources and educational technology necessary to deliver the West Virginia content standards and objectives. Schools of the 21st Century require facilities that accommodate changing technologies, 21st Century instructional processes and 21st Century staffing needs and patterns. These school facilities should mirror the best in green construction and be environmentally and educationally responsive to the communities in which they are located;

(8) Aligned public school with post-secondary and workplace readiness programs and standards. - An educational system in the 21st Century should be seen as a continuum from the public school (prekindergarten through twelve) program through post-secondary education. In order to be successful in a global competitive marketplace, learning should be an ongoing, life-long experience. Thus, the public schools and the institutions of post-secondary education in West Virginia should create a system of common standards, expectations and accountability. Creating such an aligned system will enhance opportunities for success and assure a seamless educational process for West Virginia students; and

(9) A universal prekindergarten system. - A high-quality, universal prekindergarten system should be readily available to every eligible student. The system should promote oral

language and preliteracy skills and reduce the deficit of these foundational skills through proactive, early intervention. Research indicates that universal prekindergarten systems improve graduation rates, reduce grade level retentions and reduce the number of special education placements. Therefore, local school systems should create the supports and provide the resources to assure a quality prekindergarten foundation is available to all eligible students.

(g) In addition to the policy-oriented objectives set forth in subsection (f) of this section, the plan established pursuant to this section also shall include at least the following performance-oriented objectives:

- (1) All children entering the first grade will be ready for the first grade;
- (2) The performance of students falling in the lowest quartile on national and international measures of student performance will improve by fifty percent;
- (3) Ninety percent of ninth graders will graduate from high school;
- (4) By 2012, the gap between the county with the lowest college-going rate and the state average as of the effective date of this act will decrease by fifty percent and the college-going rate of the state will equal the college-going rate of the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board; and
- (5) By 2012, the gap between the county with the lowest college-going rate and the state average for school year 2012 will decrease by fifty percent and the college-going rate of the state will exceed the college-going rate of the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board by five percentage points.