

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18-2-39

§18-2-39. College and career readiness initiative.

(a) The Legislature finds that:

(1) According to ACT, only twenty-five percent of ACT-tested high school graduates in the nation met college readiness benchmarks in English, reading, mathematics and science and only seventeen percent in West Virginia met the benchmarks in all four subjects;

(2) The post-secondary remediation rates of students entering post-secondary institutions directly out of high school indicate that a large percentage of students are not being adequately prepared at the elementary and secondary levels;

(3) This high level of post-secondary remediation is causing both students and the state to expend extra resources that would not have to be expended if the students were adequately prepared at the elementary and secondary levels;

(4) A strong foundation in English/language arts and math provides a basis for learning in all other subject areas and for on-the-job training; and

(5) A comparison of the percentages of students considered proficient in eighth grade reading and math by the state assessment and the National Assessment of Educational Progress indicate that the state assessment currently does not accurately reflect national standards.

(b) Before the 2014-2015 school year, the state board, the Higher Education Policy Commission and the Council for Community and Technical College Education shall collaborate in formally adopting uniform and specific college- and career-readiness standards for English/language arts and math. The standards shall be clearly linked to state content standards and based on skills and competencies rather than high school course titles. The standards shall allow for a determination of whether a student needs to enroll in a post-secondary remedial course. The state board shall develop a plan for gradually bringing the standards for a high school diploma and college and career readiness into uniformity, and report this plan to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability not later than December 31, 2013.

(c) The results on the comprehensive statewide student assessment program in grade eleven in English/language arts and mathematics shall be used to determine whether a student has met the college- and career-readiness standards adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, instead of using the comprehensive statewide student assessment program, the state board may develop and implement end-of-course exams in English/language arts and math courses it determines appropriate. These exams are designed for determining whether a student has met the college- and career-

readiness standards. In order to allow for the enrollment in transitional courses in the twelfth grade if necessary pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, the courses, assessments and exams, as applicable, shall be administered before the twelfth grade.

(d) Under its authority granted in section one, article three, chapter eighteen-a of this code, the state board shall require all teacher preparation programs in the state to include appropriate training for teachers seeking to teach in at least any of grades eight through twelve with respect to teaching the adopted college- and career-readiness standards. This training shall focus on teaching the standards directly, through embedding the standards in other courses or both, as appropriate.

(e) The state board shall develop a twelfth-grade transitional course for both English/language arts and math for those students who are not on track to be college and career ready based on the assessment or exam, as applicable, required pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. The transitional courses shall be aligned with the standards adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. The state board in collaboration with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the Council for Community and Technical College Education shall use the American College Testing Program's Computerized Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS) or other mutually agreed-upon assessment to determine whether a student has met the college- and career-readiness standards after completion of the transitional course.

(f) For all West Virginia public high school graduates who graduate during or after the 2016-2017 school year, all state institutions of higher education may use no factor other than the assessment, exam or test, as applicable, required pursuant to subsections (c) and (e) of this section to determine whether a student is to enroll in a remedial course or is to be placed in a college-level introductory course. Nothing in this subsection prohibits an institution from administering a diagnostic test to determine specific areas of weakness so that the specific weaknesses can be remediated rather than requiring a student to take an entire remedial course.

(g) The state board shall:

(1) Hold high schools and districts accountable for increasing the percentages of students who meet the college- and career-readiness standards as indicated by the assessments, exams or tests, as applicable, required pursuant to subsections (c) and (e) of this section. This accountability shall be achieved through the school and school system accreditation provisions set forth in section five, article two-e of this chapter;

(2) Align the comprehensive statewide student assessment for all grade levels in which the test is given with the college- and career-readiness standards adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section or develop other aligned tests at each grade level so that progress toward college and career readiness in English/language arts and math can be measured; and

(3) Hold all schools and districts accountable for helping students in earlier grade levels achieve scores on math and English/language arts tests that predict success in subsequent levels of related coursework. This accountability shall be achieved through the school and school system accreditation provisions set forth in section five, article two-e of this chapter;

(h) Except as otherwise specified, all provisions of this section become effective with the 2014-2015 school year.

(i) On or before December 31, 2013, the state board shall promulgate a legislative rule in accordance with article three-b, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to implement the provisions of this section.