WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18-2-7G

§18-2-7g. Youth Apprenticeship Program.

(a) In addition to any other registered apprenticeship programs, there is herein created the "Youth Apprenticeship Program," which shall allow for any public, private, or home school student in the eleventh or twelfth grade, or are 16 years or older, the opportunity to enroll in apprenticeship programs: *Provided*, That, no apprenticeship program shall be authorized for any occupation prohibited for children under the age of 16 in accordance with the requirements of §21-6-2 of this code.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "apprenticeship program" shall have the same meaning as defined in §21-1E-2 of this code.

(c) Any student participating in the program may receive secondary credit or other credentialing for the apprenticeship when the apprenticeship is approved by the local county board of education and in keeping with the rules of the Division of Labor (hereinafter "the division").

(d) The West Virginia Department of Education (hereinafter "the department") is responsible for establishing the Youth Apprenticeship Program, including setting standards, providing guidelines for county boards of education to approve local enterprise, and granting release time from public schools to participate in the program.

(1) The Youth Apprenticeship Program shall include a broad range of skills, including those specifically focused on manufacturing, engineering technology, administration and office technology, and health care.

(2) The county boards of education shall develop materials in conjunction with industry to promote awareness of apprenticeship for students and to encourage recruitment.

(3) The program shall create a structural linkage between secondary and postsecondary components of the program leading to the school awarding a high school diploma and postsecondary certification of occupational skills to the student.

(e) The department shall develop pilot projects for the 2024-2025 school year and shall implement and direct a comprehensive apprenticeship program for all school systems by the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year.

(f) Each apprenticeship shall meet the department’s criteria which shall include, but is not limited to:

(1) A detailed training plan between the employer and the apprentice that identifies specific work tasks that will develop workplace competency;

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(2) A minimum of 135 classroom hours of related academic instruction and training;

(3) A minimum of 400 hours of on-the-job training;

(4) A progressive wage schedule established by the participating employer;

(5) On-site evaluation of the student's performance; and

(6) Training remediation as necessary at the school site.

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