

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18-5B-9

§18-5B-9. Establishment of new innovation zone schools by state institutions of higher education.

(a) A state institution of higher education may establish a new innovation zone school subject to the following:

(1) The school will be under the jurisdiction of the state institution of higher education;

(2) The county board with jurisdiction over the school district in which the new school is planned to be located must approve the establishment of the new innovation zone school;

(3) The state institution of higher education must enter into cooperative agreements with the county board or county boards whose students attend the new innovation zone school. The agreements shall include at least required reporting on student attendance, academic progress and any other matters relating to the administration, operation and support of the school agreed to by institution and the board or boards;

(4) Students attending the school shall be enrolled in a school in their county of residence subject to the policies of the county. The students may participate in extracurricular and cocurricular activities at the county school in which they are enrolled and, subject to the cooperative agreement with the state institution of higher education, participate in curricular activities at the county school in which they are enrolled;

(5) No funds provided to support the planning and implementation of school innovation zones pursuant to this article may be used for a state institution of higher education to establish a new innovation zone school; and

(6) A school established in accordance with this section may not be funded with: (1) Moneys appropriated by the Legislature to fund the innovation zone program; or (2) state or county moneys that result from the school aid formula.

(b) The state board shall promulgate a rule, including an emergency rule if necessary, in accordance with article three-b, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code for a state institution of higher education to establish a new innovation zone school. The rule shall include provisions for at least the following:

(1) A process for a state institution of higher education in accordance with this section to apply for designation as innovation zone and for approval of its innovation zone plan that encompasses at least the following:

(A) The manner, time and process for the submission of an application for innovation zone designation and for approval of its innovation zone plan;

(B) The contents of the application; and

(C) Factors to be considered by the state board when evaluating an application and plan, which shall include, but are not limited to, support from parents, students, county board or boards of education, the local school improvement council or councils and school business partners and the potential for a school to be successful as an innovation zone.

(2) A school created by state institution of higher education designated as an innovation zone or seeking designation as an innovation zone in accordance with this section shall develop an innovation zone plan that includes at least the following:

(A) A description of the programs, policies or initiatives the state institution of higher education intends to implement as an innovative strategy to improve student learning if the plan is approved;

(B) The approval of the county board of education with jurisdiction over the school district in which the new school is planned to be or is located and the cooperative agreements with the county board or county boards whose students attend the new innovation zone school;

(C) A list of all county and state board rules, policies and interpretations, and all statutes, if any, identified as prohibiting or constraining the implementation of the plan, including an explanation of the specific exceptions to the rules, policies and interpretations and statutes required for plan implementation;

(D) A policy under which the state institution of higher education and participating county board or boards of education agree to meet the accountability requirements for student assessment under all applicable assessment programs administered by the West Virginia Department of Education and provisions of law or policy required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Public Law No. 107-110 or other federal law; and

(E) Any other information the state board requires.

(3) Standards for the state board to review applications for designation as innovation zones and to make determinations on the approval of innovation zone plans.

(c) The state board and state superintendent shall review innovation zone applications and plans of a school created by a state institution of higher education in accordance with the standards adopted by the board and shall determine whether to designate it as an innovation zone or approve it plan, as applicable. The state board and state superintendent shall notify an applicant of the board's determination within sixty days of receipt of an innovation zone application and receipt of an innovation zone plan. If the plan is disapproved, the state board and state superintendent shall communicate the reasons for the disapproval to the school and make recommendations for improving the plan. The school may amend and resubmit the plan to the state board.

(d) 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. 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 request and make a recommendation to the Legislature on the exception requested.