WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18B-3D-4

§18B-3D-4. Learn and Earn Grant Program; purpose; eligible institutions; requirements.

(a) Legislative findings. The Legislature finds that cooperative education programs that combine classroom instruction with paid work experience provide valuable pathways to career success, enable students to earn income while pursuing their education, and provide employers with a cost-effective tool for recruiting and training skilled workers.

(b) Purpose. The Learn and Earn Grant Program provides funding to support student internships with employer partners in which grant funds are used to pay fifty percent of a student intern's base wages during the internship.

(c) Eligible institutions. Community and technical colleges, as defined in §18B-1-2 of this code, and Potomac State College of West Virginia University are eligible to apply for grants under this section in cooperation with one or more employer partners.

(d) Program requirements. Learn and Earn programs shall:

(1) Provide students with paid work experience in their field of study;

(2) Require a dollar-for-dollar cash match from participating employers, which shall be used to pay student intern wages; and

(3) Target high-demand occupations as documented through labor market data.

(e) Application procedures. The Chancellor shall establish application procedures that:

(1) Require applicants to demonstrate alignment with documented employer and workforce needs;

(2) Require applicants to identify expected program outcomes, including anticipated enrollment, completion rates, and employment outcomes;

(3) Provide appropriate levels of accountability; and

(4) Minimize unnecessary administrative burdens on institutions.

(f) Administration.

(1) At the discretion of the Chancellor, Learn and Earn grants may be awarded to institutions as block grants to cover multiple student internships and employer partnerships.

(2) When awarding block grants under this subsection, the Chancellor shall establish a

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system to ensure that:

(A) Funds are used in accordance with the requirements of this article and any applicable legislative and emergency rules;

(B) Institutions maintain appropriate documentation of employer partnerships, student internships, wage payments, and employer matching contributions; and

(C) Institutions report program performance and outcomes as required by the Chancellor.

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