

**Senate Bill No. 210**

(By Senators Wells, Browning, Foster, Stollings and Plymale)

[Introduced January 19, 2011; referred to the Committee on  
Education; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

**Interim  
Bill**

A BILL to amend and reenact §18A-3-3a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to reimbursement of tuition, registration and other required fees for course work completed by teachers; removing priority for reimbursement for courses for additional endorsements in shortage areas; and placing certain limits on number of courses per teacher eligible within certain time period and lifetime.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That §18A-3-3a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 3. TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

**§18A-3-3a. Payment of tuition, registration and other fees for teachers; maximum payment per teacher.**

(a) The West Virginia Department of Education shall promulgate

1 rules to administer the reimbursement of tuition, registration and  
2 other required fees for course work completed by teachers in  
3 accordance with the provisions of this section. The rules shall  
4 provide for reimbursement for courses completed toward both  
5 certification renewal and additional endorsement in a shortage  
6 area.

7 (b) As used in this section, the following words and phrases  
8 have the meanings ascribed to them:

9 (1) "Teacher" has the meaning provided in section one, article  
10 one, chapter eighteen of this code.

11 (2) "Shortage area" shall be defined by state board policy to  
12 indicate the subject areas for which an insufficient number of  
13 teachers are available.

14 (3) "Certification" and "certificate" means a valid West  
15 Virginia:

16 (A) Professional teaching, service or administrative  
17 certificate, or its equivalent; or

18 (B) Provisional professional teaching, service or  
19 administrative certificate, or its equivalent.

20 (4) "Requirements for certification renewal" are those  
21 requirements of the State Department of Education as provided in  
22 section three of this article.

23 (5) "Requirements for additional endorsement" are those  
24 requirements of the State Department of Education as provided in  
25 section three of this article.

1           (6) "State institution of higher education" has the meaning  
2 provided in section two, article one, chapter eighteen-b of this  
3 code.

4           (c) To the extent of funds appropriated for the purposes  
5 specified in this section, payment shall be made to any teacher  
6 who:

7           (1) Holds either a valid West Virginia:

8           (A) Certificate; or

9           (B) First class permit for full-time employment; and

10          (2) Is seeking:

11          (A) An additional endorsement in a shortage area, and either  
12 resides in the state or is employed regularly for instructional  
13 purposes in a public school in the state; or

14          (B) Certification renewal, and has a continuing contract with  
15 a county board.

16          (d) The payment shall be made as reimbursement for the  
17 tuition, registration and other required fees for any course  
18 completed at:

19          (1) Any college or university within the state; or

20          (2) A college or university outside the state if prior  
21 approval is granted by the department.

22          (e) A course is eligible for reimbursement if it meets the  
23 requirements for:

24          (1) An additional endorsement in a shortage area; or

25          (2) Certification renewal.

1 ~~(f) If funds appropriated for the purposes specified in this~~  
2 ~~section are insufficient for the reimbursement of all eligible~~  
3 ~~courses within the limits provided in this section, the West~~  
4 ~~Virginia Department of Education shall make the reimbursements for~~  
5 ~~courses for additional endorsement in a shortage area and~~  
6 ~~certification renewal in a shortage area first.~~

7 ~~(g)~~ (f) Payment made for any single fee may not exceed the  
8 amount of the highest corresponding fee charged at a state  
9 institution of higher education.

10 ~~(h)~~ (g) Reimbursement for courses completed toward  
11 certification renewal is limited to reimbursement for six semester  
12 hours of courses per teacher per certification renewal period  
13 subject to a lifetime maximum of fifteen semester hours of courses  
14 for any teacher. Reimbursement for courses completed toward  
15 additional endorsement in a shortage area is limited to fifteen  
16 semester hours of courses for any teacher.

17 (h) Reimbursement for courses completed toward certification  
18 in a shortage area is limited to reimbursement for six semester  
19 hours of courses per teacher per year, with no lifetime limit.

20 (i) The West Virginia Department of Education shall seek  
21 funding from sources other than general revenue appropriation,  
22 including, but not limited to, workforce investment funds.

23 (j) No provision of this section may be construed to require  
24 any appropriation or any specific amount of appropriation for the  
25 purposes specified in this section, or to require the department to

- 1 expend funds for those purposes from any other amounts appropriated
- 2 for expenditure by the department.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to allow for smoother and more equitable processing of the reimbursement of tuition, registration and other required fees for course work completed by teachers renewing their certificates or obtaining an additional endorsement in a teacher shortage area. The current priority for reimbursement for courses for additional endorsements in shortage areas is replaced with per teacher limits on the number of courses that will be reimbursed within a certain time period and total lifetime course reimbursement

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.

This bill is recommended for introduction and passage during the Regular Session by the Joint Standing Committee on Education.