

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2021 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2995

BY DELEGATES LONGANACRE, WORRELL, BARNHART,
MALLOW, MANDT, WAMSLEY, BRUCE AND BURKHAMMER

[Introduced March 09, 2021; Referred to the Committee on
Education]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §18-2-9b, relating to creating the “Two Path Education Reform Act;” providing
 3 legislative findings; establishing two pathways for students to choose educational career
 4 paths tailored to their individual needs; setting the framework for “white-collar” and “blue-
 5 collar” packets, but allowing the county boards of education in West Virginia to develop
 6 the contents of the packets; and providing an effective date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-9b. Two Path Education Reform Act.

1 (a) Legislative findings. – The Legislature of this state acknowledges that individual high
 2 school level students are extremely diverse and have uniquely individual ideas about their
 3 educational pathways as they approach their graduation dates. Some junior and senior level West
 4 Virginia high school students may choose to pursue attending an institute of higher education to
 5 earn a college degree tailored towards a “white collar” career path such as administration,
 6 business, legal, banking, real-estate, insurance, professional level healthcare, computer
 7 engineering, etc. However, some other junior or senior level students may choose to pursue a
 8 career field tailored towards a “blue collar” path, such as a career involving skilled labor,
 9 construction or carpentry, farming and agriculture, vehicle mechanics, welding, plumbing,
 10 machining, equipment operators, etc. This Legislature hereby recognizes the need for a more
 11 definitive high school model, one which places high school students into one of two paths - either
 12 the “white collar” pathway or the “blue collar” pathway.

13 (b) Two Path Act. – Students in West Virginia high schools who are a junior or senior may
 14 choose one of two pathways - the “white collar” pathway or the “blue-collar” pathway. Whichever
 15 path the student chooses, the county board shall develop a tailored packet of information that
 16 explains opportunities for post-secondary learning. For example, if a student decides that he or
 17 she desires to work on their family farm, become a diesel mechanic, work in manufacturing, or

18 operate heavy equipment for a living, he or she should choose the “blue collar” pathway. That
19 student would then be provided with the “blue-collar” packet and given tailored information on
20 what may be best for their respective situation. If the student chooses the “blue-collar” pathway
21 and receives the “blue-collar” packet, that student shall not be required to participate in those
22 courses designed for students who are attending a college/university after high school. This
23 includes, but is not limited to, mandatory pre-college algebra, pre-college writing, pre-college
24 social studies courses, or other classes designed for the specific purpose of preparing a student
25 for college. Conversely, a student desiring to go to a college/university to become an accountant,
26 a banker, or to manage a “white-collar” style business should not be required to have unrelated
27 courses for their respective field. The contents of the packets are described below, but it shall be
28 left up to the discretion of the county boards of education to develop the specific contents of the
29 packets. These packets shall be distributed to students at the beginning of their junior and senior
30 year, and if a student desires to switch pathways, they may be permitted to do so and shall be
31 given a new packet.

32 (1) The “white-collar” packet shall contain information on high school and advanced
33 placement classes available to high school students who intend to attend college or a university.
34 The packet shall also contain information on the Promise scholarship and other scholarship
35 opportunities available for students, to encourage them to attend a college or university in West
36 Virginia.

37 (2) The “blue-collar” packet shall contain information for tailored high school and post-
38 secondary courses and opportunities at technical schools/programs designed to allow those
39 students to pursue a blue-collar education to begin their career. This packet shall contain
40 information on those programs that could help students in this particular field, such as courses in
41 welding, diesel mechanic schools, etc.

42 (c) *Effective date.* – This section shall become effective upon passage.

NOTE: The purpose of this Bill is to create two readily identifiable pathways to better prepare high school students for their chosen career path during their final two years of high school which will prepare them for either a white-collar or blue-collar career path depending upon their personal leanings, talents, and skill sets.

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