

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2385

By Delegate Longanacre

[Introduced January 11, 2023; Referred to the
Committee on Health and Human Resources then
Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18-2-7b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to
 2 clarifying the manner of instruction for comprehensive drug awareness and prevention
 3 programs for students in grades K through 12.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-7b. Programs in drug prevention and violence reduction.

1 (a) In order for the schools to become healthy learning environments and to provide a
 2 strong defense against drug use and violence, the State Board of Education shall prescribe
 3 programs within the existing health and physical education program which teach resistance and
 4 life skills to counteract societal and peer pressure to use drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, and shall
 5 include counselors, teachers, and staff in full implementation of the program. The board shall also
 6 prescribe programs to coordinate violence reduction efforts in schools and between schools and
 7 their communities and to train students, teachers, counselors, and staff in conflict resolution skills.
 8 The program shall be comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and shall begin in elementary school.

9 (b) No later than the start of the 2018-2019 school year, a county board shall implement
 10 comprehensive drug awareness and prevention programs for students in grades K through 12 to
 11 receive instruction regarding the dangers of substance abuse. The purpose of the drug awareness
 12 and prevention program is to:

13 (1) Keep students from illegally using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs;

14 (2) Reduce or eliminate the incidence and prevalence of student’s alcohol, tobacco, and
 15 other drug abuse;

16 (3) Reduce the factors that place students at risk of abusing alcohol, tobacco, or other
 17 drugs through school and a community-based planning processes;

18 (4) Contribute to the development of school environments and alternative activities that are
 19 alcohol, tobacco, and drug-free;

20 (5) Increase the knowledge and skills of students, staff, and community members for

21 avoiding the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, and of blood borne pathogens;

22 (6) Actively involve staff, students, parents, and community members in the development
23 and implementation of the drug awareness and prevention program plans;

24 (7) Facilitate an understanding and appreciation of the risks to, duties of, and likely actions
25 by law-enforcement officers when conducting investigations; and

26 (8) Instruct how to respond to an officer during a vehicular or other stop or police
27 interaction, including problematic or dangerous action and behaviors that could result in a person
28 being detained or arrested.

29 (c) The county board shall coordinate the delivery of instruction to meet the purposes of
30 subsection (b) of this section with educators, drug rehabilitation specialists, ~~and~~ law-enforcement
31 agencies, and other professionals to periodically provide age appropriate student education on
32 their experiences with the impacts of illegal alcohol and drug use: Provided, That this instruction
33 shall include classroom lectures, hands-on laboratory work, and field trips to corrections facilities,
34 morgues, funeral homes, and/or substance abuse rehabilitation centers.

35 (d) Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, instruction required pursuant to §18-2-9 of
36 this code in the subject of health education in any of the grades six through 12 as considered
37 appropriate by the county board shall include at least 60 minutes of instruction for each student on
38 the dangers of opioid use, the additive characteristics of opioids, and safer alternatives to treat
39 pain.

40 (e) Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, comprehensive drug awareness and
41 prevention programs for students in grades K through 12 may include faith-based electives for
42 drug awareness in classrooms. The state board shall promulgate a rule on how the faith-based
43 electives can be offered in a way that is consistent with constitutional requirements.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to clarify the manner of instruction for comprehensive drug awareness and prevention programs for students in grades K through 12.

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