

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 2879

[Reported on March 19, 2025 in the Committee on
Education, then to the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
2 designated §18C-10-1, §18C-10-2, §18C-10-3, and §18C-10-4, relating to the creation of
3 the West Virginia Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Scholarship Act; providing
4 for a short title; providing for legislative findings and purpose; establishing the West
5 Virginia Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Scholarship Act; requiring funding;
6 setting forth the amount of scholarship money to be paid to educators who satisfy the
7 thresholds; and creating a sunset provision.

ARTICLE 10. WEST VIRGINIA MATH & SCIENCE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP ACT.

§18C-10-1. Short title.

8 This article shall be known and may be cited as the "West Virginia Math, Science and
9 Special Education Teacher Scholarship Act."

§18C-10-2. Legislative findings and purpose.

10 (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:

11 (1) Every West Virginia student should have access to education and training that will lead
12 directly to quality employment opportunities within the state. For West Virginia to retain and attract
13 teachers and educators in this particular field, our state must ensure that qualified teachers within
14 West Virginia are incentivized to stay and work in West Virginia schools.

15 (2) West Virginia currently faces a shortage of educators, particularly with those who have
16 specialized training in the mathematics, science and special education fields, which has likely
17 contributed to underperformance in student test scores.

18 (b) The purpose of this article is to provide existing and upcoming West Virginia educators
19 with incentives to remain in West Virginia and pursue a career in educating students in the fields of
20 mathematics, science and special education through the creation of a scholarship program
21 designed to recruit and retain teachers in mathematics and science.

§18C-10-3. West Virginia Math & Science Teacher Scholarship Act; funding.

(a) There is hereby created a scholarship program known as the "West Virginia Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Scholarship", which shall be administered by the vice chancellor for administration pursuant to §18B-4-2 of this code.

(b) The scholarship program shall be available to all West Virginia certified teachers with specializations in a mathematics, science or special education.

(1) A math, science or special education teacher who has been employed in an elementary or secondary public school in this state for three years shall be eligible for up to \$2,000 in debt relief through this scholarship.

(2) A math, science or special education teacher who has been employed in an elementary or secondary public school in this state for six years shall be eligible for up to \$4,000 in debt relief: *Provided*, That the total debt relief per teacher may not exceed \$4000.

(c) Funding for this program shall be appropriated through a line item in the budget.

§18C-10-4. Eligibility requirements; agreements; sunset provision.

(a) To be eligible for the West Virginia Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Scholarship Program, an individual shall satisfy the following requirements:

(1) Be a citizen of the United States and have been a resident of West Virginia for at least one year immediately preceding the date of application for the scholarship;

(2) Have completed at least a master's degree in education, with a specialization in mathematics, science or special education;

(3) Be employed by an elementary or secondary public school in this state for a minimum of three years for the initial \$2,000 of debt relief and six years for the additional \$2,000 of debt relief;

(4) Fill a position that qualifies as mathematics, science or special education position under applicable State Board of Education rules and policies; and

(5) Have available debt to qualify, as scholarship funds to recipients may not exceed any debt owed at the time of award. Applicants who have a debt balance which is less than the award

47 amount may not receive more than the amount of the debt owed.

48 (b) The West Virginia Math, Science and Special Education Teacher Scholarship Program

49 shall begin on January 1, 2026 and shall sunset on January 1, 2036.