

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 5212

BY DELEGATES ELLINGTON, STATLER, SHAMBLIN,
HORNBY, D. SMITH, TONEY, CAMPBELL, MILLER, MARTIN,
MALLOW, AND JENNINGS

[Passed March 14, 2026; in effect 90 days from
passage (June 12, 2026)]

1 AN ACT to repeal §18B-3D-6 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; to amend and
2 reenact §18B-3D-1, §18B-3D-2, §18B-3D-3, §18B-3D-4, §18B-3D-5, and §18B-3D-6 of
3 said code; to amend and reenact §18C-3-1 and §18C-3-3 of said code; to amend and
4 reenact §18C-5-6 and §18C-5-7 of said code; to amend and reenact §18C-7-6 of said
5 code; and to amend and reenact §18C-9-3 and §18C-9-5, all relating generally to higher
6 education grants, scholarships, loans, and financial aid for postsecondary education
7 programs, workforce development initiatives, and workforce grants; amending the learn
8 and earn grant program to allow block grants and to redefine administrative costs;
9 amending the medical student loan program by amending definitions, clarifying amount of
10 award and service commitment, revising interest rate determinations and time period for
11 loan repayment; amending health sciences and mental health provider loan repayment
12 programs by replacing scholarship language with loan repayment language, amending
13 award preferences provisions, requiring the commission to pay awards directly to federal
14 loan service providers, removing provisions regarding licensure as it relates to repayment,
15 clarifying language regarding mental health provider student loan repayment program,
16 clarifying language regarding the mental health provider student loan repayment fund;
17 amending the higher education grant program by allowing part-time enrollment and
18 combining the higher education adult part-time student grant with the higher education
19 grant; amending the higher education adult part-time student grant program by renaming
20 and reorganizing it into the higher education workforce grant program; amending the
21 PROMISE scholarship program requirements; amending the WV invests grant program
22 requirements and eligibility requirements; and making technical changes.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 18B. HIGHER EDUCATION.

ARTICLE 3D. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

§18B-3D-1. Legislative findings and intent.

1 The Legislature finds that community and technical colleges play a critical role in West
2 Virginia's economic development by providing the skilled workforce necessary for businesses and
3 industries to thrive in a competitive global economy. Rapid changes in technology, industry
4 practices, and employer needs require that these institutions have the flexibility and resources to
5 respond quickly and effectively to workforce demands.

6 It is the intent of the Legislature to provide funding that enables community and technical
7 colleges to develop and deliver workforce training programs that meet the evolving needs of West
8 Virginia employers, support economic growth, and provide pathways to high-wage employment
9 for West Virginia residents.

§18B-3D-2. Workforce Development Grant Program; purpose; administration; funding.

1 (a) The Workforce Development Grant Program is continued under the supervision of the
2 West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education. The purpose of the
3 program is to provide funding to community and technical colleges to develop and deliver
4 workforce training programs that respond to the needs of West Virginia businesses and industries.

5 (b) The program consists of the following grant programs:

- 6 (1) Technical Program Development Grant Program;
- 7 (2) West Virginia Advance Grant Program;
- 8 (3) Learn and Earn Grant Program; and
- 9 (4) Skilled Trades Apprenticeship Nontraditional Degree (STAND) Program.

10 (c) The chancellor, under the direction of the council, shall administer the Workforce
11 Development Grant Program, including:

- 12 (1) Establishing application procedures and criteria;
- 13 (2) Reviewing and approving grant applications;
- 14 (3) Monitoring grant performance and compliance; and
- 15 (4) Evaluating program outcomes.

16 (d) The council may allocate a reasonable amount, not to exceed five percent of the funds
17 available for grants on an annual basis, for general program administration.

18 (e) Moneys appropriated or otherwise available for the Workforce Development Grant
19 Program shall be allocated by line item to an appropriate account. Any moneys remaining in the
20 fund at the close of a fiscal year are carried forward for use in the next fiscal year.

21 (f) Nothing in this article requires a specific level of appropriation by the Legislature.

**§18B-3D-3. Technical Program Development Grant Program and West Virginia Advance
Grant Program; purpose; eligible institutions; application procedures.**

1 (a) Purpose.

2 (1) The Technical Program Development Grant Program provides funding to community
3 and technical colleges to develop and implement new certificate and associate degree programs
4 that address workforce needs and support economic development.

5 (2) The West Virginia Advance Grant Program provides funding to community and
6 technical colleges to:

7 (A) Develop and deliver short-term, sub-certificate training programs that respond to
8 immediate workforce needs; and

9 (B) Purchase specialized equipment necessary for technical and workforce training
10 programs.

11 (b) Eligible institutions. Community and technical colleges, as defined in §18B-1-2 of this
12 code, are eligible to apply for grants under this section.

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

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

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

18 (3) Provide appropriate levels of accountability; and

19 (4) Minimize unnecessary administrative burdens on institutions.

20 (d) Grant awards. The Chancellor shall review applications and make grant awards based
21 on criteria established pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 (3) Provide appropriate levels of accountability; and

22 (4) Minimize unnecessary administrative burdens on institutions.

23 (f) Administration.

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

26 (2) When awarding block grants under this subsection, the Chancellor shall establish a
27 system to ensure that:

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

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

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

§18B-3D-5. Legislative and emergency rules.

1 (a) The council shall propose a legislative rule pursuant to §18B-1-6 and §29A-3A-1 *et*
2 *seq.* of this code to implement the provisions of this article and shall file the rule with the
3 Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability no later than October 1, 2026.

4 (b) The Legislature finds that an emergency exists and, therefore, the council shall
5 propose an emergency rule to implement the provisions of this article in accordance with §18B-
6 1-6 and §29A-3A-1 *et seq.* of this code by October 1, 2026.

7 (c) Any rule promulgated by the council pursuant to previous enactments of this section
8 and in effect on the effective date of the amendment and reenactment of this section in the year
9 2026 remains in effect until amended, modified, repealed or replaced by the council.

§18B-3D-6. Learn and Earn Cooperative Education Program established.

1 [Repealed.]

CHAPTER 18C. STUDENT LOANS; SCHOLARSHIPS AND STATE AID.

ARTICLE 3. HEALTH PROFESSIONALS STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS.

§18C-3-1. Medical Student Loan Program; establishment; administration; eligibility; loan repayment and collection; required report.

1 (a) Definitions. – As used in this section, unless the context in which the term used clearly
2 requires a different meaning:

3 "Approved service commitment area" means a location in West Virginia that is both a
4 federally designated geographic, population, or facility-based health professions shortage area
5 and in a medical specialty in which there is a shortage of physicians, as determined by the state's
6 Department of Health.

7 "Medical schools" means the Marshall University School of Medicine, the West Virginia
8 University School of Medicine, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

9 "Person" means the recipient of a medical student loan issued in accordance with the
10 provisions of this section by a medical school as defined herein.

11 "West Virginia residents" means persons who are citizens or legal residents of the United
12 States and are charged in-state tuition at the time of entry into the medical school.

13 (b) There are established the medical student loan program at the Marshall University
14 School of Medicine, the West Virginia University School of Medicine, and the West Virginia School
15 of Osteopathic Medicine.

16 (c) Subject to the availability of funds as established in §18C-3-1(d) of this code, the
17 medical schools may make medical student loans in accordance with the provisions of this section
18 to students enrolled in or admitted to their respective medical schools in a course of instruction
19 leading to the degree of doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy who enter into a written
20 medical student loan agreement with the medical school in accordance with §18C-3-1(i) of this
21 code. The number of awards shall be determined by the availability of funds in this program at
22 each school in any given academic year: *Provided*, That the availability of funds does not require
23 the medical schools to issue or renew medical student loans.

24 (d) There are hereby continued the special revolving fund accounts at the Marshall
25 University School of Medicine, the West Virginia University School of Medicine, and the West
26 Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, which shall be used to carry out the purposes of this
27 section.

28 (1) The funds shall consist of all moneys currently on deposit in such accounts or which
29 are due or become due for deposit into such accounts as obligations made under the previous
30 enactment of this section; those funds provided for medical education pursuant to the provisions
31 of §18B-10-4 of this code; appropriations provided by the Legislature; repayment of any loans
32 made under this section; amounts provided by medical associations, hospitals, or other medical
33 provider organizations in this state, or by political subdivisions of the state, under an agreement
34 which requires the recipient to practice his or her health profession in this state or in the political
35 subdivision providing the funds for a predetermined period of time and in such capacity as set
36 forth in the agreement; and any other amounts which may be available from external sources.

37 (2) All expenditures from the medical schools' medical student loan repayment funds shall
38 be for medical student loans issued in accordance with the terms of this section and for the
39 medical schools' expenses incurred in administering their respective medical student loan
40 programs.

41 (3) These funds shall operate as special funds whereby all deposits and payments thereto
42 do not expire to the General Revenue Fund, but shall remain in the medical schools' funds and
43 be available for expenditure in succeeding fiscal years.

44 (e) In order to be eligible for a medical student loan as provided in this section, the person
45 applying shall meet the following minimum requirements:

46 (1) Full-time enrollment in a medical school in a program leading to the degree of doctor
47 of medicine or doctor of osteopathy: *Provided*, That the person has not previously obtained such
48 a degree;

49 (2) Demonstrated financial need as determined by the medical schools' individual financial
50 aid offices;

51 (3) Demonstrated credit-worthiness by not being in default of any previous student loan or
52 medical student loan issued by any lender; and

53 (4) United States citizenship as either born or naturalized.

54 (f) Medical student loans shall be awarded on a priority basis first to qualified applicants
55 who are West Virginia residents, and second to qualified applicants who are not West Virginia
56 residents.

57 (g) In order to be eligible for renewal of a medical student loan as provided in this section,
58 the person applying therefor shall meet the minimum requirements established in §18C-3-1(e) of
59 this code, as well as maintain good academic standing and make satisfactory progress toward
60 degree completion in accordance with the issuing medical school's policy for awarding Title IV
61 financial aid funds.

62 (h) Each medical student loan issued by a medical school shall be made pursuant to the
63 provisions of this section and shall provide to the recipient of the medical student loan a maximum
64 amount of up to \$20,000 per academic year. The medical school and the person may renew the
65 medical student loan annually for a period not to exceed four years: *Provided*, That the person is
66 eligible for such renewal in accordance with §18C-3-1(g) of this code.

67 (i) Each medical student loan issued by a medical school shall be memorialized in a written
68 medical student loan agreement, which shall require, at a minimum, that the person receiving the
69 loan:

70 (1) Complete the required course of instruction and receive the degree of doctor or
71 medicine (M.D.) or doctor of osteopathy (D.O.);

72 (2) Apply for and obtain a license to practice medicine in West Virginia;

73 (3) Engage in the full-time practice of medicine for a period of 12 months within an
74 approved service commitment area;

75 (4) Commence the full-time practice of medicine within nine months after completion of an
76 approved post-graduate residency training program and licensure in an approved service
77 commitment area and continue full-time practice in the approved service commitment area for a
78 consecutive period of years equal to the total number of years for which the medical student loan
79 was provided;

80 (5) Agree that the service commitment for each agreement entered into under the
81 provisions of this section is in addition to any other service commitment contained in any other
82 agreement the person has entered or may enter into for the purpose of obtaining any other
83 financial aid;

84 (6) Maintain records and make reports to the issuing medical school and the Commission
85 to document the person's satisfaction of the obligations under the agreement to engage in the
86 full-time practice of medicine in an approved service commitment area and to continue the full-
87 time practice of medicine in the approved service commitment area for a consecutive period of
88 years equal to the total number of years the student received the medical student loan. Persons
89 practicing in a federally designated population-based health professions shortage area shall
90 provide documentation that more than 50 percent of their service is provided to the designated
91 population; and

92 (7) Upon failure to satisfy the requirements of the agreement that the person engage in
93 the full-time practice of medicine within an approved service commitment area for the required
94 period of time under the medical student loan agreement, the person receiving a medical student
95 loan pursuant to the provisions of this section shall repay amounts to his or her issuing medical
96 school in accordance with the provisions of §18C-3-1(k) of this code.

97 (j) Upon the selection of an approved service commitment area for the purpose of
98 satisfying a service obligation under a medical student loan agreement entered into pursuant to
99 the provisions of this section, the person so selecting shall inform the issuing medical school and
100 the Commission of the service area selected. Such person may serve all or part of the

101 commitment in the approved service commitment area initially selected or in a different approved
102 service commitment area: *Provided*, That the person notifies his or her issuing medical school
103 and the Commission of his or her change of approved service commitment areas. Service in any
104 such service commitment area shall be deemed to be continuous for the purpose of satisfying the
105 medical student loan agreement.

106 (k) Upon the person's presentation of the report required by subdivision (i)(6) of this
107 section to the issuing medical school evidencing his or her satisfaction of the terms of the medical
108 student loan agreement provided for herein, the issuing medical school shall cancel one year of
109 award for every twelve full consecutive months of service as required in the agreement.

110 (l) Upon the failure of any person to satisfy the obligation to engage in the full-time practice
111 of medicine within an approved service commitment area of this state for the required period of
112 time under any medical student loan agreement, such person shall repay to his or her issuing
113 medical school an amount equal to the total of the amount of money received by the person
114 pursuant to the medical student loan agreement plus annual interest at a rate as determined by
115 the Vice Chancellor of Administration from the date the person begins repayment or fails to work
116 full-time in an approved service commitment area. For any such repayment, the following
117 provisions shall apply:

118 (1) The person shall repay an amount totaling the entire amount to be repaid under all
119 medical student loan agreements for which such obligations are not satisfied, including all
120 amounts of interest at the rate prescribed. The repayment period shall not exceed ten years.

121 (2) All installment payments shall commence six months after the date of the action or
122 circumstance that causes the person's failure to satisfy the obligations of the medical student loan
123 agreement, as determined by the issuing medical school based upon the circumstances of each
124 individual case. In all cases, if an installment payment becomes 91 days overdue, the entire
125 amount outstanding shall become immediately due and payable, including all amounts of interest
126 at the rate prescribed.

127 (3) If a person becomes in default of his or her medical student loan repayment obligations,
128 the medical school shall make all reasonable efforts to collect the debt, in accordance with the
129 provisions of §14-1-1 *et seq.* of this code.

130 (m) If, during the time a person is satisfying the service requirement of a medical student
131 loan agreement, such person desires to engage in less than the full-time practice of medicine
132 within an approved service commitment area and remain in satisfaction of the service
133 requirement, such person may apply to the medical school that issued the medical student loan
134 for permission to engage in less than the full-time practice of medicine. Upon a finding of
135 exceptional circumstances made by the medical school that issued the medical student loan, the
136 medical school may authorize the person to engage in less than the full-time practice of medicine
137 within an approved service commitment area for the remaining required period of time under the
138 medical student loan agreement and for an additional period of time that shall be equal to the
139 length of time originally required multiplied by two: *Provided*, That in no event shall such person
140 be allowed to practice medicine less than half-time.

141 (n) By July 31 each year, each medical school shall prepare and submit a report on the
142 operations of their respective medical student loan programs to the commission for inclusion in
143 the commission's data publication and reporting required by §18C-1-1(f) of this code. At a
144 minimum, this report shall include the following information:

145 (1) The number of medical student loans awarded during the preceding academic year;

146 (2) The total amount of medical student loans awarded;

147 (3) The total amount of any unexpended moneys remaining in their medical student loan
148 funds at the end of the fiscal year;

149 (4) The rate of default on the repayment of previously awarded loans during the previous
150 fiscal year;

151 (5) The number of doctors practicing medicine in the state in accordance with their service
152 obligations; and

153 (6) The total amount of medical student loans cancelled in accordance with subsection (k)
154 of this section.

§18C-3-3. Health Sciences Loan Repayment Program; Mental Health Provider Loan Repayment Program; establishment; administration; eligibility.

1 (a) There is continued a special revolving fund account under the Higher Education Policy
2 Commission in the State Treasury known as the Health Sciences Loan Repayment Fund. The
3 fund shall be used to accomplish the purposes of this section. The fund consists of any of the
4 following:

5 (1) All unexpended health sciences loan repayment program funds on deposit in the State
6 Treasury on the effective date of reenactment of this section;

7 (2) Appropriations as may be provided by the Legislature;

8 (3) Repayments, including interest as set by the vice chancellor for administration,
9 collected from program award recipients who fail to practice or teach in West Virginia under the
10 terms of an award agreement or the former health sciences scholarship program previously
11 established by this section; and

12 (4) Amounts that may become available from other sources.

13 (b) Balances remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year do not expire or revert to
14 the general revenue. All costs associated with the administration of this section shall be paid from
15 the health sciences loan repayment fund under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for
16 Administration.

17 (c) Award preference is given to West Virginia residents. An individual is eligible for
18 consideration for a health sciences loan repayment award if the individual:

19 (1) Either:

20 (A) Is a medical student at the Marshall University School of Medicine, the West Virginia
21 School of Osteopathic Medicine, or the West Virginia University School of Medicine who has

22 participated in the match process and has been offered an internship or residency in a primary
23 care or emergency medicine program in West Virginia; or

24 (B) Is enrolled in the last year of an approved education program at a public or private,
25 non-profit West Virginia institution of higher education leading to a degree or certification in the
26 field of nurse practitioner, nurse educator, nurse midwife, physician assistant, dentist, pharmacist,
27 physical therapist, doctoral clinical psychologist, licensed independent clinical social worker, or
28 other disciplines identified as shortage fields by the Vice Chancellor for Administration; and

29 (2) Signs an agreement to practice for at least two years in an underserved area of West
30 Virginia or, if pursuing a master's degree in nursing, signs an agreement to teach at least two
31 years for a school of nursing located in West Virginia after receiving the master's degree.

32 (d) Program awards shall be in an amount set by the Higher Education Policy Commission
33 of at least \$20,000 for medical and dental students and at least \$10,000 for all others and shall
34 be awarded by the Vice Chancellor for Administration, who may seek the advice of an advisory
35 panel, from the pool of all applicants with a commitment to practice in an underserved area of
36 West Virginia. This subsection does not grant or guarantee any applicant any right to a program
37 award. Upon completion of the requirements stated in the service agreement, the Higher
38 Education Policy Commission shall pay the award directly to the participant's federal student loan
39 servicer.

40 (e) If a program award recipient fails to practice in an underserved area of West Virginia
41 within six months of the completion of his or her training, or if a program award recipient fails to
42 complete his or her training or required teaching, the Vice Chancellor for Administration shall
43 cancel the program award.

44 (f) (1) There is created a mental health provider student loan repayment program to be
45 administered by the Higher Education Policy Commission. The loan repayment program shall
46 help repay the federal student loans for mental health providers who provide therapy and
47 counseling services and who reside in West Virginia and work in an underserved area of West

48 Virginia for up to three years beginning January 1, 2020. Individuals participating in the loan
49 repayment program may be eligible to receive up to \$30,000 to be dispersed as follows:

50 (A) A participant may receive a loan repayment program award of up to \$10,000 each year
51 in exchange for the participant completing one year of practice in an underserved area.

52 (B) A participant may not receive a program award for more than three years of practice.

53 (C) Upon completion of the requirements stated in the service agreement, the Higher
54 Education Policy Commission will pay the award directly to the participant's federal student loan
55 servicer.

56 (2) There is created a special revenue fund account under the Higher Education Policy
57 Commission in the State Treasury known as the Mental Health Provider Student Loan Repayment
58 Fund. The fund shall be used to accomplish the purposes of this subsection. The fund shall consist
59 of any of the following:

60 (A) All unexpended funds in the Mental Health Provider Student Loan Repayment fund on
61 deposit in the State Treasury on the effective date of the reenactment of this section;

62 (B) Appropriations as may be provided by the Legislature;

63 (C) Repayments, including interest as set by the Vice Chancellor for Administration,
64 collected from program award recipients who fail to practice in West Virginia under the terms of
65 the practice agreement or the mental health provider loan repayment program previously
66 established by this section; and

67 (D) Amounts that may become available from other sources.

68 (3) Balances remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year do not expire or revert to
69 the general revenue.

70 (g) *Rule.* — The Higher Education Policy Commission shall promulgate a rule pursuant to
71 §29A-3A-1 *et seq.* of this code to implement and administer this section.

72 (h) As used in this section:

73 (1) "Training" means:

74 (A) The entire degree program or certification program for nurse midwives, nurse
75 practitioners, nurse educators, physician assistants, dentists, pharmacists, physical therapists,
76 doctoral clinical psychologists, licensed independent clinical social workers, and other disciplines
77 identified as shortage fields by the Vice Chancellor for Administration; or

78 (B) Completion of a degree program and an approved residency/internship program for
79 students pursuing a degree in medicine or osteopathy, or as otherwise may be designated for
80 such students in the rule required by this section.

81 (2) "Underserved area" means any primary care health professional shortage area located
82 in the state as determined by the Bureau for Public Health or any additional health professional
83 shortage area, including an emergency medicine professional, determined by the Vice Chancellor
84 for Administration.

ARTICLE 5. HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM.

§18C-5-6. Recipients, awards and distribution of grant awards; authority of vice chancellor to enter into reciprocal agreements with other states concerning grants.

1 (a) A grant recipient may attend any approved institution of higher education. An institution
2 is not required to accept a grant recipient for enrollment, but may exact compliance with its own
3 admission requirements, standards and policies.

4 (b) Grants may only be awarded to undergraduate students that are enrolled full-time or
5 part-time at an approved institution of higher education.

6 (c) Each grant may be awarded and renewed up to a lifetime total of eight full-time
7 equivalent semesters, or until a recipient obtains a bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first.

8 (d) Qualifications for renewal include the following, as determined by the vice chancellor:

9 (1) Maintaining satisfactory academic standing;

10 (2) Making normal progress toward completion of the course of study; and

11 (3) Continued eligibility.

12 (e) Grants are awarded:

13 (1) Without regard to the applicant's race, creed, color, sex, national origin or ancestry;

14 and

15 (2) In accordance with the provisions of this article.

16 (f) The vice chancellor shall treat all approved institutions of higher education in a fair and
17 equitable manner when awarding grants.

18 (g) The vice chancellor periodically shall identify areas of professional, vocational and
19 technical expertise that are, or will become, of critical need in this state. To the extent feasible the
20 vice chancellor may direct grants to students who are pursuing instruction in those areas.

21 (h) The vice chancellor may enter into reciprocal agreements with state grant and grant
22 program agencies in other states which provide financial assistance to their residents attending
23 institutions of higher education located in West Virginia. In connection therewith, the vice
24 chancellor may authorize residents of West Virginia to use financial assistance under this article
25 to attend institutions of higher education in such other states. Residents of West Virginia
26 requesting financial assistance to attend institutions of higher education located in any such state
27 must meet all of the eligibility standards set forth in section five of this article.

28 (i) Grant awards may not exceed the cost of the tuition and those related compulsory fees
29 charged by an institution to all West Virginia undergraduate students.

30 (j) Grant payments are made directly to the institution.

31 (k) In the event that a grant recipient transfers from one approved institution of higher
32 education to another, the grant is transferable only with the approval of the vice chancellor.

33 (l) If a recipient terminates enrollment for any reason during the academic year, the unused
34 portion of the grant shall be returned by the institution to the commission in accordance with the
35 commission's policy for issuing refunds. The commission shall transfer such funds to the
36 appropriate account for allocation and expenditure pursuant to the provisions of this article.

§18C-5-7. Higher education future workforce grant program.

1 (a) There is established the Higher Education Future Workforce Grant Program. The
2 Future Workforce grant program established and authorized by this section is administered by
3 the vice chancellor for administration. Moneys appropriated or otherwise available for the Future
4 Workforce grant program shall be allocated by line item to an appropriate account. Any moneys
5 remaining in the fund at the close of a fiscal year shall be carried forward for use in the next fiscal
6 year.

7 (b) As used in this section, the following terms have the meanings ascribed to them:

8 (1) "Approved distance education" means a course of study offered via electronic access
9 that has been approved for inclusion in the applicant's program of study by the eligible institution
10 of higher education at which the applicant is enrolled or has been accepted for enrollment;

11 (2) "Satisfactory academic progress" means, in the case of postsecondary certificate,
12 industry recognized credential and other skill development programs, continuous advancement
13 toward completion of the program on the normal schedule established for the program in which
14 enrolled;

15 (3) "Eligible institution" has the same meaning as approved institution of higher education
16 as defined in §18C-5-2 of this code;

17 (4) "Eligible program or programs" or "eligible course or courses" means, in addition to
18 programs and courses offered by eligible institutions as defined in subdivision (3) of this
19 subsection:

20 (A) Programs and courses offered by any nationally accredited degree granting institution
21 of higher learning approved by the vice chancellor for administration; and

22 (B) Any postsecondary certificate, industry recognized credential and other skill
23 development programs of study as defined in this section in a demand occupation in this state;

24 (5) "State resident" means a student who has lived in West Virginia continuously for a
25 minimum of twelve months immediately preceding the date of application for a Future Workforce
26 grant or renewal of a grant;

27 (6) "Postsecondary certificate program" means an organized program of study, approved
28 by the vice chancellor for administration, with defined competencies or skill sets that may be
29 offered for credit or noncredit and which culminates in the awarding of a certificate: *Provided*, That
30 postsecondary certificate programs offered by eligible institutions as defined in subdivision (3) of
31 this subsection do not require the approval of the vice chancellor for administration;

32 (7) "Demand occupation" means any occupation having documented verification from
33 employers that job opportunities in that occupation are currently available or are projected to be
34 available within a year within the state or regions of the state. The vice chancellor for
35 administration shall prepare and update annually a list of occupations that they determine meet
36 the requirements of this definition;

37 (8) "Industry-recognized credential program" means an organized program that meets
38 nationally recognized standards in a particular industry, is approved by the vice chancellor for
39 administration and which culminates in the awarding of a certification or other credential
40 commonly recognized in that industry: *Provided*, That industry recognized credential programs
41 offered by eligible institutions as defined in subdivision (4) of this subsection do not require the
42 approval of the vice chancellor for administration; and

43 (9) "Skill development program" means a structured sequence or set of courses,
44 approved by the vice chancellor for administration, with defined competencies that are designed
45 to meet the specific skill requirements of an occupation and which culminates in the awarding of
46 a certificate of completion that specifically lists the competencies or skills mastered: *Provided*,
47 That skill development programs offered by eligible institutions as defined in subdivision (4) of
48 this subsection do not require the approval of the vice chancellor for administration.

49 (c) A person is eligible for consideration for a Future Workforce grant if the person:

50 (1) Demonstrates that he or she has applied for, accepted, or both, other student financial
51 assistance in compliance with federal financial aid rules, including the federal Pell grant;

52 (2) Demonstrates financial need for funds, as defined by legislative rule;

53 (3) Is a state resident and may not be considered a resident of any other state;

54 (4) Is a United States citizen or permanent resident thereof;

55 (5) Is not incarcerated in a correctional facility;

56 (6) Is not in default on a higher education loan; and

57 (7) Is enrolled in short-term training programs of twelve months or less in a postsecondary
58 certificate, industry-recognized credential, or other skill development programs in a demand
59 occupation in the state and is making satisfactory academic progress at the time of application:
60 *Provided*, That the requirement that the student be making satisfactory academic progress may
61 not preclude a Future Workforce grant award to a student who has been accepted for enrollment
62 in an eligible institution or program of study but has not yet been enrolled.

63 (d) Each Future Workforce grant award is eligible for renewal until the course of study is
64 completed, but not to exceed an additional three years beyond the first year of the award.

65 (e) The Higher Education Policy Commission shall propose a legislative rule pursuant to
66 §29A-3A-1 *et seq.* of this code to implement the provisions of this section and §18C-5-6 of this
67 code which shall be filed with the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability
68 by October 1, 2026. The Legislature finds that an emergency exists and, therefore, the
69 commission shall propose an emergency rule to implement the provisions of this section and
70 §18C-5-6 of this code in accordance with §29A-3A-1 *et seq.* of this code by October 1, 2026. Any
71 rule promulgated by the commission pursuant to previous enactments of this article and in effect
72 on the effective date of the amendment and reenactment of this section in the year 2026 remains
73 in effect until amended, modified, repealed, or replaced by the commission.

74 (f) The legislative rule shall provide at least the following:

75 (1) That consideration of financial need, as required by subdivision (2), subsection (c) of
76 this section, include the following factors:

77 (A) Whether the applicant has dependents as defined by federal law;

78 (B) Whether the applicant has any personal hardship as determined at the discretion of
79 the vice chancellor for administration; and

80 (C) Whether the applicant will receive any other source of student financial aid during the
81 award period.

82 (2) That an appropriate allocation process be provided for distribution of funds directly to
83 the eligible institutions or programs based on the part-time enrollment figures of the prior year;

84 (3) That funds appropriated in any one fiscal year may be used to make grants to students
85 enrolled in postsecondary certificate, industry recognized credential and other skill development
86 programs of study;

87 (4) That funds appropriated in any one fiscal year may be used to make grants to state
88 community and technical colleges by the council for community and technical college education
89 in accordance with a process specified in the rule for noncredit and customized training programs
90 which further the economic development goals of the state, help meet the training and skill
91 upgrade needs of employers in the state, and for which funds are not available from other sources;

92 (5) That any funds not expended by an eligible institution or program at the end of each
93 fiscal year shall be returned to the vice chancellor for administration for distribution under the
94 provisions of this section;

95 (6) That grants under this section shall be available throughout the calendar year, subject
96 only to the availability of funds; and

97 (7) That the amount of each Future Workforce grant award be determined using the
98 following guidelines:

99 (A) The amount of any Future Workforce grant awarded to a student per semester, term
100 hour or program for those students who are enrolled in eligible institutions or programs operated

101 under the jurisdiction of an agency of the state or a political subdivision thereof shall be based
102 upon the following:

103 (i) Actual cost of tuition and fees;

104 (ii) The portion of the costs determined to be appropriate by the commission; and

105 (iii) In addition to factors (i) and (ii) above, in determining the amount of the award, the
106 vice chancellor may consider the demand for the program pursuant to subdivision (8), subsection
107 (b) of this section; and

108 (B) The amount of any Future Workforce grant awarded to a student who is enrolled in
109 any other eligible institution, program or course shall be no greater than the average amount for
110 comparable programs or courses as determined pursuant to the provisions of paragraph (A)
111 above.

112 (g) The Future Workforce grant program is subject to any provision of this article not
113 inconsistent with the provisions of this section.

**ARTICLE 7. WEST VIRGINIA PROVIDING REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAXIMIZING
IN-STATE STUDENT EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.**

§18C-7-6. PROMISE Scholarship Program requirements; legislative rule.

1 (a) A PROMISE scholarship annual award shall meet the following conditions:

2 (1) For a student enrolled in a state institution of higher education, the annual award is
3 equal to the lesser of the cost of tuition or \$4,750, except that a student who was awarded and
4 used a PROMISE scholarship annual award prior to January 1, 2010, shall continue to receive
5 the annual award calculated under the same terms and conditions that applied on the day before
6 the effective date of this article;

7 (2) For a student enrolled in an eligible institution other than a state institution of higher
8 education, the annual award is equal to, but may not exceed, the lesser of the cost of tuition or
9 \$4,750, except that a student who was awarded and used a PROMISE scholarship annual award

10 prior to January 1, 2010, shall continue to receive the annual award calculated under the same
11 terms and conditions that applied on the day before the effective date of this article;

12 (3) The annual award may exceed \$4,750, if the commission determines that adequate
13 funds are available, but in any case may not be greater than the actual cost of tuition;

14 (4) The annual award shall be used by an eligible institution to supplement, but may not
15 supplant, a tuition and fee waiver for which the individual is eligible pursuant to §18B-10-5, §18B-
16 10-6a, §18B-10-7, or §18B-10-7b of this code.

17 (b) The total cost of all scholarships awarded by the commission in any year may not
18 exceed the amount of funds available to the commission during that fiscal year.

19 (c) In order to be eligible to receive a PROMISE scholarship award, an individual shall:

20 (1) Submit a scholarship award application to the commission:

21 (A) Within two years of completing a secondary education program in a public, private, or
22 home school or within two years of obtaining a GED or equivalent; or

23 (B) Within seven years of initially entering military service, and within one year of discharge
24 from military service, if the individual has entered the United States armed services within two
25 years after completing a secondary education program in a public, private, or home school or
26 obtaining a GED or equivalent;

27 (2) Apply for and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid;

28 (3) Maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 grading scale in the
29 required course work necessary to prepare students for success in post-secondary education at
30 the associate and baccalaureate degree levels as determined by the commission, if the individual
31 has completed not more than one semester or term at an institution of higher education, excluding
32 credits earned in advanced placement, international baccalaureate, dual credit, and comparable
33 courses while the student is enrolled in high school;

34 (4) Maintain appropriate academic progress toward the completion of a degree at the
35 undergraduate education level as determined by the commission if the individual has completed

36 more than one semester or term at an institution of higher education, excluding credits earned in
37 advanced placement, international baccalaureate, dual credit and comparable courses while the
38 student is enrolled in high school; school: *Provided*, That a recipient of the PROMISE scholarship
39 award who does not meet the requirements of this subdivision and loses the award may petition
40 the institution to reinstate the award upon successfully reattaining the credit hour and minimum
41 overall grade point qualifications set out in the commission's rule governing eligibility for receipt
42 of the PROMISE scholarship: *Provided, however*, That a student who has lost the PROMISE
43 scholarship award is only eligible to be reinstated one time; if the student becomes ineligible for
44 the PROMISE scholarship award a second time, the student may not again petition the institution
45 for reinstatement of the award nor again be reinstated: *Provided further*, That the student forfeits
46 a term of eligibility for each term in which the student is enrolled to meet the renewal requirements
47 as authorized by this subdivision: *And provided further*, That upon a finding that the student
48 successfully reattained the credit hour and minimum overall grade point qualifications set out in
49 the commission's rule governing eligibility for receipt of the PROMISE scholarship award as
50 required by this subdivision, the institution shall reinstate the award;

51 (5) Be a United States citizen or legal immigrant to the United States;

52 (6) Meet additional objective standards the commission considers necessary to promote
53 academic excellence and to maintain the financial stability of the fund; and

54 (7) Enroll in an eligible institution. A student enrolled at an eligible institution who receives
55 a PROMISE scholarship award may retain and renew the scholarship to complete his or her
56 undergraduate education at that institution or any other eligible institution under the following
57 circumstances:

58 (A) The institution at which the student is enrolled loses its status as an eligible institution
59 pursuant to the provisions of §18B-7-3(b)(1) of this code; and

60 (B) The student meets all other renewal requirements of this code and of commission
61 rules.

62 (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that the commission shall strongly encourage
63 prospective candidates for the PROMISE scholarship to perform at least 20 hours of unpaid
64 community service while in high school to help prepare them for success in post-secondary
65 education. The community service may include, but is not limited to, participation with nonprofit,
66 governmental or community-based organizations designed with any or all of the following
67 purposes:

- 68 (1) Improving the quality of life for community residents;
- 69 (2) Meeting the needs of community residents; or
- 70 (3) Fostering civic responsibility.

71 (e) The commission shall promulgate a legislative rule in accordance with the provisions
72 of §29A-3A-1 *et seq.* of this code.

73 (1) The rule shall include at least the following provisions:

74 (A) The amount of a PROMISE scholarship award in combination with aid from all other
75 sources may not exceed the cost of education at the institution the recipient is attending;

76 (B) Additional objective standards the commission considers necessary:

- 77 (i) To promote academic excellence;
- 78 (ii) To maintain the financial stability of the fund; and
- 79 (iii) To operate the program within the limits of available funds;

80 (C) Provisions for making the highest and best use of the PROMISE Scholarship Program
81 in conjunction with the West Virginia College Prepaid Tuition and Savings Program Act set forth
82 in §18-30-1 *et seq.* of this code;

83 (D) A provision defining the relationship of PROMISE scholarship awards to all other
84 sources of student financial aid to ensure maximum coordination. The provision shall include the
85 following:

- 86 (i) Methods to maximize student eligibility for federal student financial aid;

87 (ii) A requirement that PROMISE scholarship awards not supplant tuition and fee waivers;

88 and

89 (iii) Clarification of the relationship between the PROMISE Scholarship Program, tuition
90 savings plans and other state-funded student financial aid programs;

91 (E) A method for awarding scholarships within the limits of available appropriations,
92 including circumstances when program funds are not sufficient to provide awards to all eligible
93 applicants. The commission may not use any of the following methods:

94 (i) Providing for an annual PROMISE scholarship award that is less than the amounts
95 provided for in this section; or

96 (ii) Eliminating any current recipient from eligibility; and

97 (F) A method for applicants to appeal determinations of eligibility and renewal.

98 (2) The rule may provide for or require the following at the commission's discretion:

99 (A) Requiring repayment of the amount of the scholarship, in whole or in part, if a
100 scholarship recipient chooses to work outside the state after graduation. The rule may not require
101 a recipient to repay a scholarship, in whole or in part, unless the prospective recipient has been
102 informed of this requirement in writing before initial acceptance of the PROMISE scholarship
103 award;

104 (B) Targeting a portion of the scholarship funds to be used for applicants enrolled in an
105 engineering, science, technology or other designated program;

106 (C) Determining what other sources of funding for higher education are to be deducted
107 from the PROMISE scholarship award; and

108 (D) Providing additional criteria as determined by the commission.

109 (3) Any rule promulgated by the commission pursuant to previous enactments of this
110 article in effect on the effective date of the amendment and reenactment of this article in the year
111 2009 remains in effect until amended, modified, repealed, or replaced by the commission.

ARTICLE 9. WEST VIRGINIA INVESTS GRANT PROGRAM.

§18C-9-3. Definitions.

1 As used in this article:

2 "Academic fees" means fees charged to students for specific courses or programs to
3 support such expenses such as lab or equipment costs.

4 "Council" means the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College
5 Education.

6 "Commission" means the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

7 "Eligible institution" means a public community and technical college under the authority
8 of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, or a public or not-
9 for-profit private baccalaureate institution authorized by the Higher Education Policy Commission
10 that grants associate degrees satisfying the requirements of participating in Advanced Career
11 Education (ACE) program partnerships in accordance with §18-2E-11 of this code, or a not-for-
12 profit, hospital-based allied health program authorized by the West Virginia Council for
13 Community and Technical College Education.

14 "Eligible post-secondary program" means a curriculum of courses leading to a certificate
15 or associate degree at an eligible institution which satisfies a course of study that has been
16 deemed by the council to satisfy a workforce need.

17 "Tuition" means the semester or term charges imposed by an eligible institution and,
18 additionally, all mandatory fees required as a condition of enrollment by all students.

§18C-9-5. Eligibility requirements; agreements.

1 (a) To be eligible for a WV Invests Grant, an individual must satisfy the following
2 requirements:

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

5 (2) Have completed a secondary education program in a public, private, or home school;

6 (3) Have not been previously awarded a bachelor's degree: *Provided*, That individuals
7 who have previously been awarded a bachelor's degree may qualify for the grant if they are
8 seeking an associate degree or certificate in an eligible post-secondary program for emergency
9 medical services;

10 (4) Be at least 18 years of age: *Provided*, That individuals younger than 18 years of age
11 may qualify for the grant upon completion of a secondary education program in a public, private,
12 or home school;

13 (5) Meet the admission requirements of, and be admitted into, an eligible institution;

14 (6) Satisfactorily meet any additional qualifications of enrollment, academic promise, or
15 achievement as established by the council through rule;

16 (7) Have filed a completed free application for federal student aid for the academic year in
17 which the grant award is sought;

18 (8) Be enrolled in an eligible post-secondary program;

19 (9) Be enrolled in at least six credit hours per semester;

20 (10) Have completed a WV Invests Grant application as provided by the council in
21 accordance with a schedule established by the council; and

22 (b) Each grant may be awarded and renewed up to a lifetime total of six full-time equivalent
23 semesters, until the course of study is completed as long as the following qualifications, as
24 determined by the vice chancellor for administration and the council, are satisfied:

25 (1) Maintaining satisfactory academic standing, including a cumulative grade point
26 average of at least 2.0;

27 (2) Making adequate progress toward completion of the eligible post-secondary program;

28 (3) Satisfactory participation in a community service program authorized by the council.

29 The council shall include in the legislative rules, required by §18C-9-4 of this code, provisions for
30 the administration of community service requirements, including, but not limited to, requiring
31 completion of at least eight hours of unpaid community service during the time of study, which

32 may include, but is not limited to, participating with nonprofit, governmental, institutional, or
33 community-based organizations designed to improve the quality of life for community residents,
34 meet the needs of community residents, or foster civic responsibility;

35 (4) Continued satisfaction of eligibility requirements provided by §18C-9-5(a) of this code;
36 and

37 (5) Satisfaction of any additional eligibility criteria established by the council through
38 legislative rule.

39 (c) Each recipient of a WV Invests Grant shall enter into an agreement with the vice
40 chancellor for administration, which shall require repayment of an amount of the grant or grants
41 awarded to the recipient, in whole or in part, if a recipient chooses to reside outside the state
42 within two years following either obtainment of the degree or certificate for which the grant or
43 grants were awarded or enrollment at an eligible institution ends, whichever occurs later:
44 *Provided*, That while enrolled out-of-state for further post-secondary education, the recipient may
45 request deferment of the two-year residency requirement. The council may not require a recipient
46 to repay grants, in whole or in part, unless the prospective recipient has been informed of this
47 requirement in writing before initial acceptance of the grant award. Each WV Invests Grant
48 agreement shall include the following:

49 (1) Disclosure of the full terms and conditions under which assistance under this article is
50 provided and under which repayment may be required; and

51 (2) A description of the appeals procedure required to be established under this article.

52 (d) WV Invests Grant recipients found to be in noncompliance with the agreement entered
53 into under §18C-9-5(c) of this code shall be required to repay the amount of the grant awards
54 received, plus interest, and, where applicable, reasonable collection fees, on a schedule and at a
55 rate of interest prescribed in rules promulgated by the council. The council shall also provide for
56 proration of the amount to be repaid by a recipient who maintains employment in the state for a
57 period of time within the time period required under §18C-9-5(c) of this code.

58 (e) A recipient is not in violation of an agreement entered into pursuant to §18C-9-5(c) of
59 this code during any period in which the recipient is meeting any of the following conditions:

60 (1) Pursuing a half-time course of study at an accredited institution of higher education;

61 (2) Serving as a member of the armed services of the United States;

62 (3) Failing to comply with the terms of the agreement due to death or permanent or
63 temporary disability as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; or

64 (4) Satisfying the provisions of any additional repayment exemptions prescribed by the
65 council through rule.

The Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

.....
Clerk of the House of Delegates

.....
Clerk of the Senate

Originated in the House of Delegates.

In effect 90 days from passage.

.....
Speaker of the House of Delegates

.....
President of the Senate

The within is this the.....
Day of, 2026.

.....
Governor