

Senate Bill No. 436

ARTICLE 13. West Virginia EDGE.

§18-13-1. Earn a Degree - Graduate Early (EDGE) initiative established; purposes.

The Earn a Degree - Graduate Early initiative herein established is known and may be cited as "West Virginia EDGE". This program is part of the programs of study and seamless curriculum initiative that focuses on aligning curriculum between education levels. Specifically, West Virginia EDGE is established to connect public schools with higher education for the following purposes:

- (a) To prepare public high school students for success in the workplace or postsecondary education; and
- (b) To provide the opportunity for these students to earn community and technical college credit free-of-charge for the duplicated secondary and postsecondary courses identified during the curriculum alignment process.

§18-13-2. Goals for West Virginia EDGE.

In order to serve the citizens of the state by promoting a higher college-going rate, reducing the time and cost for students to obtain college credentials and expanding opportunities for economic development, the West Virginia EDGE initiative shall meet the following goals:

- (1) Create incentives for more students to continue their education beyond high school by providing all students with information about and access to courses that will prepare them to meet college-level standards;
- (2) Expand successful concurrent enrollment programs that include all students, not just those who are designated as college bound. The goal here is to prepare all students for both work and postsecondary education with the same rigorous curriculum;
- (3) Align junior and senior year secondary courses with community and technical college certificate and associate degree programs. This alignment provides access to early entrance college courses which offer all students the opportunity to establish a college transcript while still in high school;
- (4) Increase the number of students attending public community and technical colleges by participating in a collaborative partnership between the public schools and the state community and technical colleges; and
- (5) Establish programs of study pathways in combination with early entrance college courses which together allow a student to obtain an associate degree one year after high school graduation or to receive an associate degree along with the high school diploma.

§18-13-3. Program administration and accountability.

- (a) West Virginia EDGE is administered by the Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Technical, Adult and Institutional Education who serves as State Tech-Prep Coordinator. The

community and technical college consortia planning districts created by section four, article three-c, chapter eighteen-b of this code serve as regional consortia to implement the program.

(b) The duties of State Tech-Prep Coordinator include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Developing a collaborative agreement with the facilitating state community and technical college or colleges in each consortium district and with the Council for Community and Technical College Education to meet the goals and objectives of this article.

(2) Meeting the record-keeping requirements of section nine, article eight, chapter five of this code:

(A) By developing or adapting an existing comprehensive relational data base and data analysis system for student tracking to assure that consistent, reliable data relevant to the goals of the program are available; and

(B) By tracking and evaluating outcomes across all eight consortia districts and by creating a standardized reporting procedure for collecting consistent data at the state level;

(3) Assuring that coordinators in the district consortia prepare and retain reliable supporting source documents necessary to validate the data included with the state electronic database;

(4) Provide documentation to substantiate program outcomes, included, but not limited to, the number of students who enroll in the program, specific courses taken, student course and final exam grades, the number who earn EDGE credits and, of these, the number who apply the credits in pursuit of degrees or certifications at state community and technical colleges; and

(5) Collecting data relevant to the goals and objectives established for this initiative, analyzing the data, and preparing a report for the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability by December 1, 2012, and annually thereafter. The specific focus of the report is the analysis of data on program outcomes to demonstrate to what degree the initiative has met the goals and objectives of this article.

§18-13-4. Joint rule required.

The state board and the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, created in section three, article two-b, chapter eighteen-b of this code, shall promulgate a joint legislative rule in accordance with article three-b, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code, for the administration of West Virginia EDGE. This rule shall incorporate strategies designed to achieve the overall goals of the program, methods of operation, and step-by-step procedures for achieving the objectives outlined in section two and for implementing the reporting and accountability measures set forth in section three of this article.

§18-13-5. No specific level of appropriation required.

The Legislature recognizes the importance of the West Virginia Edge Program and will endeavor to provide sufficient funds to meet program goals and objectives. However, funding is subject to appropriation by the Legislature and nothing in this article requires any specific level of appropriation.