

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2019 SESSION

CHAPTER 796

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 22.1-227.1, 22.1-253.13:2, 22.1-253.13:10, and 22.1-290.01 of the Code of Virginia, relating to school boards; staffing ratios; guidance counselors.

[S 1406]

Approved March 25, 2019

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 22.1-227.1, 22.1-253.13:2, 22.1-253.13:10, and 22.1-290.01 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-227.1. Career and technical education.

A. The Board of Education shall incorporate into career and technical education the Standards of Learning for mathematics, science, English, and social studies, including history, and other subject areas as may be appropriate. The Board may also authorize, in its regulations for accrediting public schools in Virginia, the substitution of industry certification and state licensure examinations for Standards of Learning assessments for the purpose of awarding credit for career and technical education courses, where appropriate.

B. The Board shall also develop a plan for increasing the number of students receiving industry certification and state licensure as part of their career and technical education. The plan shall include an annual goal for school divisions. Where there is an accepted national industry certification for career and technical education instructional personnel and programs for automotive technology, such certification shall be mandatory.

C. With such funds as may be appropriated for such purpose, there shall be established, within the Department of Education, a unit of specialists in career and technical education. The unit shall (i) assist in developing and revising local career and technical curriculum to integrate the Standards of Learning, (ii) provide professional development for career and technical instructional personnel to improve the quality of career and technical education, (iii) conduct site visits to the schools providing career and technical education, and (iv) seek the input of business and industry representatives regarding the content and direction of career and technical education programs in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

D. The Board shall develop guidelines for the establishment of High School to Work Partnerships, hereafter referred to as "Partnerships," between public high schools and local businesses to create opportunities for high school students to (i) participate in an apprenticeship, internship, or job shadow program in a variety of trades and skilled labor positions or (ii) tour local businesses and meet with owners and employees. These guidelines shall include a model waiver form to be used by high schools and local businesses in connection with Partnership programs to protect both the students and the businesses from liability.

Each local school board may establish Partnerships or delegate the authority to establish Partnerships to the local school division's career and technical education administrator or his designee, in collaboration with the ~~guidance~~ school counselor office of each public high school in the school division, and shall educate high school students about opportunities available through such Partnerships.

Students who miss a partial or full day of school while participating in Partnership programs shall not be counted as absent for the purposes of calculating average daily membership, but each local school board shall develop policies and procedures for students to make up missed work and may determine the maximum number of school days per academic year that a student may spend participating in a Partnership program.

§ 22.1-253.13:2. Standard 2. Instructional, administrative, and support personnel.

A. The Board shall establish requirements for the licensing of teachers, principals, superintendents, and other professional personnel.

B. School boards shall employ licensed instructional personnel qualified in the relevant subject areas.

C. Each school board shall assign licensed instructional personnel in a manner that produces divisionwide ratios of students in average daily membership to full-time equivalent teaching positions, excluding special education teachers, principals, assistant principals, *school* counselors, and librarians, that are not greater than the following ratios: (i) 24 to one in kindergarten with no class being larger than 29 students; if the average daily membership in any kindergarten class exceeds 24 pupils, a full-time teacher's aide shall be assigned to the class; (ii) 24 to one in grades one, two, and three with no class being larger than 30 students; (iii) 25 to one in grades four through six with no class being larger than 35 students; and (iv) 24 to one in English classes in grades six through 12. After September 30 of any school year, anytime the number of students in a class exceeds the class size limit established by this subsection, the local school division shall notify the parent of each student in such class of such fact no later than 10 days after the date on which the class exceeded the class size limit. Such

notification shall state the reason that the class size exceeds the class size limit and describe the measures that the local school division will take to reduce the class size to comply with this subsection.

Within its regulations governing special education programs, the Board shall seek to set pupil/teacher ratios for pupils with intellectual disability that do not exceed the pupil/teacher ratios for self-contained classes for pupils with specific learning disabilities.

Further, school boards shall assign instructional personnel in a manner that produces schoolwide ratios of students in average daily memberships to full-time equivalent teaching positions of 21 to one in middle schools and high schools. School divisions shall provide all middle and high school teachers with one planning period per day or the equivalent, unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.

D. Each local school board shall employ with state and local basic, special education, gifted, and career and technical education funds a minimum number of licensed, full-time equivalent instructional personnel for each 1,000 students in average daily membership (ADM) as set forth in the appropriation act. Calculations of kindergarten positions shall be based on full-day kindergarten programs. Beginning with the March 31 report of average daily membership, those school divisions offering half-day kindergarten with pupil/teacher ratios that exceed 30 to one shall adjust their average daily membership for kindergarten to reflect 85 percent of the total kindergarten average daily memberships, as provided in the appropriation act.

E. In addition to the positions supported by basic aid and in support of regular school year programs of prevention, intervention, and remediation, state funding, pursuant to the appropriation act, shall be provided to fund certain full-time equivalent instructional positions for each 1,000 students in grades K through 12 who are identified as needing prevention, intervention, and remediation services. State funding for prevention, intervention, and remediation programs provided pursuant to this subsection and the appropriation act may be used to support programs for educationally at-risk students as identified by the local school boards.

To provide algebra readiness intervention services required by § 22.1-253.13:1, school divisions may employ mathematics teacher specialists to provide the required algebra readiness intervention services. School divisions using the Standards of Learning Algebra Readiness Initiative funding in this manner shall only employ instructional personnel licensed by the Board of Education.

F. In addition to the positions supported by basic aid and those in support of regular school year programs of prevention, intervention, and remediation, state funding, pursuant to the appropriation act, shall be provided to support 17 full-time equivalent instructional positions for each 1,000 students identified as having limited English proficiency, which positions may include dual language teachers who provide instruction in English and in a second language.

To provide flexibility in the instruction of English language learners who have limited English proficiency and who are at risk of not meeting state accountability standards, school divisions may use state and local funds from the Standards of Quality Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation account to employ additional English language learner teachers or dual language teachers to provide instruction to identified limited English proficiency students. Using these funds in this manner is intended to supplement the instructional services provided in this section. School divisions using the SOQ Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation funds in this manner shall employ only instructional personnel licensed by the Board of Education.

G. In addition to the full-time equivalent positions required elsewhere in this section, each local school board shall employ the following reading specialists in elementary schools, one full-time in each elementary school at the discretion of the local school board. One reading specialist employed by each local school board that employs a reading specialist shall have training in the identification of and the appropriate interventions, accommodations, and teaching techniques for students with dyslexia or a related disorder and shall serve as an advisor on dyslexia and related disorders. Such reading specialist shall have an understanding of the definition of dyslexia and a working knowledge of (i) techniques to help a student on the continuum of skills with dyslexia; (ii) dyslexia characteristics that may manifest at different ages and grade levels; (iii) the basic foundation of the keys to reading, including multisensory, explicit, systemic, and structured reading instruction; and (iv) appropriate interventions, accommodations, and assistive technology supports for students with dyslexia.

To provide reading intervention services required by § 22.1-253.13:1, school divisions may employ reading specialists to provide the required reading intervention services. School divisions using the Early Reading Intervention Initiative funds in this manner shall employ only instructional personnel licensed by the Board of Education.

H. Each local school board shall employ, at a minimum, the following full-time equivalent positions for any school that reports fall membership, according to the type of school and student enrollment:

1. Principals in elementary schools, one half-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; principals in middle schools, one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis; principals in high schools, one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis;

2. Assistant principals in elementary schools, one half-time at 600 students, one full-time at 900 students; assistant principals in middle schools, one full-time for each 600 students; assistant principals in high schools, one full-time for each 600 students; and school divisions that employ a sufficient

number of assistant principals to meet this staffing requirement may assign assistant principals to schools within the division according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether such schools are elementary, middle, or secondary;

3. Librarians in elementary schools, one part-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; librarians in middle schools, one-half time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students, two full-time at 1,000 students; librarians in high schools, one half-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students, two full-time at 1,000 students. Local school divisions that employ a sufficient number of librarians to meet this staffing requirement may assign librarians to schools within the division according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether such schools are elementary, middle, or secondary; and

4. ~~Guidance~~ School counselors:

a. *Effective with the 2019-2020 school year*, in elementary schools, one hour per day per ~~400~~ 75 students, one full-time at ~~500~~ 375 students, one hour per day additional time per ~~400~~ 75 students or major fraction thereof; ~~guidance counselors~~ in middle schools, one period per ~~80~~ 65 students, one full-time at ~~400~~ 325 students, one additional period per ~~80~~ 65 students or major fraction thereof; ~~guidance counselors~~ in high schools, one period per ~~70~~ 60 students, one full-time at ~~350~~ 300 students, one additional period per ~~70~~ 60 students or major fraction thereof.

b. Local school divisions that employ a sufficient number of ~~guidance~~ school counselors to meet ~~this the school counselor staffing requirement requirements set forth in this subdivision~~ may assign ~~guidance~~ school counselors to schools within the division according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether such schools are elementary, middle, or ~~secondary high schools~~.

I. Local school boards shall employ five full-time equivalent positions per 1,000 students in grades kindergarten through five to serve as elementary resource teachers in art, music, and physical education.

J. Local school boards shall employ two full-time equivalent positions per 1,000 students in grades kindergarten through 12, one to provide technology support and one to serve as an instructional technology resource teacher.

To provide flexibility, school divisions may use the state and local funds for instructional technology resource teachers to employ a data coordinator position, an instructional technology resource teacher position, or a data coordinator/instructional resource teacher blended position. The data coordinator position is intended to serve as a resource to principals and classroom teachers in the area of data analysis and interpretation for instructional and school improvement purposes, as well as for overall data management and administration of state assessments. School divisions using these funds in this manner shall employ only instructional personnel licensed by the Board of Education.

K. Local school boards may employ additional positions that exceed these minimal staffing requirements. These additional positions may include, but are not limited to, those funded through the state's incentive and categorical programs as set forth in the appropriation act.

L. A combined school, such as kindergarten through 12, shall meet at all grade levels the staffing requirements for the highest grade level in that school; this requirement shall apply to all staff, except for ~~guidance~~ school counselors, and shall be based on the school's total enrollment; ~~guidance~~ school counselor staff requirements shall, however, be based on the enrollment at the various school organization levels, i.e., elementary, middle, or high school. The Board of Education may grant waivers from these staffing levels upon request from local school boards seeking to implement experimental or innovative programs that are not consistent with these staffing levels.

M. School boards shall, however, annually, on or before December 31, report to the public (i) the actual pupil/teacher ratios in elementary school classrooms in the local school division by school for the current school year; and (ii) the actual pupil/teacher ratios in middle school and high school in the local school division by school for the current school year. Actual pupil/teacher ratios shall include only the teachers who teach the grade and class on a full-time basis and shall exclude resource personnel. School boards shall report pupil/teacher ratios that include resource teachers in the same annual report. Any classes funded through the voluntary kindergarten through third grade class size reduction program shall be identified as such classes. Any classes having waivers to exceed the requirements of this subsection shall also be identified. Schools shall be identified; however, the data shall be compiled in a manner to ensure the confidentiality of all teacher and pupil identities.

N. Students enrolled in a public school on a less than full-time basis shall be counted in ADM in the relevant school division. Students who are either (i) enrolled in a nonpublic school or (ii) receiving home instruction pursuant to § 22.1-254.1, and who are enrolled in public school on a less than full-time basis in any mathematics, science, English, history, social science, career and technical education, fine arts, foreign language, or health education or physical education course shall be counted in the ADM in the relevant school division on a pro rata basis as provided in the appropriation act. Each such course enrollment by such students shall be counted as 0.25 in the ADM; however, no such nonpublic or home school student shall be counted as more than one-half a student for purposes of such pro rata calculation. Such calculation shall not include enrollments of such students in any other public school courses.

O. Each local school board shall provide those support services that are necessary for the efficient and cost-effective operation and maintenance of its public schools.

For the purposes of this title, unless the context otherwise requires, "support services positions" shall include the following:

1. Executive policy and leadership positions, including school board members, superintendents and assistant superintendents;
2. Fiscal and human resources positions, including fiscal and audit operations;
3. Student support positions, including (i) social workers and social work administrative positions; (ii) ~~guidance~~ *school counselor* administrative positions not included in subdivision H 4; (iii) homebound administrative positions supporting instruction; (iv) attendance support positions related to truancy and dropout prevention; and (v) health and behavioral positions, including school nurses and school psychologists;
4. Instructional personnel support, including professional development positions and library and media positions not included in subdivision H 3;
5. Technology professional positions not included in subsection J;
6. Operation and maintenance positions, including facilities; pupil transportation positions; operation and maintenance professional and service positions; and security service, trade, and laborer positions;
7. Technical and clerical positions for fiscal and human resources, student support, instructional personnel support, operation and maintenance, administration, and technology; and
8. School-based clerical personnel in elementary schools; part-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; clerical personnel in middle schools; one full-time and one additional full-time for each 600 students beyond 200 students and one full-time for the library at 750 students; clerical personnel in high schools; one full-time and one additional full-time for each 600 students beyond 200 students and one full-time for the library at 750 students. Local school divisions that employ a sufficient number of school-based clerical personnel to meet this staffing requirement may assign the clerical personnel to schools within the division according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether such schools are elementary, middle, or secondary.

Pursuant to the appropriation act, support services shall be funded from basic school aid.

School divisions may use the state and local funds for support services to provide additional instructional services.

P. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, when determining the assignment of instructional and other licensed personnel in subsections C through J, a local school board shall not be required to include full-time students of approved virtual school programs.

§ 22.1-253.13:10. Standards of Learning Innovation Committee.

The Secretary of Education, upon receiving recommendations for appointments from the Virginia Parent Teacher Association, Virginia Education Association, Virginia School Boards Association, Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, Virginia Association of School Superintendents, Virginia State Reading Association, Virginia School Counselor Association, and Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, shall establish and appoint nonlegislative citizen members to the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee (Committee). The Committee shall consist of (i) four members of the Virginia House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; (ii) three members of the Virginia Senate, appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules on the recommendation of the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education and Health; and (iii) at least one parent of a currently enrolled public school student, public elementary school teacher, public secondary school teacher, public secondary school ~~guidance~~ counselor, school board member, public school principal, division superintendent, curriculum and instruction specialist, higher education faculty member, representative of a four-year public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth, representative of a two-year public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth, and representative of the business community in the Commonwealth and such other stakeholders as the Secretary deems appropriate, appointed by the Secretary. Members of the Committee should reflect geographic diversity and rural and urban school systems as far as practicable. The Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President of the Board of Education or his designee, and the Secretary of Education or his designee shall serve ex officio. All other members shall be appointed for terms of two years. The Committee, under the direction of the Secretary, shall periodically make recommendations to the Board of Education on (a) the Standards of Learning assessments, (b) authentic individual student growth measures, (c) alignment between the Standards of Learning and assessments and the School Performance Report Card, and (d) ideas on innovative teaching in the classroom. An affirmative vote by a majority of the legislative members in attendance and a majority of nonlegislative members in attendance shall be required for the Committee to adopt any recommendations. The Board of Education shall review the recommendations of the Committee and submit to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health, in advance of the next regular session of the General Assembly, any comments on such recommendations that the Board of Education deems appropriate.

§ 22.1-290.01. Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program established; purpose; Board of Education to administer Program; eligibility requirements for scholarship and awards; collaboration and consultation with State Council of Higher Education; repayment of scholarship

required.

A. With such funds as may be appropriated for this purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds that may be received on behalf of the Program by the Board of Education, there is hereby established the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program, hereinafter referred to as the "Program," to: (i) increase the number of teacher candidates pursuing careers in critical teacher shortage areas as defined in the Board of Education's Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas; (ii) expand eligibility to teacher candidates, including graduate students and paraprofessionals from Virginia school divisions who are enrolled full-time or part-time in an approved teacher education program; (iii) increase the diversity of persons pursuing careers in teaching, including male teacher candidates enrolled in an elementary or middle school education program and minority teacher candidates enrolled in any teaching endorsement area; and (iv) increase the number of teacher candidates pursuing careers in career and technical education.

B. The Board of Education shall establish, in regulation, criteria for determining critical teacher shortage areas for awarding scholarships pursuant to this section. The criteria shall include such factors as the needs in teaching endorsement areas among the several school divisions of the Commonwealth, teacher shortages at the elementary and secondary grade levels, and teacher shortages in rural and urban regions of the Commonwealth.

C. The Program shall be administered by the Board of Education. The Board may promulgate such regulations as may be necessary for the implementation of the Program. The Board shall consult with the State Council of Higher Education in the implementation of the Program.

The Program shall consist of scholarships awarded annually to teacher candidates, including graduate students and paraprofessionals from Virginia school divisions at an accredited baccalaureate private institution of higher education in the Commonwealth or baccalaureate public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth, who (i) are enrolled full-time or part-time in an approved teacher education program or are participants in another approved teacher education program; (ii) have maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.7 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent; and (iii) are nominated for such scholarship by the institution where they are enrolled. In addition, the candidates must meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) be enrolled in a program leading to an endorsement in a critical shortage area as established by the Board of Education; (b) be a male teacher candidate in an elementary or middle school education program; (c) be a minority teacher candidate enrolled in any teacher endorsement area; or (d) be a student in an approved teacher education program leading to an endorsement in career and technical education.

D. Before any teaching scholarship is awarded in accordance with the provisions of this section, the scholarship recipient shall sign a promissory note agreeing (i) to pursue an approved teacher education program full-time or part-time at an accredited baccalaureate private institution of higher education in the Commonwealth or baccalaureate public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth or another approved teacher education program and (ii) upon graduation, to begin teaching in the public schools of the Commonwealth in a critical teaching shortage discipline or in a career and technical education discipline or, regardless of teaching discipline, in a school with a high concentration of students eligible for free or reduced lunch or in a rural or urban region of the Commonwealth with a teacher shortage.

Upon program completion, the scholarship recipient shall begin teaching in the public schools of the Commonwealth in the first full academic year after becoming eligible for a teaching license, and shall fulfill the teaching obligation in accordance with the promissory note by teaching continuously in Virginia for the same number of years that he was the beneficiary of such scholarship. Such scholarship recipient may fulfill the teaching obligation by accepting a teaching position (i) in one of the critical teacher shortage disciplines as established by the Board of Education; or (ii) in a career and technical education discipline; or (iii) regardless of teaching discipline, in a school with a high concentration of students eligible for free or reduced lunch; or (iv) in any discipline or at any grade level within a school division with a shortage of teachers, as defined in the Board of Education's Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas; or (v) in a rural or urban region of the state with a teacher shortage.

E. The Board of Education may recover the total amount of funds awarded as a scholarship, or the appropriate proportion thereof, including any accrued interest, if the scholarship recipient fails to honor the teaching obligation.

F. There is hereby created in the Department of the Treasury a special nonreverting fund known as the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Fund, hereinafter referred to as the "Fund." The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller, and any moneys remaining in the Fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. The Fund shall consist of such moneys as may be appropriated for the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program and such gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds as may be received on its behalf by the Board of Education. The Fund shall be used solely to fund the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program. Interest earned on such moneys shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely to award scholarships pursuant to the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program as

provided in this section. Disbursements from the Fund for such scholarships shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request of the President of the Board of Education.

G. The Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education shall make available to parents, students, teachers, high school ~~guidance~~ counselors, and academic advisors and financial aid administrators at public and private institutions of higher education information concerning the Virginia Teacher Scholarship Loan Program, eligibility for the loans, and the terms and conditions under which such loans are awarded, in order that students interested in pursuing careers in the teaching profession may be advised of the availability of such financial assistance.