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SENATE BILL NO. 1263

Offered January 21, 1999

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-209.1:6, relating to the Navigator Laboratory Pilot Program.

Patron—Lambert

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-209.1:6 as follows:**

§ 22.1-209.1:6. Navigator Laboratory Pilot Program created; regulations promulgated; program criteria.

A. With such funds as may be appropriated for this purpose, there is hereby created the Navigator Laboratory Pilot Program to provide a model for school divisions to explore innovative options and creative instructional programs for the education of secondary school students within the same facility, who are (i) considered educationally at-risk, (ii) assigned to the regular instructional program, (iii) identified as gifted or talented or enrolled in advanced placement or honors classes, (iv) identified as having special needs, or (v) enrolled in vocational and technical education programs, or who are over-age or for whom the regular instructional program is inappropriate; or (vi) have been suspended, excluded, or expelled from school attendance. The Board of Education shall promulgate regulations for the implementation of the program, which shall be administered by the Department of Education. Such regulations shall require that school boards offer two or more instructional program components as provided in subsection B of this section, and compliance with the provisions of this section by any school board adopting the Program.

B. On and after July 1, 1999, the Program shall consist of five pilot projects located in regions throughout the Commonwealth to provide equal geographical distribution of such projects. Priority for awarding grants shall be given to projects designed to serve students with various educational needs, including, but not limited to, instructional programs for secondary school students who are identified in subsection A.

Criteria for the programs shall include, but not be limited to:

1. A curriculum developed for intensive, accelerated instruction designed to establish high standards and academic achievement for participating students. However, the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations governing special education and gifted education, as the case may be, shall apply to students identified for educational services provided by the respective programs.

2. A low pupil-teacher ratio to promote significant student-teacher interaction.

3. Compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing the respective instructional programs, including special education, gifted education, and the regional alternative education programs.

4. Teachers, coordinators, counselors, and administrators who possess the requisite qualification, training, and experience, as determined necessary by the school board, and who request assignment to such pilot program.

5. Community outreach to build strong school, business, and community partnerships.

6. An emphasis on preparation for college and work upon graduation.

7. Opportunities for participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, extended day programs, mentorships, and tutorials.

8. A plan to provide and promote family participation and community support.

9. An agreement executed between the local governing body and the local school board to pilot a Navigator Laboratory Pilot Program.

10. An interagency agreement for cooperation executed by the local departments of health and social services or welfare; juvenile and domestic relations district court; law-enforcement agency; institutions of higher education; professional and community organizations; business and religious communities; dropout prevention and substance abuse prevention programs; teenage pregnancy prevention programs; and community services boards located within the school division to provide collaboration and cooperation between the pilot program and the community agencies and for the comprehensive delivery of services as may be necessary.

11. A review and evaluation of the pilot project, as provided in subsection C of this section.

Grants for all projects shall be awarded on a competitive basis to applicants responding to requests for proposals. Upon appropriation of funds for the purposes of this section, the Board shall issue a

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60 *request for proposals for projects for the program. Grants shall be awarded by December 1, 1999.*

61 *C. Eligible projects shall (i) satisfy the program criteria in accordance with subsection B of this*
62 *section; (ii) encourage the development of innovative teaching strategies to improve the academic*
63 *achievement of students regardless of their socio-economic status; and (iii) and promote communication*
64 *between, and the exchange of best practices among, teachers and administrators assigned to the pilot*
65 *project.*

66 *The Department shall require funded projects to submit a written evaluation of the program on such*
67 *date as it may determine. The Department shall report the data analysis of the evaluation of the projects*
68 *to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2003.*

69 **2. That this act shall expire on July 1, 2004.**