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SENATE BILL NO. 1570

Offered January 20, 2017

A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-212.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public schools; Virtual Virginia; availability.

Patron—Peake

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 22.1-212.2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 22.1-212.2. Virtual Virginia.**

From such funds as are appropriated, the Department of Education shall establish a statewide ~~electronic classroom~~ *an online learning program* to be known as the Virtual Virginia Program. Virtual Virginia shall be made available to every public *middle and high school* in Virginia *and may be made available to every public elementary school in Virginia*.

The Department may utilize the services of the Commonwealth's educational television stations and other providers, as well as any other appropriate technology for the purposes of implementing Virtual Virginia.

The services of this program shall be limited to educational purposes. Educational purposes shall include, but not be limited to, instruction in subject areas that are not available in all schools and in-service training for instructional, administrative, and support personnel.

The Department may contract with one or more local school boards that have created online courses to make one or more such courses available to other school divisions through the Virtual Virginia Program. The Department shall approve all courses offered through Virtual Virginia, including those made available by local school boards to other school divisions. A school board that makes one or more of its online courses available to other school divisions through Virtual Virginia (i) shall not be considered a multidivision online provider pursuant to § 22.1-212.23 and (ii) may charge a per-course or per-student fee to school divisions to defray the costs of developing the course and providing course instruction using teachers employed by the offering school board. The Department shall approve any such fee schedule before a school board offers any such online courses through Virtual Virginia.

The Department shall establish the Virtual Learning Advisory Committee, which shall consist of one superintendent or his designee from each of the eight superintendent's regions, the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee, and such other members as the Department deems appropriate, not to exceed three additional members. The contractor that manages Virtual Virginia shall serve as a nonvoting ex officio member. The Committee shall advise the Department on (i) online courses, in-service training, and digital instructional resources that school divisions need to meet the Commonwealth's graduation requirements and (ii) strategic planning to expand blended and online learning opportunities in Virginia's public schools, including cost-effective access to high-need and low-demand courses, training, content, and digital resources.

INTRODUCED

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