

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2023 SESSION

CHAPTER 542

An Act to amend and reenact § 23.1-2904 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Virginia Community College System; duties of State Board for Community Colleges; standardization of health care-related programs.

[S 1286]

Approved March 26, 2023

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 23.1-2904 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 23.1-2904. State Board; duties.

In addition to the duties of governing boards of public institutions of higher education set forth in Chapter 13 (§ 23.1-1300 et seq.), the State Board shall:

1. Be the state agency with primary responsibility for coordinating workforce training at the postsecondary through the associate degree level, exclusive of the career and technical education programs provided through and administered by the public school system. This responsibility shall not preclude other agencies from also providing such services as appropriate, but these activities shall be coordinated with the comprehensive community colleges;

2. Report on actions that comprehensive community colleges have taken to meet the requirements of § 23.1-2906 in its annual report to the General Assembly on workforce development activities required by the general appropriation act;

3. Prepare and administer a plan providing standards and policies for the establishment, development, and administration of comprehensive community colleges under its authority. It shall determine the need for comprehensive community colleges and develop a statewide plan for their location and a time schedule for their establishment. In the development of such plan, a principal objective is to provide and maintain a system of comprehensive community colleges, as that term is defined in § 23.1-100 to make appropriate educational opportunities and programs available throughout the Commonwealth. In providing these offerings, the State Board shall recognize the need for excellence in all curricula and shall establish and maintain standards appropriate to the various purposes the respective programs are designed to serve;

4. Establish policies providing for the creation of a local community college board for each comprehensive community college established under this chapter and the procedures and regulations under which such local boards shall operate. These boards shall assist in ascertaining educational needs and enlisting community involvement and support and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the State Board;

5. Adhere to the policies of the Council for the coordination of higher education as required by law;

6. Develop a mental health referral policy directing comprehensive community colleges to designate at least one individual at each college to serve as a point of contact with an emergency services system clinician at a local community services board, or another qualified mental health services provider, for the purposes of facilitating screening and referral of students who may have emergency or urgent mental health needs and of assisting the college in carrying out the duties specified by §§ 23.1-802 and 23.1-805. Each comprehensive community college may establish relationships with community services boards or other mental health providers for referral and treatment of persons with less serious mental health needs;

7. Develop and implement, in coordination with the Council, the Department of Education, and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, (i) a plan to achieve and maintain the same standards regarding quality, consistency, and level of evaluation and review for dual enrollment courses offered by local school divisions pursuant to § 23.1-907 as are required for all courses taught in the System and (ii) a process and criteria for determining whether any dual enrollment course offered in the Commonwealth that meets or exceeds such standards is transferable to a public institution of higher education as (a) a uniform certificate of general studies program or passport program course credit, (b) a general elective course credit, or (c) a course credit meeting other academic requirements of a public institution of higher education;

8. Prepare and administer a plan to standardize *across all comprehensive community colleges* the courses offered; and the quality and content of such courses, ~~offered across all comprehensive community colleges~~, as well as to standardize the application and registration process at all comprehensive community colleges. Such plan shall allow for a comprehensive community college to provide additional courses, beyond the standard class content offered across the System, that meet specific regional interests and needs. Regional courses shall be subject to the standards of quality applied to all courses offered in the System; ~~and~~

9. *Develop and implement a plan to standardize across all comprehensive community colleges the courses offered for health care-related degree, credential, or licensure programs, excluding any registered nursing programs. Such plan shall include procedures and criteria for (i) standardizing such courses by name, curriculum, coursework, quality, academic rigor, and standard of evaluation; (ii) awarding credit toward the completion of any such health care-related program for any student enrolled in a comprehensive community college; and (iii) standardizing the manner in which academic and clinical hour credits are awarded for such courses to ensure that they are stackable and transferrable across the System; and*

10. Develop and implement accountability measures to periodically, but in no case less than every three years, review the performance of each comprehensive community college to ensure that all standards established by the Board are being met, with a goal of ensuring a consistent quality of education and opportunity across the System. If it is found that such standards are not being met at a particular institution, the Board shall develop a plan for corrective action specific to the issues presented at that institution.