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**SENATE BILL NO. 1063**

Offered January 8, 2025

Prefiled January 7, 2025

*A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 22.1-237.2 through 22.1-237.5 and 23.1-907 of the Code of Virginia and the second enactment of Chapter 647 and the second enactment of Chapter 684 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, relating to Department of Education; Virginia Community College System; College and Career Ready Virginia Program.*

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Referred to Committee on Education and Health

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 22.1-237.2 through 22.1-237.5 and 23.1-907 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 22.1-237.2. College and Career Ready Virginia Program and Fund.**

A. The Board and the State Board for Community Colleges shall establish the College and Career Ready Virginia Program.

B. The purpose of the Program is to offer consistent, structured opportunities for all qualified high school students in the Commonwealth to enroll in postsecondary coursework offered by a comprehensive community college that is creditable toward high school completion and a certificate or degree from a public institution of higher education. Academic credits earned through the Program shall enable students to complete a postsecondary credential in less time and at lower cost.

C. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the College and Career Ready Virginia Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of administering the Program. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Chancellor of the System and the Superintendent.

D. Comprehensive community colleges; ~~the Online Virginia Network Authority~~; and local school boards shall not charge qualified high school students tuition or fees for enrolling and participating in Program courses.

**§ 22.1-237.3. (For effective date, see Acts 2024, cc. 647, 684, cl. 2) College and Career Ready Virginia Program; requirements.**

A. The Program shall consist of the dual enrollment and participation of qualified high school students at the high school in college courses pursuant to the Passport Program and the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program established in accordance with the requirements set forth in subsection B of § 23.1-907.

B. (Effective beginning with course registration for the fall term of the 2025 academic year) Each school board shall, pursuant to the Program, offer each qualified high school student in the local school division access to courses at each high school that are sufficient to complete the Passport Program and the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program at a public institution of higher education at no cost to such student.

C. (Effective beginning with course registration for the fall term of the 2025 academic year) ~~The System and the Online Virginia Network Authority~~ shall, pursuant to the Program, offer each local school board access to courses at each high school, including virtual courses, that are sufficient for each local school board's qualified high school students to complete the Passport Program and the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program at a public institution of higher education, at no cost to such local school board. *The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any advance college academy or early college academy.*

D. (Effective beginning with course registration for the fall term of the 2025 academic year) Any credit earned through successful completion of Passport Program and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program courses through the Program shall transfer to each public institution of higher education pursuant to §§ 23.1-905.1 and 23.1-907.

E. The Program shall include appropriate counseling by high school and comprehensive community college staff to ensure that all high school students and parents of high school students receive thorough information about the availability of and process for enrolling in Program courses and the opportunity to earn Passport Program and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program credits that will transfer to public institutions of higher education.

F. The Program shall be data-driven and continually updated to (i) reduce socioeconomic, academic, and other barriers impeding students' access to Program courses; (ii) improve student academic and career outcomes; and (iii) align with the changing workforce needs of the Commonwealth.

G. The Auditor of Public Accounts shall annually audit the receipt and expenditure of any funds associated with the Program by any local school board, any comprehensive community college, the Department, or the System to ensure that such funds are expended exclusively in furtherance of the purposes of this article.

**§ 22.1-237.4. College and Career Ready Virginia Program; administration.**

The Department and the System shall administer the Program. In administering the Program, the Department and the System shall:

1. Establish an advisory committee composed of representatives from local school divisions from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, associate-degree-granting public institutions of higher education from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, baccalaureate public institutions of higher education, ~~Richard Bland College~~, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia, the Virginia Office of Education Economics, and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, ~~and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond~~, as well as parents of public school students from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, a parent of a student who receives home instruction, and a representative from the Department with expertise in state and federal requirements for meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Such advisory committee shall provide guidance to the Department and the System to ensure that the Program fulfills the purpose of the Program described in subsection B of § 22.1-237.2 and meets the requirements set forth in § 22.1-237.3.

2. Coordinate with the Council in its performance of its responsibilities under §§ 23.1-905.1, 23.1-907, and 23.1-908.

3. Review existing regulations, including 8VAC20-131-140, and policies, including policy 6.6.3 in the VCCS Policy Manual, on dual enrollment student eligibility and admission requirements and develop consistent student eligibility and admission requirements for the Program that balance improving student access to and ensuring student preparedness for Program courses.

4. Develop and implement initiatives to improve participation in the Program by qualified high school students from groups of students that are underrepresented in baccalaureate public institutions of higher education.

5. Develop guidelines for school boards and comprehensive community colleges to provide notice of and counseling relating to the Program to high school students and their parents.

6. Develop guidelines for local school boards and comprehensive community colleges to provide students enrolled in the Program with appropriate support, including academic support services and activities, access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services, accommodations for students with disabilities, transportation, and any other learning information or resources.

7. Establish and implement initiatives to increase the number of high school teachers across the Commonwealth that meet the applicable dual enrollment faculty credential requirements.

8. In local school divisions in which in-person instruction by qualified high school faculty is not available, ensure that comprehensive community colleges ~~and the Online Virginia Network Authority~~ provide access to Program courses transmitted virtually.

9. Consider the unique needs of local school divisions related to their location, size, and proximity to a comprehensive community college when developing recommendations and implementing the Program.

10. Consider how to incorporate all associate-degree-granting public institutions of higher education in the Program, consistent with the establishment of the Program pursuant to § 22.1-237.2.

11. Make distributions from the Fund as set forth in subsection C of § 22.1-237.2.

12. Develop and implement a plan for the annual collection and public reporting of state-level and division-level Program data, including high school and postsecondary student outcomes.

13. Develop and implement a plan for the annual collection from local school divisions and comprehensive community colleges of data on their receipts and expenditures related to the Program.

14. Establish a Program webpage that provides information necessary for students and parents to understand and access the Program.

15. Complete an annual, comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the Program, including its cost, student outcomes, and the quality and rigor of Program courses, and prepare a plan for continuous Program improvement.

16. Annually report to the General Assembly the results of the review and the plan for continuous Program improvement in subdivision 15.

**§ 22.1-237.5. College and Career Ready Virginia Program; incorporation of career and technical education coursework; work group.**

A. In recognition of the fact that career and technical education is an essential element of workforce readiness in the Commonwealth, the Department and the System shall establish the Program career and

technical education work group (the work group) for the purpose of developing and recommending a career and technical education program of coursework that is available to all qualified high school students as part of the Program.

B. The work group shall be composed of representatives from local school divisions from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, associate-degree-granting public institutions of higher education from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, ~~Richard Bland College~~, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia, the Virginia Office of Education Economics, ~~and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce; and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond~~, as well as parents of public school students from each of the eight Superintendent's regions, a parent of a student who receives home instruction, and a representative from the Department with expertise in state and federal requirements for meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

C. The work group shall:

1. Review existing statutory requirements related to career and technical education, including § 23.1-2906.1, and assess their relevance to qualified dual enrollment students;

2. Gather data sufficient to understand (i) what career and technical education courses and pathways are currently offered through dual enrollment to students; (ii) how the current dual enrollment course offerings differ across local school divisions; (iii) whether existing state funding programs that support career and technical education, ~~including the Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back (G3) Program established pursuant to § 23.1-2911.2, the New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program established pursuant to Article 4.1 (§ 23.1-627.1 et seq.) of Chapter 6 of Title 23.1, and the FastForward Program established by the System~~, are available to dual enrollment students; (iv) the current availability of instructors who are qualified to teach dual enrollment career and technical education courses across local school divisions; (v) the current costs of dual enrollment in career and technical education courses for students across local school divisions; (vi) the current cost to comprehensive community colleges to provide career and technical education through dual enrollment; and (vii) the extent to which current dual enrollment career and technical education coursework meets industry needs across the Commonwealth; and

3. Develop recommendations for the Department and the System to incorporate career and technical education coursework into the Program. Such recommendations shall address (i) what career and technical education coursework shall be available through dual enrollment to qualified high school students through the Program; (ii) how to ensure that all qualified dual enrolled students can access career and technical courses available through the Program; (iii) how to ensure that such courses meet the industry needs of the Commonwealth; (iv) how to ensure that such courses are affordable for qualified high school students across the Commonwealth; (v) how to ensure that qualified instructors are available to teach career and technical education coursework through the Program; (vi) how to make career and technical education coursework offered through the Program available to qualified high school students ~~through the Online Virginia Network~~; (vii) what measurable objectives and quantifiable goals the Department and the System should use to understand the cost, assess outcomes, and develop plans for continuous improvement of dual enrollment career and technical education coursework through the Program; and (viii) what legislative action is necessary to incorporate career and technical education coursework into the Program.

**§ 23.1-907. Articulation, dual admissions, and guaranteed admissions agreements; admission of certain comprehensive community college graduates.**

A. The board of visitors of each baccalaureate public institution of higher education shall develop, consistent with Council guidelines and the institution's six-year plan as set forth in § 23.1-306, articulation, dual admissions, and guaranteed admissions agreements with each associate-degree-granting public institution of higher education. Such guaranteed admissions agreements may provide for the guaranteed admission of a student who earns an associate degree concurrently with a high school diploma through a dual enrollment program, in addition to any guaranteed admission for a student who earns an associate degree post-high school.

B. The System, in cooperation with the Council and each public institution of higher education, and consistent with the guidelines developed pursuant to subdivision 20 of § 23.1-203, shall establish a one-semester Passport Program and a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program. The Passport Program shall consist of 15 course credit hours and shall be a component of the 30-credit-hour Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program. Each Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program and Passport Program course shall be transferable and shall satisfy a lower division general education requirement at any public institution of higher education. The Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program and Passport Program shall be available at each comprehensive community college ~~and through the Online Virginia Network~~.

C. The Council shall establish procedures under which a baccalaureate public institution of higher education may seek a waiver from the Council from accepting the transfer of a Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program or Passport Program course to satisfy the requirements for the completion of a specific pathway or degree. A waiver shall not be granted allowing a baccalaureate public institution to (i)

generally reject the transfer of all coursework that is a part of the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program or Passport Program or (ii) generally reject the transfer of a course from the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program or Passport Program for all pathway maps and degrees. An application for a waiver shall identify with particularity the course for which the institution is seeking a waiver and the particular pathway or degree to which the waiver would apply. The application shall provide justification for the waiver and shall designate alternative courses offered through the System that may be completed by a student in order to complete a transferable, 30-credit-hour Uniform Certificate of General Studies or 15-credit-hour Passport. The Council shall adopt guidelines regarding the criteria to be used to review and issue decisions regarding waiver requests. Such waiver requests shall only be granted if the baccalaureate public institution of higher education provides evidence that the specified pathway or degree requires a specialized, lower division course not available through the System. Once approved, notice of a waiver granted by the Council shall be included in the online portal established pursuant to § 23.1-908.

D. The Council shall develop guidelines for associate-degree-granting and baccalaureate public institutions of higher education to use in mapping pathways for the completion of credits in particular programs of study, including the courses recommended to be taken in a dual enrollment, comprehensive community college, and baccalaureate public institution setting in order to pursue a specific degree or career. Such guidelines shall define the elements of a pathway map and identify the pathway maps to be developed. Initial guidelines adopted for mapping such pathways shall establish a multiyear schedule for the development and implementation of pathway maps for all fields of study.

E. Each baccalaureate public institution of higher education, in cooperation and consultation with the System, shall develop pathway maps consistent with the guidelines established pursuant to subsection D. Such pathways maps shall clearly set forth the courses that a student at a comprehensive community college is encouraged to complete prior to transferring to the baccalaureate institution. The goal of the career education pathway maps shall be to assist students in achieving optimal efficiencies in the time and cost of completing a degree program. Such program map shall also clearly identify the courses, if any, for which the baccalaureate institution has received a waiver from transfer pursuant to subsection C.

F. The Council shall prepare a comprehensive annual report on the effectiveness of transferring from comprehensive community colleges to baccalaureate public institutions of higher education, including a review of the effectiveness of the use of pathway maps in achieving efficiencies and cost savings in the completion of a degree program. The report shall include the following elements: completion rates, average time to degree, credit accumulation, post-transfer student academic performance, and comparative efficiency. The Council shall adopt guidelines for data submission from public institutions of higher education necessary for such report, and all institutions shall report such data in accordance with the guidelines. The report shall be made publicly available on the Council website and on the online portal maintained pursuant to § 23.1-908.

G. Each comprehensive community college shall develop agreements for postsecondary credit and degree attainment with the public high schools in the school divisions that such comprehensive community college serves specifying the options for students to complete an associate degree, the Passport Program, or the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program concurrent with a high school diploma consistent with the requirements for the College and Career Ready Virginia Program set forth in Article 5.1 (§ 22.1-237.1 et seq.) of Chapter 13 of Title 22.1. Such agreements shall specify the credit available for dual enrollment courses and Advanced Placement courses with qualifying exam scores of three or higher.

H. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any public institution of higher education established pursuant to Chapter 25 (§ 23.1-2500 et seq.).

**2. That the second enactment of Chapter 647 and the second enactment of Chapter 684 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024 are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**2. That the provisions of subsections B, C, and D of § 22.1-237.3 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, shall become effective beginning with course registrations for the fall term of the 2025 2026 academic year.**