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## HOUSE BILL NO. 2158

## AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations  
on February 17, 2025)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Carr)

A *BILL* to establish the Virginia Prison Education Task Force and to direct the Department of Education to review and update the salary schedules for teachers licensed by the Board of Education and employed by the Department of Corrections to provide instruction in the schools of correctional centers to be competitive with those in effect for the school division in which the correctional facility is located; report.

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

1. § 1. That there is hereby established the Virginia Prison Education Task Force (the Task Force) for the purpose of implementing a consistent education program across all state correctional facilities operated by the Department of Corrections. The Task Force shall be administered jointly by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education and consist of the following members: (i) two members of the Senate who are not members of the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; (ii) two members of the House of Delegates who are not members of the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; (iii) the Secretary of Finance or his designee; (iv) the Secretary of Education or his designee; (v) the Secretary of Labor or his designee; (vi) the Secretary of Commerce and Trade or his designee; (vii) the Director of the Department of Corrections or his designee; (viii) the Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement or his designee; (ix) the Chief Information Officer of the Virginia Information Technologies Agency or his designee; (x) the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System or his designee; (xi) the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development or his designee; (xii) the Research Director of the Virginia Office of Education Economics or his designee; (xiii) the President of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce or his designee; (xiv) the Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia or his designee; (xv) the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee; (xvi) three formerly incarcerated individuals appointed by the Secretary of Labor, including one individual who was enrolled in the Department of Corrections' Adult Basic Education program while incarcerated, one individual who was enrolled in postsecondary coursework while incarcerated, and one individual who was not able to access education services while incarcerated; (xvii) a member of a faith-based organization with expertise in prison higher education appointed by the Secretary of Labor; (xviii) a member of a criminal justice advocacy organization appointed by the Secretary of Labor; (xix) a representative with expertise in management of state education and workforce data to be appointed by the Secretary of Labor; and (xx) any other stakeholders as may be appropriate appointed by the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary of Labor shall serve as the chair of the Task Force. A majority of the members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum. The Task Force shall meet at least four times a year and upon the call of the chair or at the request of a majority of the members. The Task Force shall make recommendations on the development and implementation of a consistent education program across all state correctional facilities operated by the Department of Corrections as proposed in the engrossed bill with Amendments by the Senate Committee on Education and Health to House Bill 2158 of the 2025 Session of the General Assembly (House Bill 2158). In making such recommendations, the Task Force shall (a) analyze existing and potential state and federal funding programs and develop a strategy to maximize securement and use of available funds; (b) recommend additional budget requests to meet the goals of implementation of the education programs proposed by House Bill 2158; (c) review and support development of the interagency agreements between the Department of Corrections, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, and the Chief Information Officer of the Virginia Information Technologies Agency as proposed by the provisions of House Bill 2158; (d) advise and support the Department of Corrections in developing a strategy to reduce waitlists for participation in the literacy and education programs proposed under the provisions of House Bill 2158; (e) study and recommend the most effective ways to facilitate data collection, sharing, and analysis relating to prison education; (f) study and recommend the most effective ways to increase technological infrastructure in all state correctional facilities operated by the Department of Corrections to support education; (g) study and recommend the most effective ways to establish reentry supports to facilitate positive employment outcomes post release; and (h) conduct regular evaluations of program effectiveness, outcomes, and conditions to inform education program improvement.

The Task Force shall establish a Higher Education Advisory Group (the Advisory Group), which shall, at a minimum, consist of the following members of the Task Force: the Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement, the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, the Director of the Department of Corrections, and the Chief Information Officer of the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, or their designees, and a member of a faith-based organization with expertise in prison

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60 *higher education. The Advisory Group shall make recommendations to the Task Force on a possible*  
61 *interagency agreement between the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System and the*  
62 *Department of Corrections as proposed in House Bill 2158, necessary technology infrastructure to meet the*  
63 *needs of higher education staff in state correctional facilities operated by the Department of Corrections, and*  
64 *necessary technology tools to provide incarcerated students coursework commensurate with that provided to*  
65 *nonincarcerated students, including a learning management system, research library access, access to*  
66 *advisors, synchronous teleconference instruction, application suites, and long-term storage for students'*  
67 *academic resource materials and work product.*

68 *The Task Force shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Committee*  
69 *on Finance and Appropriations and the House Committee on Appropriations by November 1 each year,*  
70 *beginning on November 1, 2026, on its activities, findings and recommendations, and progress toward*  
71 *implementing the literacy and education programs described in House Bill 2158. The Task Force shall*  
72 *complete its work by July 1, 2030.*

73 *§ 2. That the Department of Education shall, by November 1, 2025, (i) review and update the salary*  
74 *schedules for teachers licensed by the Board of Education and employed by the Department of Corrections to*  
75 *provide instruction in the schools of the correctional centers to be competitive with those in effect for the*  
76 *school division in which the correctional facility is located as described in of the engrossed bill with*  
77 *Amendments by the Senate Committee on Education and Health to House Bill 2158 of the 2025 Session of the*  
78 *General Assembly and (ii) make recommendations for the inclusion of such teacher salary increases in the*  
79 *appropriation act.*