

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
AT CHARLESTON
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2-13**

By the Governor

WHEREAS, in 2011 the Southern Regional Education Board's Middle Grades Commission, a group of education and political leaders, published a comprehensive education study titled, "A New Mission for the Middle Grades"; and

WHEREAS, this new mission for the middle grades focuses on building a strong foundation to prepare students for success in high school, ensuring that more students will graduate from high school and proceed to college, community college or technical training; and

WHEREAS, this new mission also stresses the importance of engaging middle graders in their studies by connecting lessons to their passions and interests; and

WHEREAS, the earlier in a student's academic career he or she begins considering career goals, the easier it is to motivate the student and connect academic subjects and lessons to real life applications; and

WHEREAS, although four-year degrees will remain a critical component of the educational format, research indicates many of today's high-paying, high-demand jobs require, and in the future will require, specialty certifications or highly focused skill sets, rather than traditional degree qualifications; and

WHEREAS, research further indicates students and parents are being underexposed to the opportunities available through career and technical education.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, EARL RAY TOMBLIN, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **ORDER** that:

1. The Governor's Commission on the Middle Grades ("the Commission") is hereby created for the purpose of studying "A New Mission for the Middle Grades" and developing West Virginia specific recommendations for improving student achievement in the middle grades.

2. The Commission shall consist of the following individuals:

(a) Two members of the State Board of Education, appointed by the Superintendent of Schools;

(b) One principal of a public school in West Virginia that includes middle grade instruction, who shall be appointed by and shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor;

(c) Two teachers in public schools in West Virginia that include middle grade instruction, who shall be appointed by and shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor. One of the teachers shall be a science, technology, engineering or math ("STEM") instructor, and the other teacher shall be an English language arts instructor;

(d) Five citizen members, two of whom shall be representatives of teachers organizations, who shall be appointed by and shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor;

(e) Two ex officio, non-voting members of the Senate appointed by the Senate President;

(f) Two ex officio, non-voting members of the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(g) The Executive Director of Workforce West Virginia, or his designee;

(h) The Assistant State Superintendent of Schools who supervises the Division of Technical, Adult and Institutional Education;

(j) The Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, or his designee; and

(k) The Chancellor of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, or his designee.

3. The Governor or his designee shall chair the Commission.

4. The Governor may appoint additional citizen members to the Commission, who shall serve at his will and pleasure.

5. The Commission shall consider, among other things, the findings and recommendations set forth in "A New Mission for the Middle Grades." Such recommendations address:

(a) Common standards necessary for college and career readiness;

(b) Improving student learning based on the latest research;

(c) Eliminating programs and policies that have failed to improve student learning and achievement;

(d) Literacy as a strategy for learning in all subjects;

(e) Improving teachers' expertise in their subjects, especially in math and science;

(f) Teaching at-risk students at grade-level curriculum and providing them with the help and support needed to succeed;

(g) Professional development as a continuing process for principals and teachers to improve their instructional practices incrementally, according to students' needs;

(h) Integrating science, technology, engineering and math to help students discover their interests and aptitudes in emerging careers;

(i) Finding and preparing school leaders specifically for the middle grades who can motivate teachers and students;

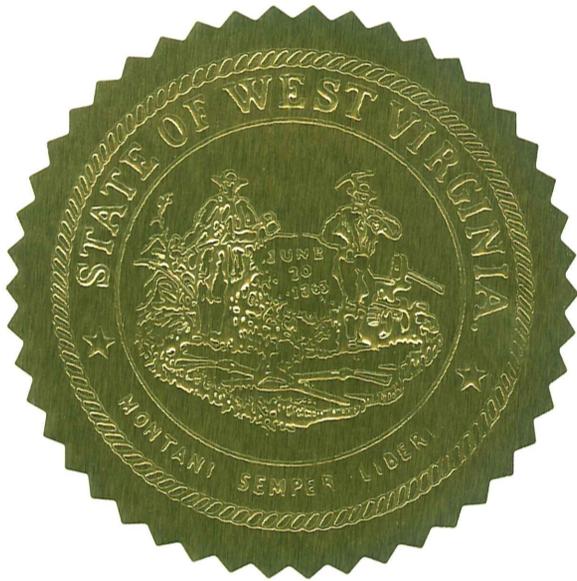
(j) Providing parents and students the information and experiences they need to initiate career and higher education plans; and

(k) Accountability and incentives for continuous improvement of students to prepare them for high school.

6. The Commission shall report its recommendations to the Governor, the State Board of Education and the Legislative Oversight Committee on Education Accountability no later than January 15, 2014.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol, in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the eighth day of March, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Thirteen, and in the One Hundred Fiftieth year of the State.



Earl Ray Tomblin
GOVERNOR

By the Governor

Natalie Edmunds
SECRETARY OF STATE