



Personal Finance Education for 21st
Century Learning in Grades K – 12
September, 2009

NetWorth Background

Begun in 2008 with the leadership of the West Virginia Treasurer's Office in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education, and with support from the West Virginia Legislature, the NetWorth program is intended to make personal finance education a permanent fixture in every West Virginia classroom.

What is NetWorth?

- The NetWorth program seeks to seamlessly integrate personal finance education into the core curriculum being taught in all West Virginia schools.
- The program is the first of its kind in the nation, and will incorporate personal finance lessons into core subjects like math, language arts, and social studies in grades K through 12.

Additional NetWorth Initiatives

To support the implementation of personal finance education curriculum, NetWorth also emphasizes the following goals to create a comprehensive solution:

- The creation of developmental guidance materials for counselors
- Robust parent involvement
- The development of an afterschool network
- The establishment of partnerships and collaborations among community stakeholders, government entities, and non-profit organizations
- Pre-service personal finance education for future teachers

The NetWorth 3-Phase Strategy

- Phase 1 of the NetWorth program, largely completed this past summer, began in 2008 and involved the development of more than 30 personal finance instructional guides for use in the classroom.
- The instructional guides were developed by experienced educators for all grades across the curriculum, and are consistent with the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives adopted by the West Virginia State Board of Education.
- Following extensive peer review, and approval by the State Board of Education, the guides are made available to educators through the State Board of Education's "Teach 21" website. Currently, 19 instructional guides are available online, with the remainder awaiting final approval.

The NetWorth Strategy cont'd

- Phase 2 of the strategy, currently underway, focuses on the recruitment of respected educators throughout the state to pilot NetWorth in the classroom.
- Currently, approximately 80 teachers in 35 West Virginia counties are poised to introduce the NetWorth instructional guides in their classrooms this fall. All pilot teachers were required to complete extensive training this past summer.
- Educators and students will receive both pre and post testing, allowing for assessment of the program's effectiveness.

The NetWorth Strategy cont'd

- The final Phase 3 of NetWorth, anticipated in 2010, will see implementation of NetWorth in every West Virginia classroom.
- An additional 80 personal finance instructional guides will be developed and made available to educators.
- Teachers will have access to professional development resources linked directly to NetWorth.
- The West Virginia State Treasurer's Office will continue to offer NetWorth training to educators, for which graduate school credit will be available.

Conclusion

- The NetWorth program has made remarkable progress in the past year for three important reasons:
 - (1) The strong partnership between the West Virginia Treasurer's Office and the West Virginia Department of Education;
 - (2) A program strategy that seeks to integrate personal finance education with existing educational standards, rather than create additional burdens for teachers;
 - (3) Perhaps most importantly, an emphasis on providing West Virginia students with a learning experience that provides them with meaningful skills for the real world.

Wise Beyond Years...

“I also think that more classes should be about life and careers. Let’s face it, we’re only going to have 12 years at the most to become a civilized person, and learn how to live in this world. It would be nice to have some occasional classes that help us learn about that kind of stuff.”

a high school student from Hampshire County, West Virginia