



# AFT-West Virginia 2015 Legislative Update

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Post

Thursday, February 12, 2015

## **Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 14 – West Virginia Public Charter Schools Act of 2015**

*SB14: Sponsored by Senators Sypolt, Walters, Blair, Cole (Mr. President), Takubo*

*HB2014: Delegates Upson, Pasdon, Cowles, McCuskey, Hamrick, Ihle, Walters, Overington, Faircloth, Azinger*

For the third week in a row, the charter school bill dominated discussion in the Senate Education Committee. On Tuesday, committee members spent the entire meeting asking questions about the Committee Substitute for SB 14. Thursday marked the half way point of the 2015 Legislative Session, and the committee finally moved to consider the committee substitute and accept amendments. The committee debated nearly five pages of amendments, which will now be drafted into a new Committee Substitute. The amendments did not significantly improve the bill; in fact most created additional concerns. AFT-WV is in continuous discussions with senators, pointing out the severe consequences this legislation will bring to our public education system.

**AFT-WV would like to thank the thousands of teachers and service personnel who have called and emailed committee members to voice their concern with this bill. The flood of communication to senators by school employees, parents and community members is making a difference! The momentum of this bill slowed dramatically as your calls and emails poured in. It is critical to continue to call and email the Senate Education Committee to oppose charter schools!**

## **House Bill 2005 – Alternative Certification Programs**

*Sponsored by Delegates Pasdon, Hamrick, Zatezalo, Romine, McCuskey, Walters, Westfall, Arvon, Overington, Espinosa, Moffatt*

### **AFT-WV opposes HB 2005 in its current form.**

The House of Delegates voted on Committee Substitute for HB 2005 on Tuesday. Delegates debated five amendments on the floor for over an hour, adopting only three. The bill passed by a [vote of 60-35](#). HB 2005 will lower the standards for alternative teacher certification programs in the state and allow any individual with a bachelor's degree to teach in West Virginia's public schools. A proposed amendment to prohibit the use of Teach for America as an alternative certification program failed, clearing the way for the controversial organization's entry into local school systems.

"This bill is a step backward in providing a highly qualified teacher for every student. Frankly, it insults the credentials and experience of our certified educators who have dedicated their lives to the teaching profession. Instead of lowering alternative certification standards, we should be attracting and retaining our teachers. West Virginia is graduating nearly 1,500 from our teacher colleges annually, but only 400 are actually staying," remarked AFT-WV President Christine Campbell.

HB 2005 now moves to the Senate for consideration.

**Despite numerous sound bites by legislative leaders pledging a commitment to public education and comments admitting salary is the primary cause for classroom vacancies, no action has been taken on any bills increasing school employee salaries to attract and retain highly qualified educators for West Virginia's students. Bills awaiting action by House and Senate Education Committees:**

[House Bill 2155](#) Increasing pay to teachers and service personnel

[House Bill 2163](#) Increasing salaries for school service personnel

[House Bill 2164](#) Providing pay increases for teachers and counselors

[House Bill 2183](#) Relating to salary increase for school personnel

[House Bill 2413](#) Providing pay rates for teachers and other personnel employed by county boards of education and institutions of higher education for work assignments outside of regular school days

[Senate Bill 422](#) Raising minimum teacher salaries

[Senate Bill 433](#) Relating to graduated salary increases for teachers



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## AFT-WV Bill Watch:

### **House Bill 2032 - Increasing salary increments paid to principals and assistant principals**

**AFT-WV opposes** HB2032 unless attached to pay increases that will attract and retain school employees at all levels.

### **House Bill 2077 - Requiring county boards of education to provide released time for professional educators and service personnel when serving in an elected municipal or county office**

**AFT-WV supports** public education employees serving at all levels of elected office, from city hall to the statehouse.

### **House Bill 2082 - Requiring county boards of education to employ a certified library media specialist in each county school**

**AFT-WV supports** with appropriate funding allocation.

### **House Bill 2107 - Relating to required courses of school instruction generally**

**AFT-WV opposes** mandating curriculum in state code.

### **Senate Bill 33 - Decreasing teacher-pupil ratios; increasing certain classroom aides' pay**

**AFT-WV supports** all efforts to produce a quality learning environment. SB33 would establish a 20 pupil per class maximum for pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 25 pupil per class maximum for all other classrooms.

### **Senate Bill 246 - Establishing grandfather exemption requiring certain School for Deaf and Blind child care workers hold associate's degree**

**AFT-WV supports** treating public employees with fairness.

### **Senate Bill 296 - Providing maximum licensed school psychologist-pupil ratio**

**AFT-WV supports** a 1,500 pupil ratio for each licensed school psychologist in the county.

## Education Bills on the Move:

### **SB7 Requiring CPR and care for conscious choking instruction in public schools**

PASSED SENATE 32-0; PASSED HOUSE 99-0; AFT-WV SUPPORTS. *Completed Legislation awaiting Governor's signature*

### **SB19 Specifying minimum early childhood education program instruction days**

Reduces early childhood education program requirement from five days per week to four days. PASSED SENATE 34-0;

### **HB2151 Making the West Virginia state teacher of the year an ex officio, nonvoting member of the WV BOE**

PASSED HOUSE 95-1; PENDING SENATE EDUCATION; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **SB238 Exempting county boards of education from liability arising from unorganized recreation**

Provides that county boards of education are not liable for loss or injury from the use of school property made available for unorganized recreation; PASSED SENATE 32-0; PENDING HOUSE EDUCATION; NO POSITION TAKEN BY AFT-WV

### **SB287 Providing posthumous high school diplomas**

Provides for the awarding of a posthumous high school diploma to parents of a high school senior who dies during the senior year PASSED SENATE 33-0; PENDING HOUSE EDUCATION; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **HB2370 Increasing the powers of regional councils for governance of regional education service agencies**

Expands the powers of the regional councils comprised of superintendents, county board members and others in the governance of regional education service agencies PASSED HOUSE 99-0; PENDING SENATE EDUCATION; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **SB243 Relating to school nutrition standards during state of emergency or preparedness**

Facilitates educational instruction during a state of emergency where approved school meals are not available for distribution to students; PASSED SENATE 34-0; PENDING HOUSE EDUCATION; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **HB2139 Relating to employment of retired teachers as substitutes in areas of critical need and shortage for substitutes**

Restarts expired provisions that allow retired teachers to be employed as substitutes in areas of critical need and shortage for substitutes beyond the 140-day post-retirement employment limit. ADVANCED TO HOUSE FINANCE; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **HB2160 WV Schools for the Deaf and Blind eligible for SBA funding**

Makes schools for deaf and blind eligible to participate in all funding administered or distributed by WV SBA; ADVANCED TO HOUSE FINANCE WITH AMENDMENTS; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

### **HB2377 Authorizing State Board of Education to approve certain alternatives with respect to instructional time**

Describes the constitutional authority of the State Board of Education for the general supervision of the public schools and includes provisions for flexibility for instructional time. AFT-WV worked to ensure flexibility provisions in the bill guarantee the current minimum required planning period for teachers; ADVANCED TO HOUSE JUDICIARY WITH AMENDMENTS; AFT SUPPORTS

### **HB2387 Relating to a framework for initiating comprehensive transformation of school leadership**

1<sup>st</sup> READING IN HOUSE

### **HB2545 Relating to reimbursement of certification fee for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification**

Requires submission of satisfactory evidence to the WVDE rather than relying on a specific parameter of the NBPTS that may change. PASSED HOUSE EDUCATION; PENDING HOUSE FINANCE; AFT-WV SUPPORTS

