



AFT-West Virginia 2018 Legislative Agenda

At the 2017 American Federation of Teachers - West Virginia Legislative Summit, members from across the state gathered to prioritize a legislative agenda. The union identified six priorities for the upcoming legislative session:

1. HIGHER QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

- **Funding to provide a highly-qualified educator in every classroom, every school, and for every student.**
- Revise current legislation to ensure school districts must hire the most qualified applicants.
- Increased planning and collaboration time for all educators and support staff.
- Class-size equity for all grade levels and content areas.

2. IMPROVED COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS FOR ALL EDUCATION PERSONNEL AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

- **Fix and fully fund PEIA, including legislation to address rising healthcare costs.**
- Appropriate funding for a 4-year salary package for teachers, service personnel and public employees with automatic cost of living increases.
- A state tax exemption of up to \$500 on out-of-pocket classroom expenses accrued by educators.

3. PROVIDING A SAFE, EQUITABLE AND HIGH-QUALITY WORK ENVIRONMENT

- **Revise current legislation to ensure employees are appropriately protected from overwork and abuse by instituting mandatory limits regarding uncompensated duties, employee ratios and work areas.**
- Provide all resources necessary to ensure mental health services for children, as well as appropriate, alternate placements for students exhibiting emotional/mental health disorders that impede the learning process.
- Revise current legislation to allow school employees to expeditiously allege and resolve potential violations of the Safe Schools Act by allowing these actions to immediately proceed to a Level 3 hearing for consideration and resolution.

4. PROVIDE FOR THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- **An exemption for higher education from any proposed budget reduction.**
- Ensure a tenure system that provides security and respect to the profession.
- An annual cost of living increase for staff and faculty with merit increases only given after the annual cost of living increase.

5. TRANSPARENCY AND REDUCTION OF TOP-HEAVY ADMINISTRATION

- **Close the salary gap between the administration and the workforce across all divisions of public education and state agencies by creating a percentage/proportional pay scale for administrators and employees.**
- Reduce the bureaucracy in public education and state agencies by ensuring input from stakeholders in the decision-making process.
- Revise current legislation to grant employees for preferred recall more protections in relation to their place between regular employment and substitute employment.

6. IMPROVED SALARY AND BENEFITS FOR ALL RETIREES

- **Automatic cost-of-living increases for all retirees.**
- A state tax exemption for retired educators and public employees.
- Providing retired teachers and service personnel their daily rate per employment as a substitute.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

In addition to these priorities, AFT-West Virginia supports the right of education employees and other public employees to bargain collectively.

We believe that education employees and public employees have the right to choose the bargaining agent in their county/institution through free and open representation elections.

AFT-West Virginia
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