



AFT-West Virginia 2018 Legislative Update

Please
Post

Final Edition: Wednesday, March

WV Teachers, Service Personnel and State Employees Gain Historic Victory

Unprecedented employee unity and unwavering support from county superintendents and boards of education led to a historic victory for WV school and public employees.

PEIA:

While AFT-WV remains committed to the goal of a dedicated funding stream for PEIA, it was apparent that this was not going to occur during the final 10 days of the legislative session. The positive side is that employees are guaranteed a seat at the table to develop a long-term solution. This is much better than relying solely on legislators to find a permanent fix. A two-pronged approach will prevent additional financial burdens to employees in the short term, as well as provide a mechanism to develop solutions.

- Short term: All PEIA changes and costs are frozen until the 2020 plan year. Go 365 and total family income provisions are repealed. This provides immediate financial relief for employees.
- Long term: Governor Justice issued an Executive Order to create the PEIA Task Force, which began meeting on March 13. Education and public employees have substantial representation on this Task Force with a large number of members representing various employee groups, including AFT-WV President Christine Campbell and former AFT-WV President Judy Hale, who will represent retirees. The next scheduled meeting will held April 10th at the Culture Center.

Salary:

After continuous stall tactics by Senate Leadership, the 5% pay raise passed during the last week of the session. All teachers, service personnel and state troopers will receive an average 5% increase (\$2020 for teachers, \$1100 for service personnel.) The 5% increase for state employees was included in the budget, which passed before the session concluded. The raise is effective July 2018. Frontloading the increase will allow the maximum raise from the current legislature this year and while not limiting ourselves to 1% for the next two years.



These bills were also taken off the table as part of the settlement:

SB 6 - Education Savings Accounts (Sponsored by Sen. Rucker and Sen. Karnes)

Education Savings Accounts (ESA) are school vouchers. Vouchers drain funding from public schools, resulting in less resources to provide services to students.

Permitting county boards of education to base certain workforce decisions on individual's qualifications

There were several bills attacking seniority rights for teachers and service personnel. All were taken off the table.

SB 124 / SB 304 / HB 2572 - Authorizing charter schools (Lead sponsors: Sen. Karnes, Sen. Carmichael & Del. Espinosa)

There were multiple bills to propose charter schools and drain funding from public schools.

SB 335 -Paycheck Deception (Sponsors: Senators Karnes, Weld, Boso, Blair, Rucker, Cline and Ferns)
This bill would have made it cumbersome for employees to have union dues deducted from their paychecks. It was a clear attempt to silence the voice of workers.

While we were able to stop the passage of these bills this year, it will be important to remember the sponsors of these bills as you vote in May and November!



AFT-West Virginia
Christine Campbell, President
www.aftwv.org 800.222.9838





Activism Stops Other Bad Bills

[HB 4407 Alternative Certification](#) (Lead sponsor Del. Espinosa)

This bill would have lowered the requirements to become an alternatively certified teacher. The bill narrowly passed the House of Delegates but died in Senate Education.

[SB 494 Attack on the Union Presidents](#)

(Sponsors: Senators Azinger and Ferns)

This bill would have stripped provisions in current law that allow elected presidents of the statewide professional associations to purchase service credit in the State Teachers Retirement System. The bill passed the Senate on Feb. 20th but died in the House.

WV Teachers, Service Personnel Ignite a National Movement

Media outlets and scholars across the country are lauding the WV teacher and service personnel strike as the rebirth of the labor movement. Inspired by the WV victory and fed up over similar employment issues, education employees in Kentucky, Arizona and Oklahoma have initiated protests or walk outs in the past week. Our grassroots movement could serve as a model to build public support to improve not just the salaries and working conditions of education employees, but also to demand policymakers support well-funded, high-quality public schools for all children.

[Click to read CNN op ed: WV teachers have launched a movement](#)



Education Bills that Passed

[HB 3089](#) Relating to the adoption of instructional resources for public schools; completed legislative process

[HB 4006](#) Eliminating the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Arts and transferring its programs to other agencies; Passed both houses, awaiting action by Governor

[HB 4183](#) Relating generally to standardized testing requirements for nonpublic schools; completed legislative process

[HB 4478](#) Authorizing public schools to distribute excess food to students; completed legislative process

[SB 62](#) Adjusting the hiring requirements for school attendance directors; effective 90 days from passage

[SB 364](#) Allowing parent/guardian of homeschooled child provide signed statement to obtain a permit or license to operate motor vehicle; awaiting action by Governor

[SB 561](#) Increasing minimum contract price requiring execution of bond with respect to building or repairing school property; awaiting action by Governor



AFT-West Virginia
Christine Campbell, President
www.aftwv.org 800.222.9838

