



AFT-West Virginia 2023 Legislative Agenda

1. Providing a Safe, Equitable, and/ High-Quality Work Environment

- a) Provide legislation and resources that facilitate resolutions to problems encountered with sick schools, including, but not limited to, breakouts associated with infectious diseases.
 - Require full transparency and consistent reporting guidelines that shall be utilized statewide
 - Inform staff when anyone in their work environment has an infectious disease
 - Include additional language in the Safe Schools Act pertaining to infectious disease
 - Expedite to Safe Schools Act Level 3
 - Legislation requiring Safe Schools Act training countywide

2. Transparency & Accountability / High Quality Training

- a) Adhere to Safe Schools Act by providing applicable training based on individual and school needs
- b) Provide high-quality and relevant training based on teacher needs
- c) Provide professional development on current issues facing teacher needs

3. Consistently upgrade and maintain building operations, including HVAC systems

- a) Practice CDC recommendation best practice guidelines in order to reduce or prevent the spread of infectious disease
- b) Maintain OSHA standards and state and local building compliances. Work to be inspected by a certified engineer or architect
- c) Scheduled audits by County Boards regarding distribution and accountability of funds

4. Attracting and Retaining High-Quality Educators and Support Staff for All Students

- a) Provide appropriate funding for a 3-year salary package:
 - \$7,000 raise across-the-board for teachers, service personnel, and public employees with automatic cost of living increases. This salary proposal would be in accordance with SB 391, a

bill passed in 2014 that called for a beginning WV teacher salary of \$43,000 by fiscal year 2019 plus 2 years of inflation.

- b) Fully-fund PEIA by securing sustainable funding sources and allowing sensible and non-discriminatory utilization of this state-provided healthcare that reflects input from stakeholders.
- c) Preservation of school employees' rights in the workplace as dictated in State Code 18 and 18A
- d) When service personnel become professional, consideration for pay scale is given for years of experience.
- e) Ensure class-size equity for all grade levels and content areas with grades k-2 class
- f) sizes not to exceed 20 students and grades 3-12 not to exceed 25 students.
- g) Permit overages of three students per class and provide financial compensation for teachers and aides when a class size overage occurs. All limitations and overages are applicable to both in-person and virtual classes or a combination of the two.
- h) Revise legislation and provide funding to ensure school districts must hire the
- i) most highly qualified applicant, as determined by certification and years of experience, in every classroom, in every school, and for every student.
- j) Provide a state tax exemption of up to \$1,000 on out-of-pocket classroom expenses accrued by educators.
- k) Establish an incentive program to attract education candidates
- l) Add service personnel to attendance bonus and establish a paid mentor program
- m) Add classroom overage pay for service personnel and increase aid pay to that of a teacher

5. Addressing Transparency and Reduction of Top-Heavy Administration

- a. 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, including the requirement that administrators will be paid no more than 1.5 times the daily rate of a classroom teacher of equitable experience and education and set policies in place to redistribute funding to use for hiring additional teaching/service positions.
- b. Provide legislation that defines a reasonable cap, as defined by all stakeholders, for the creation of and continuance of administrative positions in relation to

teacher positions and student population at the county level and revisit annually based on enrollment.

- c. All county school systems shall post job vacancies on WV K12 Job Bank; additionally, all county boards of education will make it available for viewing expenditures prior to the county board meeting and publish the same in the meeting minutes. All BOE meetings will be live-streamed and archived for public viewing

6. Improving Salary and Benefits for All Retirees

- a. Provide regular cost-of-living increases for all retired public employees.
- b. Remove all restrictions on the daily rate of pay for all retired teachers and retired service personnel that serve as substitutes. They all may receive their daily rate of pay also eliminating the 140-day limit
- c. Eliminate all state taxes for retired educators, retired service personnel, and retired public employees.

7. Providing for the Quality of Education and Financial Stability of Higher Education Institutions

- a. Ensure a tenure system that provides security and respect to the profession.
- b. Provide for additional salary advancement increases beyond the salary increase for the achievement of the rank of full professor.
- c. Restructure the appropriation calculations to provide a more equitable distribution of funding, especially to provide for the smaller state institutions.
- d. Ensure an exemption for higher education from any proposed budget reduction, especially in the teacher education programs.
- e. Provide a regular cost-of-living increase for staff and faculty with merit increases given only after the regular cost-of-living increase is given.