



WVSSPA

West Virginia School Service Personnel Association
An Affiliate of the UMWA WV AFL-CIO

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2023 Legislative Priorities

The 2023 Legislative session will begin on Wednesday, January 11, 2023. As a result of the 2022 election cycle there is Republican super majority. With this super majority there have been leadership and committee changes. The senate has created a School Choice Committee, Senator Patricia Rucker is Chair, she previously chaired the Senate Education Committee. The new Chair of Senate Education is Senator Amy Grady. Senator Grady is a teacher from Mason County. Another change of note is the appointment of Delegate Chris Toney to Vice Chair of the House Education Committee. Delegate Toney is a bus operator from Raleigh County.

As you may know, WVSSPA often has carryover Legislative Priorities from previous sessions. It can take many years to get legislation passed. This past session our cook to meal ratio bill made it through House Education. Our bill deeming bus operators critical need passed House Education but died in House Finance. Legislation requiring 5 years experience as a bus operator to be a Director or Supervisor of Transportation passed the House of Delegates but failed in the Senate. All three pieces of the aforementioned Legislation made it further last session than any previous Legislative Session.

Every fall our Presidents meet and set the priorities for the upcoming legislative session. This year we will continue to focus on PEIA, pay increases for service personnel and retirees, cook to meal ratio, square footage maximums for custodians, designating bus operators as critical need, prohibiting aides from teaching in the absence of a teacher or substitute, and protections for aides dealing with violent students.

Read on for a list legislation we will oppose and Legislation we hope to pass.

Legislation WVSSPA will Support

Increase Service Personnel and State Employee Salaries

- Adequate funding for a 4-year salary package for service personnel and state employees
- Reinstate the holiday pay (§18A-5-2)
- Establish years of experience pay for military service (§18A-4-8a)
- Include Service Personnel in the \$500 bonus for unused leave

Charter Schools/Education Savings Account

- Abolishment of charter schools in West Virginia
- Abolishment of Education Savings Accounts

Legislation WVSSPA will Support Continued

WV Public Employee Insurance Agency (PEIA)

- Earmark a funding source for PEIA

RIF and Transfer

- Allow for RIFs and Transfers to be rescinded through October 1 (§18A-2-7)
- Allow RIFed employees to substitute without penalty (§18A-4-8b)

Retirement

- Allow military service years to count toward retirement
- Reinstate the ability for unused sick days towards PEIA in retirement

Classification Specific Issues

- Cook meal ratio mandate for staffing kitchens based on the number of meals served (§18A-2-13) and raise paygrade for Cook I, Cook II, Cook III and Cafeteria Manager (§18A-4-8a)
- Promotion of Custodian I to Custodian II after 4 years of service (§18A-4-8) and institute square footage maximums for custodians
- Allow Aides to move after 20 days prior to the start of the school year (§18a-2-7b)
- Compensation for aides who work in classrooms where the number of students exceeds 20 in kindergarten and 25 in grades 1-4 (§18-5-18a)
- Prohibit classroom aides from teaching in the absence of a teacher or substitute
- Provide additional compensation for special education aides dealing with students who have violent outbursts and making the aide a required participant in all IEP meeting concerning the students they serve
- Require five years of experience working in a transportation department, or the requirement of acquiring a NAPT certification in order to be eligible to fill a Transportation Director position (§18A-1-1)
- Introduce legislation that will designate substitute retired school bus operators as critical need employees and protect retirement benefits if working days exceed 140
- Incremental pay raises based on years worked for bus drivers (§18A-4-8a)

WV School for the Deaf and the Blind Service Personnel

- Introduce legislation that will provide seniority and due process rights for WVDB personnel (§18A-7-9a)

Legislation WVSSPA will Oppose

- PEIA benefit cuts for active service personnel employees, state employees, retirees, and spouses
- Repealing the intent of the service personnel seniority and substitute provisions of law as provided in §18A-4-8b, §18A-4-8g and §18A-4-15
- Merit Pay: providing pay raises based on merit
- Further strengthening of Education Savings Accounts
- Further strengthening of charter schools
- Funding cuts to education

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Contact WVSSPA

Phone: 304-346-3544 - Email: Info@wvsspa.org

