



# WVSSPA

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

## 2026 Legislative Look Ahead

**The 2026 Legislative session will begin on January 14, 2026.** As it did last year, the West Virginia Legislature will have a Republican supermajority and a Republican governor. A supermajority in any political party creates serious problems for healthy lawmaking. When one party can pass anything it wants, there is no healthy debate, no negotiation, and little compromise. Good laws usually require input from multiple perspectives; a supermajority leads to one-sided legislation that is often rushed, poorly written, and sometimes overreaching. This also encourages extremes in policy, catering to the party's most extreme members. There are many examples from the last legislative session that show the flaws in a supermajority. Unfortunately, our current supermajority is not education or worker-friendly.

During previous sessions, we have fought against attacks on the grievance procedure and seniority. These are essential job protections for Service Personnel. During the last interim session, the superintendents' association indicated they would like to see the repeal of seniority rights for service personnel. It is our sincere hope that the education committee chairs and co-chairs don't allow bills attacking seniority on their agendas.

Regardless of the things mentioned above, WVSSPA will continue to advocate for School Service Personnel at the West Virginia Legislature. As in years past, we would like to see a significant multi-year pay increase for Service Personnel. One that is not consumed by increased insurance premiums. It is essential for the Legislature to develop a plan to stabilize PEIA. Health insurance premiums have continued to rise. With the 2023 passage of Senate Bill 268, much of this burden has been shifted to Service Personnel and other West Virginia state employees.

Several years ago, the Legislature passed a bill to no longer require counties to provide training for service personnel competency testing. We would like to see these trainings reinstated. The legislature should establish years-of-experience pay for military service and allow those years to count toward retirement. RIF and transfer laws should be updated to allow RIFed and transfers to be rescinded through October 1, and to permit RIFed employees to substitute without penalty. The use of sick days for retirement credit should be reinstated, and service personnel should receive the \$500 bonus that teachers get for not using PTO.

We recommend establishing several classification-specific policies in the code. Cooks should be staffed according to a required cook-to-meal ratio, while custodians should be allocated based on square footage. Both cooks and custodians need to receive pay grade increases. Aides require protection from violent students, extra pay for working in classrooms with overcapacity, and compensation when they are forced to cover for absent teachers without substitutes. Secretaries should be hired based on a combination of enrollment numbers and duties, as many perform tasks outside their designated roles. To address staffing shortages, bus operators should receive a pay grade increase after four years of service. Mechanics should be reclassified as diesel technicians, with pay reflecting private-sector standards. These are some of the key classification-specific improvements we support.

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