



2026 Legislative Wrap Up

Completed Legislation

SB 890 removes the 180-day requirement for a school year and replaces it with a mandate of 900 hours in a school year. This bill only affects the amount of time students must spend in the classroom. 18a-4-8 specifies that the minimum contract for service personnel is 200 days; this legislation does not change that. Senator Roberts is the lead sponsor.

HB 5686 is a House Finance Committee originating bill concerning the Hope Scholarship. It requires that funds be paid quarterly. There is \$290 million budgeted for the Hope Scholarship. The House Finance Committee had another bill to reduce the amount of the Hope Scholarship and put guardrails on the program, but that legislation didn't make it out of committee.

HB 4575, an appropriation bill, allocates \$8 million of surplus funds to the Shortfall Supplement Fund, which was created in SB 929. This bill originated in the House Finance Committee. No legislation was passed to create the shortfall fund, but the WVDE will still receive these funds to assist Hancock County Schools.

HB 4395 requires a board of education to continue investigating allegations that school personnel have jeopardized the health, safety, or welfare of a student, even after the school personnel obtain another job or transfer to another school. The information regarding the investigation must be placed in a statewide database. The lead sponsor is Delegate Drennan.

HB 5012 allows teachers and service personnel to be transferred throughout the school year. Employees can only be moved if there is a population shift and no other reason. Delegate Ellington is the lead sponsor, but the bill was introduced at the Superintendent Association's request.

HB 4765 increases the salaries of certain state employees by 3%. This would give service personnel a monthly increase of \$87. This was introduced on behalf of Governor Morrisey. The Senate Finance Committee tried to add locality pay to the bill. In the final hours of the session, the Senate agreed to eliminate the language.

HB 4995 was amended to remove the provisions requiring cameras in support areas and rooms connected to self-contained classrooms, as well as the requirement that staff escorting students wear recording devices. The bill now requires parents or guardians to be notified of any outage affecting video or audio recording. Footage should be reviewed every 30 days, and all investigations must be finalized. The lead sponsor is Delegate Martin.

HB 4025 exempts new hires and promoted employees within the Departments of Health, Health Facilities, and Human Services from the classified civil service system and the state grievance process, effective July 1, 2026. This bill was introduced on behalf of Governor Morrisey.

HB 5441 terminates the State Personnel Board and its responsibilities to the Division of Personnel. Additionally, this bill removes civil service protections and the grievance procedure from the State Tax Division, the Bureau of Social Services, and the Department of Transportation for new employees and those who transfer to another position. This bill was introduced on behalf of Governor Morrisey.

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Failed Legislation

HB 5669 would have established Raylee’s Law, which temporarily prevents a student from switching to home-schooling if there is a pending CPS investigation reported by a mandatory reporter at their school.

Delegate Fluharty is the lead sponsor, and he has been trying to get this legislation passed for three years. This bill died after a vote by the House of Delegates failed to suspend the Constitutional Rule requiring a bill to be read 3 times.

The Senate amended Raylee’s law into **HB 5537** on Friday evening. The House of Delegates held the legislation until 11 pm Saturday, even though they had multiple chances to consider it earlier. Delegates Kimble, Crouse, Burkhammer, and Anders blocked the bill using filibuster tactics.

Raylee Browning was tortured and murdered by her father, stepmother, and stepmother’s sister. Raylee was withdrawn from public school after CPS was contacted by her teacher to report abuse.

HB 5511 would have provided a lump sum payment of accrued personnel leave to the estate of an employee who dies while employed by the county board of education. The amount cannot exceed \$6000. Delegate Toney is the lead sponsor. There was an attempt on the last day of the session to amend this language into another bill. It was ruled not germane.

SB 1024 would have authorized the recession or reversal of school closure decisions through July 15 and established procedures for these decisions. Senator Maynard is the lead sponsor.

HB 5453 would have provided extra funding for Tier II and Tier III special education students. Counties could have applied for additional supplemental funding for transportation, Vocational and CTE centers, and pilot programs. Delegate Ellington was the lead sponsor.



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