

At midnight on Saturday, March 14th, the 2015 Legislative Session concluded. Throughout the session, WVSSPA called on members to take action in order to uphold and protect §18-A privileges for service personnel. WVSSPA is grateful to everyone who took the time to email and call legislators. **You truly made a difference for school service personnel!**

In unity,

Linda Thompson

Completed Legislation

SB19 – Specifying minimum early childhood education program instruction days

Passed Senate 34-0; Passed House 99-0-1; Effective 90 days from passage

This bill specifies early childhood education programs shall provide at least four days of instruction per week. WVSSPA supports SB19.

SB529 – Relating to PERS, SPRS and TRS benefits and costs

Passed Senate 34-0; Passed House 96-3-1; Effective from passage

Employees hired after July 1, 2015, will not be permitted to use unused accrued sick days for retirement. This bill will not affect current employees. WVSSPA does not support SB529. We do not support legislation that reduces employee retirement benefits.

HB2702 – Multiclassification of aides, ECCATs and paraprofessionals

Passed House 97-0-3; Passed Senate 33-0-1; Effective from passage

This bill will redefine service personnel class titles of early childhood classroom assistant teachers to smooth the transition of former early childhood aides to this new classification of school service personnel. The multiclassification status includes protections from reduction in force or transfer for those aides eligible for full retirement benefits before July 1, 2020, to create vacancy for less senior early childhood classroom assistant teachers. WVSSPA strongly supports HB2702.

Failed Legislation

SB14 – WV Public Charter Schools Act

This bill would have allowed the creation of public charter schools in WV. The bill passed the Senate early in the session before advancing to the House Education and House Finance committees. The bill was scheduled for a third reading in the House, but was abruptly placed on the bottom of the House calendar. SB14 remained at the foot of the calendar until the gavel fell at midnight on March 14th, despite a late attempt to amend the language into another bill. A resolution to study charter schools also fell short. The demise of the charter school bill is a tremendous victory for service personnel and the outcry from education employees was a key factor in the momentum shift for this bill.

HB2717 – Relating to hiring of public school employees

This bill would have prevented service personnel from transferring to a new position after the 20th day prior to the



beginning of the instructional term. The bill was approved in the House Education committee and on the House floor. After two full readings in the Senate, the bill was sent to the Senate Education committee. No further action was taken on HB2717.

HB3018 – Increasing the allowable range of salary difference in salary potential of school employees in different counties

The passage of this bill would have increased the allowable salary variance of school employees in the ten highest paid counties and the lowest paid counties from 10%-15%. For service personnel, this would have caused 4 million dollars in lost wages. This bill was approved in the House Education committee and sent to the floor. Delegate Rick Moyer led a discussion of opposition to this bill which resulted in the removal of the bill from the calendar. No further action was taken on HB3018.

Other Completed Legislation Relative to Service Personnel

SB243 – Relating to school nutrition standards during state of emergency or preparedness

Passed Senate 34-0; Passed House 99-0-1; Effective from passage

This bill relates to school nutrition standards during a state of emergency. The bill allows for meals to be provided that may or may not meet required nutrition standards. The foods provided must be safe alternative foods and beverages. WVSSPA supports SB243. We promote serving safe meals to children during situations when children might not have other access to food.

HB2370 – Increasing powers of regional councils for governance of RESAs

Passed House 99-0-1; Passed Senate 33-0-1

This bill will expand the powers of the regional councils that oversee Regional Education Service Agencies. The councils will have more involvement in the selection of executive directors of RESAs.

HB2598 – Ensuring that teachers and teacher aides of students with disabilities receive complete information about the school's plan for accommodating the child's disabilities.

Passed House 82-0-18; Passed Senate 34-0; Effective 90 days from passage

HB2755 – Relating to service and professional employee positions at jointly established schools

Passed House 92-0-8; Passed Senate 33-0-1

This bill addresses seniority and other personnel issues relating to service and professional employee positions at jointly established schools.

HB2840 – Providing an alternative plan to make up lost days of instruction

Passed House 97-1-2; Passed Senate 34-0

This bill allows county boards to submit alternative plans for providing instruction during emergency closures. Plans must be approved by the State Board.