

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2480

By Delegates Heckert, Criss, Fehrenbacher, Riley,

Green, Foggin, and Crouse

[Introduced February 17, 2025; referred to the

Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
2 designated §18-5-13f, relating to schools; consolidating school boards; providing
3 legislative findings; providing a purpose; directing the State Board of Education and State
4 Superintendent of Schools to take certain actions; providing an effective date; and
5 providing rule authority.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-5-13f. School board consolidation.

1 (a) The Legislature finds that declining enrollment, rising costs, inequitable funding, local
2 property taxes, and students with additional needs may contribute to the funding challenges facing
3 school districts across West Virginia.

4 (b) The Legislature finds that West Virginia currently has 55 school boards, 55 board
5 presidents, 55 board vice presidents, and 55 board secretaries.

6 (c) The Legislature finds that the consolidation of school boards will create a positive
7 financial impact by reducing administration costs and operating expenses which may be
8 reinvested in teacher salaries, school programs, Public Employee Insurance Agency
9 enhancements, or providing tax relief.

10 (d) The Legislature finds that the consolidation of school boards will benefit communities
11 by cutting costs, optimizing resources, enhancing educational outcomes, and streamlining change
12 management.

13 (e) The purpose of this section is to better allocate resources to directly benefit the
14 educational system and community through the consolidation of school boards.

15 (f) The State Board of Education and State Superintendent shall review the state's 55
16 school boards and consolidate them down to 11 school boards with five counties per school board
17 and two members per county.

18 (g) Effective July 1, 2026, the 55 individual county school boards will be consolidated down
19 to 11 school boards, 11 board presidents, 11 board vice presidents, and 11 board secretaries with
20 five counties per school board.

21 (h) The State Board of Education is authorized to submit rules for legislative approval
22 pursuant to §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code that establish policies and procedures to aid in the
23 orderly and efficient process during the consolidation of the school boards.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to consolidate school boards to better allocate resources to directly benefit the education programs and community.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.