

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

ENGROSSED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 3125

By Delegates Barnhart, Stephens, Hornby, Pritt,
Ellington, and Statler

[Introduced March 4, 2025; referred to the Committee
on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18A-3-2a and §18A-3-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
2 amended, relating to removing restrictions from teachers receiving permanent teaching
3 licenses.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

**ARTICLE 3. TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT.**

**§18A-3-2a. Certificates valid in the public schools that may be issued by the State
Superintendent.**

1 In accordance with state board rules for the education of professional educators adopted
2 pursuant to §18A-3-1 of this code and subject to the limitations and conditions of that section, the
3 State Superintendent may issue the following certificates valid in the public schools of the state:

4 (a) *Professional teaching certificates.* —

5 (1) A professional teaching certificate for teaching in the public schools may be issued to a
6 person who meets the following conditions: (A) Holds at least a bachelor's degree from a
7 regionally accredited institution of higher education, and:

8 (i) Has passed appropriate state board approved basic skills and subject matter tests in the
9 area for which licensure is being sought; and

10 (ii) Has completed a program for the education of teachers which meets the requirements
11 approved by the state board; or

12 (iii) Has met equivalent standards at institutions in other states; or

13 (iv) Has completed three years of successful teaching experience within the last seven
14 years under a license issued by another state in the area for which licensure is being sought; or

15 (v) Has completed an alternative program approved by another state; or

16 (B) Holds at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education,
17 and:

- 18 (i) Has passed appropriate state board approved basic skills and subject matter tests; and
19 (ii) Has completed an alternative program for teacher education as provided in this article;
20 and
21 (iii) Is recommended for a certificate in accordance with the provisions of §18A-3-1i of this
22 code relating to the program; and
23 (iv) Is recommended by the State Superintendent based on documentation submitted; or
24 (C) Holds a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education, and:
25 (i) Submits to a criminal history check pursuant to §18A-3-10 of this code: *Provided*, That
26 information discovered during the criminal history check may form the basis for the denial of a
27 certificate for just cause; and
28 (ii) Successfully completes pedagogical training or a pedagogical course or courses in
29 substantive alignment with nationally recognized pedagogical standards, or approved or
30 established by the state board; and
31 (iii) Passes the same subject matter and competency test or tests required by the state
32 board for traditional program applicants for licensure.
33 (2) The certificate shall be endorsed to indicate the grade level or levels or areas of
34 specialization in which the person is certified to teach or to serve in the public schools.
35 (3) The initial professional certificate is issued provisionally for a period of three years from
36 the date of issuance:
37 (A) The certificate may be converted to a professional certificate valid for five years subject
38 to successful completion of a beginning teacher induction program, if applicable; or
39 (B) The certificate may be renewed subject to rules adopted by the state board.
40 (4) Teaching certificates granted pursuant to §18A-3-2a(a)(1)(C) of this code shall be
41 equivalent to certificates granted to graduates of teacher preparation programs at public higher
42 education institutions.

43 (b) *Alternative program teacher certificate.* — An alternative program teacher certificate
44 may be issued to a candidate who is enrolled in an alternative program for teacher education
45 approved by the state board.

46 (1) The certificate is valid only for the alternative program position in which the candidate is
47 employed and is subject to enrollment in the program.

48 (2) The certificate is valid while the candidate is enrolled in the alternative program, up to a
49 maximum of three years, and may not be renewed.

50 (c) *Professional administrative certificate.* —

51 (1) A professional administrative certificate, endorsed for serving in the public schools, with
52 specific endorsement as a principal, vocational administrator, supervisor of instructions, or
53 superintendent, may be issued to a person who has completed requirements all to be approved by
54 the state board as follows:

55 (A) Holds at least a master's degree from an institution of higher education accredited to
56 offer a master's degree, and:

57 (i) Has successfully completed an approved program for administrative certification
58 developed by the state board in cooperation with the chancellor for higher education; and

59 (ii) Has successfully completed education and training in evaluation skills through the
60 Center for Professional Development, or equivalent education and training in evaluation skills
61 approved by the state board; and

62 (iii) Possesses three years of management level experience.

63 (2) Any person serving in the position of dean of students on June 4, 1992, is not required
64 to hold a professional administrative certificate.

65 (3) The initial professional administrative certificate is issued provisionally for a period of
66 five years. This certificate may be converted to a professional administrative certificate valid for
67 five years or renewed, subject to the regulations of the state board.

(d) *Paraprofessional certificate.* — A paraprofessional certificate may be issued to a person who meets the following conditions:

(1) Has completed 36 semester hours of post-secondary education or its equivalent in subjects directly related to performance of the job, all approved by the state board; and

(2) Demonstrates the proficiencies to perform duties as required of a paraprofessional as defined in §18A-4-8 of this code.

(e) *Other certificates; permits.* —

(1) Other certificates and permits may be issued, subject to the approval of the state board, to persons who do not qualify for the professional or paraprofessional certificate.

(2) A certificate or permit may not be given permanent status and a person holding one of these credentials shall meet renewal requirements provided by law and by regulation, unless the state board declares certain of these certificates to be the equivalent of the professional certificate.

(3) Within the category of other certificates and permits, the State Superintendent may issue certificates for persons to serve in the public schools as athletic coaches or coaches of other extracurricular activities, whose duties may include the supervision of students, subject to the following limitations:

(A) The person is employed under a contract with the county board of education.

(i) The contract specifies the duties to be performed, specifies a rate of pay that is equivalent to the rate of pay for professional educators in the district who accept similar duties as extra duty assignments, and provides for liability insurance associated with the activity; and

(ii) The person holding this certificate is not considered an employee of the board for salary and benefit purposes other than as specified in the contract.

(B) The person completes an orientation program designed and approved in accordance with state board rules.

(f) *Clinical Teacher of Record Permit.* —

(1) A clinical teacher of record permit may be issued to a candidate who is enrolled in a clinical teacher of record program in accordance with an agreement between an institution of higher education and a county board. The agreement is developed pursuant to §18A-3-1(e) of this code and requires approval by the state board.

(2) The permit is valid only for the clinical teacher of record program position in which the candidate is enrolled and is subject to enrollment in the program. The permit is valid for no more than one school year and may not be renewed.

(g) Temporary teaching certificates for armed forces spouses. —

(1) A temporary teaching certificate for an armed forces spouse may be issued to an individual who meets the following criteria:

(A) He or she is married to a member of the armed forces of the United States who is on active duty;

(B) He or she holds a current unencumbered teaching certificate or license issued by an equivalent credentialing department, board, or authority, as determined by the State Superintendent, in another state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, another territory or protectorate of the United States or a foreign country; and

(C) He or she provides proof acceptable to the State Superintendent that his or her spouse is assigned to a duty station in this state or at a military installation within 50 air miles of the West Virginia border and that he or she is also assigned to a duty station in this state or at a military installation within 50 air miles of the West Virginia border under his or her spouse's official active duty military orders.

(2) The State Superintendent shall deny a temporary teaching certificate to an individual described in paragraph (1) of this subdivision for fraud, material misrepresentation or concealment in the person's application for a temporary teaching certificate or for a conviction for which an individual's teaching certificate may be revoked under §18A-3-6 of this code.

(3) A temporary teaching certificate issued under paragraph (1) of this subdivision is valid for one year and may be renewed for additional one-year terms if the State Superintendent determines the individual holding the temporary teaching certificate continues to meet the requirements of paragraph (1) of this subdivision. The State Superintendent may revoke a temporary teaching certificate for a conviction for which an individual's teaching certificate may be revoked under §18A-3-6 of this code.

(h) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a)(3)(B) of this section, teachers with a bachelor's degree and 10 years teaching experience, with a valid teaching certificate, in good standing, without any unsatisfactory evaluations will be able to apply for and receive a permanent teaching certificate in West Virginia without having to take any additional course work. This subsection shall be effective from passage.

§18A-3-4. Validity of present certificates.

Nothing in this article shall be construed or interpreted in such way as to invalidate or in any manner change or shorten the validity period of certificates, including grade-level teaching rights, in force on the effective date of this act, nor the right to renew or make permanent such certificates, notwithstanding the provisions set forth in §18A-3-2a of this code.