

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**ENGROSSED**

## **House Bill 4591**

By Delegates Hornby, Ferrell, Campbell, Browning,

Dean, and Stephens

[Introduced January 20, 2026; referred to the

Committee on Education]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18A-4-2b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to recognizing School Athletic Directors who have achieved a nationally recognized  
3 professional certification through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators  
4 Association (NIAAA).

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 4. SALARIES, WAGES AND OTHER BENEFITS.**

**§18A-4-2b. State minimum salary supplement and educational expense reimbursement for professional personnel with recognized national certification in speech-language pathology, audiology, counseling, school psychology, ~~or school nursing,~~ or athletic director.**

1 (a) (1) The Legislature finds that achieving a nationally recognized professional  
2 certification in speech-language pathology or audiology involves a rigorous process of  
3 demonstrating both knowledge and skills and results in highly trained and capable employees.  
4 Individuals who attain national professional certification by the American Speech-Language-  
5 Hearing Association provide needed and essential services to the school students of this state.  
6 Individuals should be encouraged to achieve and maintain the national professional certification  
7 through reimbursement of expenses and a salary bonus which reflects their additional  
8 certification.

9 (2) The Legislature finds that the rigorous standards and processes for advanced  
10 certification by either the National Board of Certified Counselors or the West Virginia Board of  
11 Examiners in Counseling helps to promote the quality of counseling in schools. Counselors in the  
12 public schools of West Virginia should be encouraged to achieve and maintain the advanced  
13 certification through reimbursement of expenses and a salary bonus that reflects their additional  
14 certification.

15 (3) The Legislature finds that achieving a nationally recognized professional certification in  
16 school psychology involves a rigorous process of demonstrating competencies in scientific

17 research-based knowledge and skills. School psychologists provide assessment, counseling and  
18 consultation to students, teachers, school administrators and parents. Individuals who attain  
19 national professional certification by the National Association of School Psychologists provide  
20 services to students, families and school systems in this state. School psychologists should be  
21 encouraged to achieve and maintain this national professional certification through  
22 reimbursement of expenses and a salary bonus which reflects their additional certification.

23 (4) The Legislature finds that achieving a nationally recognized professional certification in  
24 school nursing involves a rigorous process of demonstrating competencies in health care and  
25 nursing applications, knowledge and skills. School nurses provide assessment, counseling and  
26 consultation to students, teachers, school administrators and parents. School nurses who attain  
27 national professional certification by the National Board for Certification of School Nurses provide  
28 services to students, families and school systems in this state. School nurses should be  
29 encouraged to achieve and maintain this national professional certification through  
30 reimbursement of expenses and a salary bonus which reflects their additional certification.

31 (5) The Legislature finds that achieving a nationally recognized professional certification  
32 through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) in athletic  
33 administration involves a rigorous process of demonstrating competencies in athletic directors  
34 duties, legal responsibilities, applications, knowledge and skills. School athletic directors provide  
35 education-based scholastic activity programs that benefit student-athletes, other students,  
36 coaches, parents, and the community. An education-based athletics programs provides a school  
37 culture that gives the school community pride. School athletic directors should be encouraged to  
38 achieve and maintain this national professional certification (CAA and CMAA) through  
39 reimbursement of expenses and a salary bonus which reflects their additional certification.

40 ~~(5)~~ (6) Therefore, the purpose of this section is:

41 (A) To provide a statewide salary supplement for certain professional personnel employed  
42 in the public schools who hold nationally recognized professional certification in speech-language

43 pathology, audiology, counseling, school psychology, ~~or~~ school nursing, or school athletic  
44 administration;

45 (B) To treat these professional certifications equally;

46 (C) To encourage others to attain such a certification; and

47 (D) To help school systems recruit these highly qualified professionals.

48 (b) In addition to any amounts prescribed in the applicable state minimum salary schedule,  
49 any professional personnel who hold national certification or other credential as provided in this  
50 section shall be paid an annual salary supplement of \$2,500. The payment is:

51 (1) To be made in equal monthly installments;

52 (2) To be considered a part of the state minimum salaries for teachers; and

53 (3) To continue for the life of the certification, or for ten years for any one certification,  
54 whichever first expires.

55 (c) Professional personnel employed as speech-language pathologists, audiologists,  
56 counselors, school psychologists ~~or~~ school nurses or athletic directors are eligible upon  
57 enrollment for reimbursement for one-half of the fee for certification in accordance with this  
58 section. In addition, these personnel are eligible upon attainment of the certification for  
59 reimbursement of the remainder of the application fee plus other expenses actually incurred  
60 toward attainment of the certification, not exceeding \$600, upon approval by the Department of  
61 Education. Not more than one hundred fifteen speech-language pathologists, audiologists,  
62 counselors, school psychologists ~~and~~ school nurses and athletic directors, combined total, are  
63 eligible for reimbursement in any one fiscal year.

64 (d) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, for the school year beginning July 1,  
65 2008, the number of speech-language pathologists, audiologists, counselors, school  
66 psychologists ~~and~~ school nurses and athletic directors paid the annual salary supplement  
67 provided for in said subsection may not exceed the number of speech-language pathologists,  
68 audiologists and counselors eligible to be paid the annual salary supplement under the provisions

69 of this section in effect during the school year beginning July 1, 2007, by more than one hundred  
70 fifteen qualified recipients, and the total amount of qualified recipients may not increase thereafter  
71 by more than one hundred fifteen in each subsequent fiscal year.

72 (e) The state board shall promulgate a legislative rule establishing criteria for selection of  
73 the individuals eligible for reimbursement and a salary supplement in accordance with this section.  
74 The selection criteria shall prioritize the length of time the certification has been held and the years  
75 of experience of the holder in determining eligibility.

76 (f) The state board shall report the rule to the Legislative Oversight Commission on  
77 Education Accountability by the January, 2009, legislative interim meeting period and shall report  
78 on its progress in developing the rule to the commission during prior interim meetings as  
79 requested.

80 (g) No provision of this section may be construed to require any appropriation, or any  
81 specific level of appropriation, by the Legislature, or payment of any supplement or reimbursement  
82 described in this section for which a specific appropriation has not been made.

83 (h) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section or the provisions of section two-a of  
84 this article, professional personnel may not be paid a salary supplement pursuant to the provisions  
85 of both said sections.