

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 489

**FISCAL
NOTE**

By Senator Rucker

[Introduced January 19, 2026; referred
to the Committee on Education; and then to the
Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,
2 designated §18-2L-1, §18-2L-2, and §18-2L-3, relating to course-specific teaching;
3 providing a short title; providing definitions; and establishing course-specific teaching
4 permits.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2L. HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATOR FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2026.

§18-2L-1. Short title.

1 This article shall be known as "The High School Educator Flexibility Act."

§18-2L-2. Definitions.

1 For the purposes of this article:

2 (1) "Approved professional learning" means a professional learning experience facilitated
3 by an approved provider that satisfies all the following conditions:

4 (A) The professional learning consists of no fewer than 30 clock hours of course-specific
5 content and pedagogy instruction offered in one training or in sequenced modules completed
6 within a single year;

7 (B) Professional learning sessions are anchored to the provider's course framework;

8 (C) Professional learning sessions are facilitated by an individual the provider has formally
9 vetted and then endorsed after completing the provider's own faculty-development program and
10 maintaining currency with the latest framework version; and

11 (D) At the conclusion of professional learning, participants receive a dated certificate
12 verifying the course title, hours earned, and the approved provider's name; districts shall accept
13 that certificate as proof of compliance, verifying the course title, hours earned, and the approved
14 provider's name.

15 (2) "Approved provider" means a U.S.-based, non-profit educational organization that
16 publishes the curriculum framework for each high-quality course and requires each school offering
17 the course to secure course authorization.

(3) "Eligible educator" means a currently certified educator, including:

(A) Teachers certified through alternative pathways;

(B) Individuals holding a state-issued conditional teaching license who possess a bachelor's or associate degree relevant to the high-quality course; or

(C) Individuals who hold valid professional educator certificates but do not possess an endorsement for a specific subject area.

(4) "High-quality course" means a high school course that:

(A) Is designed and maintained in partnership with:

(i) Accredited postsecondary institutions;

(ii) Postsecondary institutions that are actively pursuing accreditation and have been verified for quality by the state board of education/state department of education; or

(iii) Industry representatives.

§18-2L-3 Establishment of course-specific teaching permit.

(a) The Board of Education or West Virginia Commission for Professional Teaching Standards shall establish a course-specific teaching permit for eligible educators that:

(1) Authorizes eligible educators to teach a high-quality course outside their formally endorsed certification area;

(2) Is permanently issued to the educator upon completion of approved professional learning directly linked to the specific high-quality course content; and

(3) Once earned by an educator, enables them to immediately begin classroom instruction.

(b) Public school districts shall have the authority and flexibility to assign educators holding course-specific teaching permits to classrooms requiring such specialized instructional capacity.

(c) The Board of Education shall maintain, and update on an annual basis, a list of:

(1) Approved high-quality courses eligible for staffing through course-specific teaching permits;

(2) Approved providers who facilitate approved professional learning experiences; and

14 (3) Approved professional learning experiences.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a course-specific teaching permit system allowing certified educators to teach high-quality academic or career-technical courses outside their formal endorsement areas once they complete approved professional learning tied to that course.

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