

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.

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

19 (A) Teachers certified through alternative pathways;

20 (B) Individuals holding a state-issued conditional teaching license who possess a

21 **bachelor's or associate degree relevant to the high-quality course; or**

22 (C) Individuals who hold valid professional educator certificates but do not possess an

23 **endorsement for a specific subject area.**

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

25 (A) Is designed and maintained in partnership with:

26 (i) Accredited postsecondary institutions;

27 (ii) Postsecondary institutions that are actively pursuing accreditation and have been

28 **verified for quality by the state board of education/state department of education; or**

29 (iii) Industry representatives.

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

1 (a) The Board of Education or West Virginia Commission for Professional Teaching

2 **Standards shall establish a course-specific teaching permit for eligible educators that:**

3 (1) Authorizes eligible educators to teach a high-quality course outside their formally

4 **endorsed certification area;**

5 (2) Is permanently issued to the educator upon completion of approved professional

6 **learning directly linked to the specific high-quality course content; and**

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

8 (b) Public school districts shall have the authority and flexibility to assign educators holding

9 **course-specific teaching permits to classrooms requiring such specialized instructional capacity.**

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

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

12 **permits;**

13 (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.