

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4611

By Delegate Dillon

[Introduced January 20, 2026; referred to the
Committee on Education then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,
2 designated §18-36-1, relating to the creation of the Hope to Help Community Schools Act
3 of 2026.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 36. HOPE TO HELP COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ACT OF 2026.

§18-36-1. Hope to Help Community Schools Act of 2026.

1 (a) When five or more concerned parents agree that a certain small public school of less
2 than 150 enrolled students provides for an essential and irreplaceable service to their community,
3 they may form an ad hoc committee to facilitate the discussion of the status of the school.

4 (b) The ad hoc committee may announce and hold a public meeting at the school or other
5 venue in compliance with the Open Meetings law for consideration of becoming a Public
6 Community Micro School (hereinafter sometimes referred to as a "PCMS").

7 (c) A Public Community Micro School shall consist of a public school with an enrollment of
8 less than 150 students in which the parents, through the organization of a formal committee, have
9 direct participation in critical decision making, including closure, consolidation, school leadership
10 roles, and composition and quality of staff.

11 (d) The committee at large consists of all parents of students enrolled at the school in
12 question.

13 (1) Powers of the committee include, but are not limited to, a veto of county or state Board
14 of Education plans for closure and/or consolidation.

15 (2) Additional powers include authority to propose consolidation with another consenting
16 PCMS if no new construction is required.

17 (e) PCMS are granted de facto waivers of state policy regarding staffing, except for any
18 staffing requirements originating from special needs.

19 (f) PCMS committee may decide to use an alternative administrative structure to a
20 traditional principal and/or vice principal such as a head teacher with designated stipend for extra

duties associated with administration.

(g) Additionally, a PCMS may opt to practice vertical integration of classroom environments across grade levels.

(h) During the first meeting of the ad hoc committee, officers shall be elected by open voice nomination and voice vote, with roll call if necessary.

(1) Such officers shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, which shall serve thenceforth as officers of the PCMS Committee, or until their resignation, the committee be disbanded by 2/3 vote, or an officer be expelled from the committee by 2/3 vote.

(2) The Chair shall announce and run meetings of the PCMS, the VC operating in the absence of the Chair as necessary. Any group of five or more parents may have authority to call for a meeting to address a topic of concern.

(3) During the first meeting of the PCMS, the Chair shall introduce the question of "Shall the school become a Public Community Micro School?"

(4) The Chair will facilitate robust discussion of the merits and detractions of becoming a PCMS.

(5) If consensus for or against conversion appears likely, Chair shall call for a written vote for or against, to be counted openly by the secretary following the collection of the votes.

(6) Conversion to a PCMS shall require a 2/3 in the affirmative from a quorum of parents. Quorum shall consist of no less than 1/3 of enrolled students represented by at least one parent.

(7) If the matter is unresolved following the initial meeting, Chair may announce and schedule additional meetings, not to exceed six meetings for one year.

(8) At the conclusion of one year, if the question of conversion to a PCMS has not been answered by an affirmative 2/3 vote, the PCMS committee will automatically be disbanded.

(9) For the entirety of their existence, PCMS committees shall follow the same requirements as the State Board of Education to publish minutes and agendas within same timeframe.

47 (i) Funding. – The State Board of Education creates special fund to segregate PCMS
48 moneys in two accounts.

49 (1) Account 1 shall act as a group education saving account ("ESA") to receive Hope
50 Scholarship funding for staffing purposes.

51 (2) Account 2 is to set aside the amount of per-pupil foundational allowance not associated
52 with the Hope scholarship for the operational and transportation costs of the school.

53 (j) If parents elect to convert to a PCMS, each child is automatically considered an
54 applicant and recipient of the Hope Scholarship for the next enrollment year, provided that
55 enrollment occurs on or before May 31.

56 (1) Funding and financial planning shall occur in one year increments, with the State Board
57 of Education making such staffing and other arrangements as necessary for the coming year
58 based on enrollments as of May 31.

59 (2) Enrollment applications are not accepted subsequent to May 31.

60 (k) Parents assign receipt of Hope funds to account for PCMS, administered by the county
61 BOE.

62 (l) Provisions of this section shall expire on December 31, 2036 unless re-authorized or
63 made permanent by legislature.

64 (1) The Legislature authorizes 10 PCMS reclassifications for the first year of program, with
65 two additional authorizations being eligible for each of the following five years.

66 (2) A total of 20 PCMS for the entire state are authorized for the term of the pilot program.

67 (3) No more than two PCMS schools shall be authorized for any county during the pilot
68 program.

69 (m) At the conclusion of the pilot program, or when a PCMS decides to terminate its status
70 as a PCMS, the Board of Education of such county will resume full and normal control of decisions
71 regarding the former PCMS.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide for the creation of the Hope to Help Community Schools Act of 2026.

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