

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4851

By Delegates Dillon and T. Howell

[Introduced January 27, 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 section,
2 designated §18-5-13e, relating to creating a moratorium on school closures and
3 consolidations pending a West Virginia Department of Education ("WVDE") school aid
4 formula proposal.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-5-13e. Moratorium on school closures and consolidations pending WVDE school aid formula proposal.

1 (a) The West Virginia Department of Education ("WVDE") shall review the closures and
2 consolidations of schools that are under consideration during the current year, and previous four
3 fiscal years, and propose to the Legislature such changes to the School Aid Formula as would be,
4 or would have been, likely to prevent the closure of no fewer than 80% of those under current or
5 previous consideration, regardless of any decisions rendered to date by school districts, when
6 such justification for closure was predicated on financial and operational factors.

7 (b) There shall be a statewide moratorium on all public-school closures and consolidations
8 for all reasons other than catastrophic structural failure or ongoing, unresolvable safety and health
9 hazards, until a proposal to revise the School Aid Formula is received by Legislature, and
10 subsequent action be taken by Legislature directly related to implementation or rejection of such
11 recommendations.

12 (c) This section shall take effect from passage.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide a moratorium on school closures and consolidations pending a WVDE school aid formula proposal.

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