### ENROLLED

## H. B. 4583

(BY DELEGATES M. POLING, SHAVER, CAPUTO, MOYE, PERRY, MICHAEL, SUMNER AND DUKE)

[Passed March 5, 2012; to take effect from passage.]

AN ACT to amend and reenact §18A-2-2, §18A-2-6, §18A-2-7 and §18A-2-8a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; and to amend and reenact §18A-4-7a of said code, all relating to school personnel; changing certain deadlines pertaining to termination of a continuing contract, resignation, retirement, transfer and rehiring of probationary employees; changing the number of days prior to the beginning of the instructional term for limiting the transfer of certain employees; and restricting application of certain provisions pertaining to limiting the transfer of certain employees.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §18A-2-2, §18A-2-6, §18A-2-7 and §18A-2-8a of the code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted; and that §18A-4-7a of said code be amended and reenacted, all to read as follows:

#### **ARTICLE 2. SCHOOL PERSONNEL.**

- §18A-2-2. Employment of teachers; contracts; continuing contract status; how terminated; dismissal for lack of need; released time; failure of teacher to perform contract or violation thereof; written notice bonus for teachers and professional personnel.
  - (a) Before entering upon their duties, all teachers shall
     execute a contract with their county boards, which shall state

3 the salary to be paid and shall be in the form prescribed by the state superintendent. Each contract shall be signed by the 4 5 teacher and by the president and secretary of the county board and shall be filed, together with the certificate of the 6 7 teacher, by the secretary of the office of the county board: 8 Provided, That when necessary to facilitate the employment 9 of employable professional personnel and prospective and 10 recent graduates of teacher education programs who have not 11 yet attained certification, the contract may be signed upon the 12 condition that the certificate is issued to the employee prior 13 to the beginning of the employment term in which the 14 employee enters upon his or her duties.

15 (b) Each teacher's contract, under this section, shall be 16 designated as a probationary or continuing contract. 17 probationary teacher's contract shall be for a term of not less 18 than one nor more than three years, one of which shall be for 19 completion of a beginning teacher internship pursuant to the 20 provisions of section two-b, article three of this chapter, if 21 applicable. If, after three years of such employment, the 22 teacher who holds a professional certificate, based on at least 23 a bachelor's degree, has met the qualifications for a 24 bachelor's degree and the county board enter into a new 25 contract of employment, it shall be a continuing contract, 26 subject to the following:

(1) Any teacher holding a valid certificate with less than
a bachelor's degree who is employed in a county beyond the
three-year probationary period shall upon qualifying for the
professional certificate based upon a bachelor's degree, if
reemployed, be granted continuing contract status; and

(2) A teacher holding continuing contract status with one
county shall be granted continuing contract status with any
other county upon completion of one year of acceptable
employment if the employment is during the next succeeding
school year or immediately following an approved leave of
absence extending no more than one year.

(c) The continuing contract of any teacher shall remain infull force and effect except as modified by mutual consent of

40 the school board and the teacher, unless and until terminated,41 subject to the following:

42 (1) A continuing contract may not be terminated except:

(A) By a majority vote of the full membership of the
county board on or before March 1 of the then current year,
after written notice, served upon the teacher, return receipt
requested, stating cause or causes and an opportunity to be
heard at a meeting of the board prior to the board's action on
the termination issue; or

49 (B) By written resignation of the teacher on or before50 March 1 to initiate termination of a continuing contract;

51 (2) The termination shall take effect at the close of the 52 school year in which the contract is terminated;

(3) The contract may be terminated at any time by mutualconsent of the school board and the teacher;

(4) This section does not affect the powers of the school
board to suspend or dismiss a principal or teacher pursuant to
section eight of this article;

58 (5) A continuing contract for any teacher holding a 59 certificate valid for more than one year and in full force and 60 effect during the school year 1984-1985 shall remain in full 61 force and effect;

62 (6) A continuing contract does not operate to prevent a 63 teacher's dismissal based upon the lack of need for the teacher's services pursuant to the provisions of law relating to 64 the allocation to teachers and pupil-teacher ratios. The written 65 notification of teachers being considered for dismissal for 66 lack of need shall be limited to only those teachers whose 67 68 consideration for dismissal is based upon known or expected 69 circumstances which will require dismissal for lack of need. 70 An employee who was not provided notice and an 71 opportunity for a hearing pursuant to this subsection may not 72 be included on the list. In case of dismissal for lack of need.

4

a dismissed teacher shall be placed upon a preferred list in the
order of their length of service with that board. No teacher
may be employed by the board until each qualified teacher
upon the preferred list, in order, has been offered the
opportunity for reemployment in a position for which he or

she is qualified, not including a teacher who has accepted a
teaching position elsewhere. The reemployment shall be
upon a teacher's preexisting continuing contract and has the
same effect as though the contract had been suspended during

82 the time the teacher was not employed.

83 (d) In the assignment of position or duties of a teacher 84 under a continuing contract, the board may provide for 85 released time of a teacher for any special professional or 86 governmental assignment without jeopardizing the contractual rights of the teacher or any other rights, privileges 87 88 or benefits under the provisions of this chapter. Released 89 time shall be provided for any professional educator while 90 serving as a member of the Legislature during any duly 91 constituted session of that body and its interim and statutory 92 committees and commissions without jeopardizing his or her 93 contractual rights or any other rights, privileges, benefits or accrual of experience for placement on the state minimum 94 95 salary schedule in the following school year under the 96 provisions of this chapter, board policy and law.

97 (e) Any teacher who fails to fulfill his or her contract with 98 the board, unless prevented from doing so by personal illness 99 or other just cause or unless released from his or her contract by the board, or who violates any lawful provision of the 100 contract, is disqualified to teach in any other public school in 101 102 the state for a period of the next ensuing school year and the 103 State Department of Education or board may hold all papers 104 and credentials of the teacher on file for a period of one year 105 for the violation: *Provided*, That marriage of a teacher is not 106 considered a failure to fulfill, or violation of, the contract.

(f) Any classroom teacher, as defined in section one,
article one of this chapter, who desires to resign employment
with a county board or request a leave of absence, the
resignation or leave of absence to become effective on or

before July 15 of the same year and after completion of the
employment term, may do so at any time during the school
year by written notification of the resignation or leave of
absence and any notification received by a county board shall
automatically extend the teacher's public employee insurance
coverage until August 31 of the same year.

117 (g) (1) A classroom teacher who gives written notice to the 118 county board on or before January 15 of the school year of his or 119 her retirement from employment with the board at the conclusion 120 of the school year shall be paid \$500 from the Early Notification 121 of Retirement line item established for the Department of 122 Education for this purpose, subject to appropriation by the 123 Legislature. If the appropriations to the Department of Education 124 for this purpose are insufficient to compensate all applicable 125 teachers, the Department of Education shall request a supplemental appropriation in an amount sufficient to 126 127 compensate all such teachers. Additionally, if funds are still 128 insufficient to compensate all applicable teachers, the priority of 129 payment is for teachers who give written notice the earliest. This 130 payment shall not be counted as part of the final average salary 131 for the purpose of calculating retirement.

132 (2) The position of a classroom teacher providing written 133 notice of retirement pursuant to this subsection may be 134 considered vacant and the county board may immediately 135 post the position as an opening to be filled at the conclusion 136 of the school year. If a teacher has been hired to fill the 137 position of a retiring classroom teacher prior to the start of 138 the next school year, the retiring classroom teacher is 139 disqualified from continuing his or her employment in that 140 position. However, the retiring classroom teacher may be 141 permitted to continue his or her employment in that position 142 and forfeit the early retirement notification payment if, after 143 giving notice of retirement in accordance with this 144 subsection, he or she becomes subject to a significant 145 unforeseen financial hardship, including a hardship caused by 146 the death or illness of an immediate family member or loss of 147 employment of a spouse. Other significant unforeseen 148 financial hardships shall be determined by the county 149 superintendent on a case-by-case basis. This subsection does

not prohibit a county school board from eliminating theposition of a retiring classroom teacher.

## §18A-2-6. Continuing contract status for service personnel; termination.

1 After three years of acceptable employment, each service 2 personnel employee who enters into a new contract of 3 employment with the board shall be granted continuing contract status: Provided, That a service personnel employee holding 4 continuing contract status with one county shall be granted 5 6 continuing contract status with any other county upon 7 completion of one year of acceptable employment if such 8 employment is during the next succeeding school year or 9 immediately following an approved leave of absence extending no more than one year. The continuing contract of any such 10 employee shall remain in full force and effect except as modified 11 12 by mutual consent of the school board and the employee, unless and until terminated with written notice, stating cause or causes, 13 to the employee, by a majority vote of the full membership of the 14 board before March 1 of the then current year, or by written 15 16 resignation of the employee on or before that date. The affected 17 employee has the right of a hearing before the board, if 18 requested, before final action is taken by the board upon the 19 termination of such employment.

20 Those employees who have completed three years of 21 acceptable employment as of the effective date of this

22 legislation shall be granted continuing contract status.

### §18A-2-7. Assignment, transfer, promotion, demotion, suspension and recommendation of dismissal of school personnel by superintendent; preliminary notice of transfer; hearing on the transfer; proof required.

1 (a) The superintendent, subject only to approval of the 2 board, may assign, transfer, promote, demote or suspend school 3 personnel and recommend their dismissal pursuant to provisions 4 of this chapter. However, an employee shall be notified in 5 writing by the superintendent on or before March 1 if he or she 6 is being considered for transfer or to be transferred. Only those

employees whose consideration for transfer or intended transfer 7 8 is based upon known or expected circumstances which will 9 require the transfer of employees shall be considered for transfer or intended for transfer and the notification shall be 10 11 limited to only those employees. Any teacher or employee who desires to protest the proposed transfer may request in writing 12 a statement of the reasons for the proposed transfer. The 13 statement of reasons shall be delivered to the teacher or 14 15 employee within ten days of the receipt of the request. Within ten days of the receipt of the statement of the reasons, the 16 17 teacher or employee may make written demand upon the 18 superintendent for a hearing on the proposed transfer before the 19 county board of education. The hearing on the proposed 20 transfer shall be held on or before April 15. At the hearing, the 21 reasons for the proposed transfer must be shown.

22 (b) The superintendent at a meeting of the board on or 23 before April 15 shall furnish in writing to the board a list of 24 teachers and other employees to be considered for transfer 25 and subsequent assignment for the next ensuing school year. An employee who was not provided notice and an 26 27 opportunity for a hearing pursuant to subsection (a) of this 28 section may not be included on the list. All other teachers 29 and employees not so listed shall be considered as reassigned 30 to the positions or jobs held at the time of this meeting. The 31 list of those recommended for transfer shall be included in the 32 minute record of the meeting and all those so listed shall be 33 notified in writing, which notice shall be delivered in writing, 34 by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the persons' last known addresses within ten days following the board 35 36 meeting, of their having been so recommended for transfer 37 and subsequent assignment and the reasons therefor.

(c) The superintendent's authority to suspend school
personnel shall be temporary only pending a hearing upon
charges filed by the superintendent with the board of
education and the period of suspension may not exceed thirty
days unless extended by order of the board.

43 (d) The provisions of this section respecting hearing upon44 notice of transfer is not applicable in emergency situations

#### Enr. H. B. 4583]

- 45 where the school building becomes damaged or destroyed
- 46 through an unforeseeable act and which act necessitates a
- 47 transfer of the school personnel because of the
- 48 aforementioned condition of the building.

# §18A-2-8a. Notice to probationary personnel of rehiring or nonrehiring; hearing.

1 The superintendent at a meeting of the board on or before 2 April 15 of each year shall provide in writing to the board a list 3 of all probationary teachers that he or she recommends to be 4 rehired for the next ensuing school year. The board shall act 5 upon the superintendent's recommendations at that meeting in accordance with section one of this article. The board at this 6 7 same meeting shall also act upon the retention of other probationary employees as provided in sections two and five of 8 9 this article. Any such probationary teacher or other probationary employee who is not rehired by the board at that 10 meeting shall be notified in writing, by certified mail, return 11 receipt requested, to such persons' last known addresses within 12 13 ten days following said board meeting, of their not having been 14 rehired or not having been recommended for rehiring.

15 Any probationary teacher who receives notice that he or she has not been recommended for rehiring or other probationary 16 employee who has not been reemployed may within ten days 17 after receiving the written notice request a statement of the 18 19 reasons for not having been rehired and may request a hearing 20 before the board. The hearing shall be held at the next regularly 21 scheduled board of education meeting or a special meeting of the board called within thirty days of the request for hearing. At the 22 23 hearing, the reasons for the nonrehiring must be shown.

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

# §18A-4-7a. Employment, promotion and transfer of professional personnel; seniority.

- 1 (a) A county board of education shall make decisions affecting
- 2 the hiring of professional personnel other than classroom teachers
- 3 on the basis of the applicant with the highest qualifications.

4 (b) The county board shall make decisions affecting the
5 hiring of new classroom teachers on the basis of the applicant
6 with the highest qualifications.

7 (c) In judging qualifications for hiring employees
8 pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section,
9 consideration shall be given to each of the following:

10 (1) Appropriate certification, licensure or both;

(2) Amount of experience relevant to the position; or, in
the case of a classroom teaching position, the amount of
teaching experience in the subject area;

14 (3) The amount of course work, degree level or both in15 the relevant field and degree level generally;

- 16 (4) Academic achievement;
- 17 (5) Relevant specialized training;
- (6) Past performance evaluations conducted pursuant tosection twelve, article two of this chapter; and

20 (7) Other measures or indicators upon which the relative21 qualifications of the applicant may fairly be judged.

(d) If one or more permanently employed instructional
personnel apply for a classroom teaching position and meet
the standards set forth in the job posting, the county board of
education shall make a decision affecting the filling of the
position on the basis of the following criteria:

27 (1) Appropriate certification, licensure or both;

28 (2) Total amount of teaching experience;

(3) The existence of teaching experience in the requiredcertification area;

31 (4) Degree level in the required certification area;

32 (5) Specialized training directly related to the 33 performance of the job as stated in the job description;

(6) Receiving an overall rating of satisfactory in the
previous two evaluations conducted pursuant to section
twelve, article two of this chapter; and

37 (7) Seniority.

(e) In filling positions pursuant to subsection (d) of this
section, consideration shall be given to each criterion with
each criterion being given equal weight. If the applicant with
the most seniority is not selected for the position, upon the
request of the applicant a written statement of reasons shall
be given to the applicant with suggestions for improving the
applicant's qualifications.

45 (f) With the exception of guidance counselors, the seniority of classroom teachers, as defined in section one, 46 47 article one of this chapter shall be determined on the basis of the length of time the employee has been employed as a 48 49 regular full-time certified and/or licensed professional 50 educator by the county board of education and shall be 51 granted in all areas that the employee is certified, licensed or 52 both.

53 (g) Upon completion of one hundred thirty-three days of 54 employment in any one school year, substitute teachers, 55 except retired teachers and other retired professional 56 educators employed as substitutes, shall accrue seniority 57 exclusively for the purpose of applying for employment as a 58 permanent, full-time professional employee. One hundred 59 thirty-three days or more of said employment shall be 60 prorated and shall vest as a fraction of the school year worked by the permanent, full-time teacher. 61

62 (h) Guidance counselors and all other professional 63 employees, as defined in section one, article one of this 64 chapter, except classroom teachers, shall gain seniority in 65 their nonteaching area of professional employment on the 66 basis of the length of time the employee has been employed

by the county board of education in that area: Provided, That 67 if an employee is certified as a classroom teacher, the 68 69 employee accrues classroom teaching seniority for the time 70 that that employee is employed in another professional area. 71 For the purposes of accruing seniority under this paragraph, 72 employment as principal, supervisor or central office 73 administrator, as defined in section one, article one of this 74 chapter, shall be considered one area of employment.

75 (i) Employment for a full employment term shall equal 76 one year of seniority, but no employee may accrue more than 77 one year of seniority during any given fiscal year. 78 Employment for less than the full employment term shall be 79 prorated. A random selection system established by the 80 employees and approved by the board shall be used to 81 determine the priority if two or more employees accumulate 82 identical seniority: Provided, That when two or more 83 principals have accumulated identical seniority, decisions on 84 reductions in force shall be based on qualifications.

(j) Whenever a county board is required to reduce the
number of professional personnel in its employment, the
employee with the least amount of seniority shall be properly
notified and released from employment pursuant to the
provisions of section two, article two of this chapter. The
provisions of this subsection are subject to the following:

91 (1) All persons employed in a certification area to be
92 reduced who are employed under a temporary permit shall be
93 properly notified and released before a fully certified
94 employee in such a position is subject to release;

95 (2) An employee subject to release shall be employed in
96 any other professional position where the employee is
97 certified and was previously employed or to any lateral area
98 for which the employee is certified, licensed or both, if the
99 employee's seniority is greater than the seniority of any other
100 employee in that area of certification, licensure or both;

(3) If an employee subject to release holds certification,licensure or both in more than one lateral area and if the

#### Enr. H. B. 4583]

12

employee's seniority is greater than the seniority of any otheremployee in one or more of those areas of certification,

105 licensure or both, the employee subject to release shall be

106 employed in the professional position held by the employee

- 107 with the least seniority in any of those areas of certification,
- 108 licensure or both; and

109 (4) If, prior to August 1, of the year a reduction in force 110 is approved, the reason for any particular reduction in force 111 no longer exists as determined by the county board in its sole 112 and exclusive judgment, the board shall rescind the reduction 113 in force or transfer and shall notify the released employee in 114 writing of his or her right to be restored to his or her position 115 of employment. Within five days of being so notified, the released employee shall notify the board, in writing, of his or 116 117 her intent to resume his or her position of employment or the 118 right to be restored shall terminate. Notwithstanding any 119 other provision of this subdivision, if there is another 120 employee on the preferred recall list with proper certification 121 and higher seniority, that person shall be placed in the 122 position restored as a result of the reduction in force being 123 rescinded.

124 (k) For the purpose of this article, all positions which 125 meet the definition of "classroom teacher" as defined in 126 section one, article one of this chapter shall be lateral positions. For all other professional positions, the county 127 128 board of education shall adopt a policy by October 31, 1993, 129 and may modify the policy thereafter as necessary, which 130 defines which positions shall be lateral positions. The board 131 shall submit a copy of its policy to the state board within 132 thirty days of adoption or any modification, and the state 133 board shall compile a report and submit the report to the 134 Legislative Oversight Commission on Education 135 Accountability by December 31, 1993, and by that date in 136 any succeeding year in which any county board submits a 137 modification of its policy relating to lateral positions. In 138 adopting the policy, the board shall give consideration to the 139 rank of each position in terms of title; nature of responsibilities; salary level; certification, licensure or both; 140 141 and days in the period of employment.

(1) After the twentieth day prior to the beginning of the
instructional term, no person employed and assigned to a
professional position may transfer to another professional
position in the county during that instructional term unless
the person holding that position does not have valid
certification. The provisions of this subsection are subject to
the following:

(1) The person may apply for any posted, vacant
positions with the successful applicant assuming the position
at the beginning of the next instructional term;

(2) Professional personnel who have been on an approved
leave of absence may fill these vacancies upon their return
from the approved leave of absence;

155 (3) The county board, upon recommendation of the superintendent may fill a position before the next 156 instructional term when it is determined to be in the best 157 158 interest of the students. The county superintendent shall notify the state board of each transfer of a person employed 159 160 in a professional position to another professional position 161 after the twentieth day prior to the beginning of the 162 instructional term;

(4) The provisions of this subsection do not apply to the
filling of a position vacated because of resignation or
retirement that became effective on or before the twentieth
day prior to the beginning of the instructional term, but not
posted until after that date; and

168 (5) The Legislature finds that it is not in the best interest of the 169 students particularly in the elementary grades to have multiple 170 teachers for any one grade level or course during the instructional 171 term. It is the intent of the Legislature that the filling of positions 172 through transfers of personnel from one professional position to 173 another after the twentieth day prior to the beginning of the 174 instructional term should be kept to a minimum.

(m) All professional personnel whose seniority with thecounty board is insufficient to allow their retention by the

county board during a reduction in work force shall be placed 177 upon a preferred recall list. As to any professional position 178 179 opening within the area where they had previously been 180 employed or to any lateral area for which they have 181 certification, licensure or both, the employee shall be recalled 182 on the basis of seniority if no regular, full-time professional personnel, or those returning from leaves of absence with 183 184 greater seniority, are qualified, apply for and accept the 185 position.

186 (n) Before position openings that are known or expected 187 to extend for twenty consecutive employment days or longer 188 for professional personnel may be filled by the board, the 189 board shall be required to notify all qualified professional 190 personnel on the preferred list and give them an opportunity to apply, but failure to apply shall not cause the employee to 191 192 forfeit any right to recall. The notice shall be sent by 193 certified mail to the last known address of the employee, and 194 it shall be the duty of each professional personnel to notify 195 the board of continued availability annually, of any change in 196 address or of any change in certification, licensure or both.

- (o) Openings in established, existing or newly createdpositions shall be processed as follows:
- (1) Boards shall be required to post and date noticeswhich shall be subject to the following:
- 201 (A) The notices shall be posted in conspicuous working
  202 places for all professional personnel to observe for at least
  203 five working days;

(B) The notice shall be posted within twenty workingdays of the position openings and shall include the jobdescription;

(C) Any special criteria or skills that are required by the
position shall be specifically stated in the job description and
directly related to the performance of the job;

(D) Postings for vacancies made pursuant to this section
shall be written so as to ensure that the largest possible pool
of qualified applicants may apply; and

(E) Job postings may not require criteria which are not
necessary for the successful performance of the job and may
not be written with the intent to favor a specific applicant;

(2) No vacancy shall be filled until after the five-dayminimum posting period;

(3) If one or more applicants meets the qualifications
listed in the job posting, the successful applicant to fill the
vacancy shall be selected by the board within thirty working
days of the end of the posting period;

(4) A position held by a teacher who is certified, licensed
or both, who has been issued a permit for full-time
employment and is working toward certification in the permit
area shall not be subject to posting if the certificate is
awarded within five years; and

(5) Nothing provided herein shall prevent the county boardof education from eliminating a position due to lack of need.

229 (p) Notwithstanding any other provision of the code to 230 the contrary, where the total number of classroom teaching 231 positions in an elementary school does not increase from one 232 school year to the next, but there exists in that school a need 233 to realign the number of teachers in one or more grade levels, 234 kindergarten through six, teachers at the school may be 235 reassigned to grade levels for which they are certified without 236 that position being posted: Provided, That the employee and 237 the county board of education mutually agree to the 238 reassignment.

(q) Reductions in classroom teaching positions inelementary schools shall be processed as follows:

(1) When the total number of classroom teachingpositions in an elementary school needs to be reduced, the

Enr. H. B. 4583]

reduction shall be made on the basis of seniority with theleast senior classroom teacher being recommended fortransfer; and

246 (2) When a specified grade level needs to be reduced and 247 the least senior employee in the school is not in that grade level, the least senior classroom teacher in the grade level that 248 249 needs to be reduced shall be reassigned to the position made 250 vacant by the transfer of the least senior classroom teacher in 251 the school without that position being posted: Provided, That 252 the employee is certified, licensed or both and agrees to the 253 reassignment.

254 (r) Any board failing to comply with the provisions of 255 this article may be compelled to do so by mandamus and shall 256 be liable to any party prevailing against the board for court 257 costs and reasonable attorney fees as determined and 258 established by the court. Further, employees denied 259 promotion or employment in violation of this section shall be 260 awarded the job, pay and any applicable benefits retroactive 261 to the date of the violation and payable entirely from local 262 funds. Further, the board shall be liable to any party 263 prevailing against the board for any court reporter costs 264 including copies of transcripts.

(s) The county board shall compile, update annually on
July 1 and make available by electronic or other means to all
employees a list of all professional personnel employed by
the county, their areas of certification and their seniority.

The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

17

Chairman, House Committee

Chairman, Senate Committee

Originating in the House.

To take effect from passage.

Clerk of the House of Delegates

Clerk of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Delegates

President of the Senate

The within \_\_\_\_\_\_ this the \_\_\_\_\_

day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

Governor