

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Capitol Building 6, Suite 600
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia

MINUTES

January 14, 2026

I. Call to Order

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Dr. Stansbury. President L. Paul Hardesty called the meeting of the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) to order at 9:00 a.m. on January 14, 2026, in Capitol Building 6, Suite 600, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, West Virginia.

The following members were present: President Hardesty, Vice President Victor L. Gabriel, Robert W. Dunlevy, Cathy L. C. Justice, F. Scott Rotruck, Dr. Christopher A. Stansbury, Nancy J. White, Gregory F. Wooten, and ex officio members Michele L. Blatt, State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), and Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Chancellor, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education.

II. Approval of Agenda

President Hardesty called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Dunley moved, Mrs. White seconded, that the agenda be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote.

III. Recognitions - 2026 West Virginia Teacher of the Year and School Service Personnel of the Year

Mrs. Traci Gregory, WVDE Educator Development Director, introduced the 2026 West Virginia Teacher of the Year, Tiffani Barnes (Ohio County), and the 2026 West Virginia Service Personnel of the Year, Brandon Kelley (Upshur County). Both Ms. Barnes and Mr. Kelley addressed the Board regarding their goals throughout the year. Toyota President, David Rosier, spoke about the importance of the program and that Toyota was honored to be able to provide the Teacher of the Year with a car to use throughout the year. Afterwards, President Hardesty announced that the Board would take a necessary break for the purpose of presenting Ms. Barnes with the new Toyota Rav4 in the Capitol Courtyard.

IV. Delegations

Dr. Anthony Dasaro, Geri Salerno, and Ms. Rebekah Bailey spoke about the importance of upholding the vaccination statute established in West Virginia law. Ms. Susan Parks read from the

Bible. Mr. David Gladkosky, Executive Director, West Virginia Professional Educators, discussed the association's legislative goals. Mr. Bryan Daugherty spoke about teacher-led reforms designed to transform public education. Mr. Phil Perrine and Mr. Dave Bucher talked about Randolph County school closures. Lastly, Mr. Dale Lee, Co-President of EducationWV, talked about imagining what would happen if the educational experts were asked what was best for public education during the 2026 Legislative Session.

V. School Safety Report

Mr. Micah Whitlow informed the Board that \$1.7 million has been distributed to 34 counties to complete the school mapping project required by September 1, 2026, and provided an update on school safety training.

VI. Superintendent Reports

Superintendent Blatt informed the Board that the WVDE had been reorganized and introduced Amon Gilliam as the new Assistant Superintendent for the Division of Instruction and Support and Jessica Austin as the new Director of Instructional Leadership.

VII. Consent Agenda

President Hardesty called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. White moved, Dr. Stansbury seconded, that the Consent Agenda be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote approving the following:

- Approved the WVBE minutes from December 10, 2025.
- Approved the employment of substitute teachers in areas of critical need and shortage policies for Berkeley and Jefferson counties.
- Approved the employment of retired bus operators as substitutes in areas of critical need and shortage policies for Berkeley and Jefferson counties.
- Approved retirement affidavits for submission to the Consolidated Public Retirement Board.
- Approved the appointment of Heather Scarberry to the Alternative Certification Educator Preparation Program Review Board.
- Approved a partnership agreement between West Virginia University and Berkeley County Schools for a Certification Teacher of Record (CTR) Program as requested by the West Virginia Educator Preparation Program Review Board (EPPRB).
- Approved a request from EPPRB approving Davis & Elkins College CTR Agreement with Tucker County Schools.

VIII. Boone County Schools Update

Ms. Alexandra Criner provided background information relating to the Boone County Schools' intervention, and then Boone County Superintendent Allen Sexton provided a progress report to the Board regarding actions taken to correct identified deficiencies.

IX. Randolph County Schools Update

Ms. Alexandra Criner provided background information relating to the Randolph County Schools' State of Emergency, and then Randolph County Superintendent Shawn Dilly provided a progress report to the Board regarding actions taken to correct identified deficiencies. After which, Mr. Dunlevy moved, Mrs. White seconded, that the State of Emergency for Randolph County Schools be extended for six months as recommended. Upon a call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote.

X. Roane County Schools Update

Ms. Alexandra Criner provided background information relating to the Roane County Schools' State of Emergency, and then Roane County Superintendent Michele Stellato provided a progress report to the Board regarding actions taken to correct identified deficiencies. After which, Mr. Gabriel moved, Dr. Stansbury seconded, that the State of Emergency for Roane County Schools be extended for six months as recommended. Upon a call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote.

XI. WVBE and WVDE Personnel Matters

President Hardesty called for a motion to approve the WVBE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment. Mr. Gabriel moved, Mr. Dunlevy seconded, that the WVBE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote. President Hardesty then called for a motion to approve the WVDE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment. Mrs. White moved, Mr. Dunlevy seconded, that the WVDE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried on a voice vote.

XII. WVBE Member Updates and Requests for Information

Mrs. White encouraged the school districts to recognize that strong business partnerships help students succeed. She specifically talked about the Hope for the Future Business Partnership of the Year award that includes a \$25,000 prize package for the winner and provided information on how to apply.

XIII. Future Meetings

President Hardesty announced that the next regular meeting of the West Virginia Board of Education would be on February 11, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in Charleston, West Virginia.

XIV. Adjournment

President Hardesty called for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Stansbury moved and Mr. Gabriel seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Upon the call for the question, the meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m. on a voice vote.

Minutes approved by the Board on February 11, 2026

L. Paul Hardesty, President

Victor L. Gabriel, Vice President

NOTE:

All agendas, attachments, materials distributed during the meeting, and audio recordings are available through the WVBE website or office pursuant to Policy 1241, Notice and Conduct of Meetings.

Minutes were recorded by:

Tina Payne, Board Secretary

Tina.A.Payne@k12.wv.us

304-558-3660

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