West Virginia School Board Association

P.O. Box 1008, Charleston, West Virginia 25324 304.346.0571 WV 1.800.642.9233

Memorandum

TO: County Boards of Education Candidates
FROM: Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., West Virginia School Board Association (WVSBA) Executive Director
RE: Orientation and Training Required of County Board of Education Members
DATE: December 15, 2025

Note: This document is not to be construed as providing legal advice.

I. Orientation

1. This is to inform you that West Virginia law (§18-5-1a) states, in part, "... A person elected to a county board after July 1, 2024, may not assume the duties of county board member unless he or she has **first attended and completed an orientation training** relating to boardsmanship, governance effectiveness, and fiscal management, **which shall be provided between the date of election and the beginning of the member's term of office** under the following conditions. . .":
2. ". . . **Attendance in the orientation training provided between the date of election and the beginning of the member's term of office permits the member-elect to assume the duties of county board member, as specified in this section: *Provided*, That any county board member who is unable to attend the initial orientation training for good cause, is required to complete a make-up orientation training within 30 days of being sworn in as a county board member;**
3. ". . .**The provisions of this subsection relating to orientation training do not apply to members who have taken office prior to July 1, 2025, and who serve continuously from that date forward. . .**"
4. The orientation course, as specified in this section, will be held June 12/13, 2026, at the Canaan Valley Resort & Conference Center, Davis, W. Va. NOTE: The West Virginia School Board Association (WVSBA) has no legal standing or authority to interpret this statute and its application. Accordingly, you, as a candidate for election or reelection to a county board of education, may wish to receive legal guidance.
5. Because the Orientation is received prior to assuming office, Orientation attendance and Orientation program completion do not apply toward the seven (7) clock hours of training requirement as cited below.

II. Training

1. Additionally, §18-5-1a states, ". . . **Annually, effective July 1, 2025, each member of a county board shall receive twelve hours of training** in areas relating to boardsmanship, governance effectiveness, fiscal management, and school performance issues including, but not limited to, pertinent state and federal statutes such as the "Process for Improving Education" set forth in §18-2E-5 of this code and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education and Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), and their respective administrative rules. . ."
2. **Note**: The West Virginia Board of Education may require ". . . any county board member to attend additional training if they believe that the training would be beneficial in assisting the member in successfully fulfilling his or her duties on the county board as requested by the State Superintendent."
3. Trainings are provided by the West Virginia School Board Association or ". . . other organization or organizations approved by the state board."
4. The West Virginia School Board Association (WVSBA), by law, is responsible for providing such training in accordance with State Board of Education directives and the work of the State Board of Education's County Board Member Training Standards Review Committee (TSRC), which includes two State Board of Education members, the chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees, and four currently elected county boards of education members. As West Virginia School Board Association Executive Director, I serve as TSRC Secretary.
5. Under provisions of §18-5-4, county boards of education members ". . . shall be paid for up to two trainings," based on county boards of education compensation, which is set at $260.00 per meeting up to 40 meetings per year, given other considerations outlined in §18-5-4, which also includes other provisions affecting county board of education member compensation for specified meetings.

III. Failure to attend and complete the Orientation Trainings and Annual or Other Trainings May Constitute "Neglect of duty."

1. As stated in §18-5-1a, ". . .Failure to attend and complete the orientation training, annual training, or training required by the state board, without good cause, as determined by the state board by duly promulgated legislative rules, constitutes neglect of duty under §6-6-7 of this code.

IV. Code Citations

1. **Refer to https://code.wvlegislature.gov/18-5-1A Eligibility of county boards of education members; training requirements.**

2. **Refer to https://code.wvlegislature.gov/18-5-4/ Meetings; employment and assignment of teachers; budget hearing; compensation of members; affiliation with state and national associations.**

V. Additional Information

1. Should you have any questions regarding these matters, please contact Dr. O'Cull at 304-346-0571. His email address is hocull@wvsba.org. His cellular telephone number is 304-549-9463.
2. You also may wish to contact legal counsel or your county board of education central office—many county board central office staff assist the county superintendent, county central office staff, and, often, county board members in terms of 'local orientation'—the West Virginia Board of Education or other sources of your selection for information regarding county board member orientation and training.
3. For general information regarding county boards of education service, you may wish to contact the West Virginia School Board Association—https://www.wvsba.org/.