

26102986D

HOUSE BILL NO. 546

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 22.1-354.1 and 22.1-354.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Western Virginia Public Education Consortium; governance; funding; duties.

Patron—McNamara

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 22.1-354.1 and 22.1-354.2 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-354.1. Western Virginia Public Education Consortium established; region defined; governing board.

A. ~~The~~ *With such funds as may be appropriated by the General Assembly in the general appropriation act, the Western Virginia Public Education Consortium (the Consortium) is hereby established and shall be referred to as the Consortium maintained.* For the purposes of this chapter and the work of the Consortium, "Western Virginia" shall include the Counties of Alleghany, Bath, Bland, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Roanoke, and Wythe, and the Cities of Covington, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke, and Salem *and may include such other localities as the governing board of the Consortium may periodically approve.* The governing board of the Consortium shall consist of ~~33~~ 34 members that include ~~14~~ 16 legislative members and ~~the 19 school~~ 18 division superintendents of the named localities as follows: ~~10~~ 11 members of the House of Delegates representing the ~~Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, Thirtieth, Thirty-first, Thirty-second, Thirty-third, Thirty-fourth, Thirty-fifth, Thirty-sixth, Thirty-seventh, Thirty-eighth, Thirty-ninth, Fortieth, Forty-first, Forty-second, Forty-third, Forty-fourth, Forty-fifth, Forty-sixth, Forty-seventh, Forty-eighth, Forty-ninth, Fiftieth, Fifty-first, Fifty-second, Fifty-third, Fifty-fourth, Fifty-fifth, Fifty-sixth, Fifty-seventh, Fifty-eighth, Fifty-ninth, Sixtieth, Sixty-first, Sixty-second, Sixty-third, Sixty-fourth, Sixty-fifth, Sixty-sixth, Sixty-seventh, Sixty-eighth, Sixty-ninth, Seventieth, Seventy-first, Seventy-second, Seventy-third, Seventy-fourth, Seventy-fifth, Seventy-sixth, Seventy-seventh, Seventy-eighth, Seventy-ninth, Eightieth, Eighty-first, Eighty-second, Eighty-third, Eighty-fourth, Eighty-fifth, Eighty-sixth, Eighty-seventh, Eighty-eighth, Eighty-ninth, Ninetieth, Ninety-first, Ninety-second, Ninety-third, Ninety-fourth, Ninety-fifth, Ninety-sixth, Ninety-seventh, Ninety-eighth, Ninety-ninth, and One hundredth~~ Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Twenty-fifth Seventh Senatorial Districts, all serving as ex officio nonvoting members; and the ~~school~~ division superintendents of Alleghany Highlands (*Alleghany-Covington consolidated*), Bath, Bland, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Roanoke County, Wythe, Covington, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke City, and Salem *or their designees.*

B. Legislative members and ~~school~~ division superintendents shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. The board shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its members *and, by majority vote, approve a member school division to serve as fiscal agent for the Consortium.*

C. Members of the board shall serve without compensation. All members shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in the work of the Consortium as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825. All such expenses shall be paid from existing appropriations to or received by the Consortium or, if unfunded, shall be approved by the Joint Rules Committee.

D. A majority of the *18 division superintendent* members of the board shall constitute a quorum. The board shall meet at the call of the chairman or whenever a majority of the members so request.

E. The chairman of the board shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the board no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

§ 22.1-354.2. Functions and duties.

The Consortium shall perform the following functions and duties:

1. Coordinate with organizations and agencies providing programs and services to Consortium school divisions to reduce duplication of effort and optimize the use of available resources;

2. Conduct ongoing assessments to identify needs of member school divisions and develop plans and programs responding to those needs;

3. Facilitate the coordination of programs in the Consortium region that affect ~~K~~ *prekindergarten* through grade 12 public education in career and technical education, workforce development, and other linkages between public schools, institutions of higher education, and business and industry;

4. Coordinate technology-related activities between Consortium members in areas of common concern, such as video conferencing and distance learning, including the acquisition and utilization of hardware and software for administrative and instructional purchases;

5. ~~Develop and maintain linkages with schools and school divisions in Northern Virginia to promote enhanced usage of educational technology; and~~

6. Create the capacity for development within the Consortium of shared services and activities, including

INTRODUCED

HB546

59 purchasing, facility planning, staff development, and special needs programming, and implementation of such
60 shared services and activities as need is determined.
61 **2. That if the Western Virginia Public Education Consortium is not funded by a separate**
62 **appropriation in the general appropriation act for fiscal year 2027, the provisions of Chapter 20.1**
63 **(§ 22.1-354.1 et seq.) of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia shall expire on January 1, 2027.**