WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18A-4-8F

§18A-4-8f. Seniority rights, school consolidation.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this article to the contrary, when a majority of the classroom teachers or school service personnel, who vote to do so, in accordance with procedures established in this section, and who are employed by a county board, the board shall give priority to classroom teachers or school service personnel in any school or schools to be closed as a result of a consolidation or merger when filling positions in the new school created by consolidation or newly created positions in existing schools as a result of the merger.

(b) Each year a consolidation or merger is proposed, prior to the implementation of that plan, the superintendent shall cause to be prepared and distributed to all faculty Senates and to all schools or other work sites a ballot on which teachers and service personnel may indicate whether or not they desire those affected by school closings to be given priority status in filling new positions. A secret ballot election shall be conducted:

(1) In each faculty Senate for classroom teachers. The faculty Senate chair shall convey the results of the election to the superintendent; and

(2) At each school or work site for school service personnel. The service personnel supervisor at each school or work site shall convey the results of the election to the superintendent.

(c) The superintendent shall tabulate and post all results prior to the notice requirements for reduction in force and transfer as outlined in sections two and seven, article two of this chapter. The total number of votes shall be tabulated separately for classroom teachers and for service personnel. The provisions of this section also shall be implemented separately as follows:

(1) For classroom teachers only if a majority of the total number of teachers who cast a ballot vote to do so; and

(2) For school service personnel only if a majority of the total number of service personnel who cast a ballot vote to do so.

(d) If a majority approves, the teachers or school service personnel in the school or schools to be closed have priority in filling new positions in the new or merged schools for which the teachers are certified or for which the school service personnel are qualified and meet the standards set forth in the job posting on the basis of seniority within the county. A teacher or school service person may receive priority for filling a position at a school affected by a merger or consolidation only for the position being created by the influx of students from a consolidated or merged school into the school receiving students from their closed school or

WV Legislature

grade level.

(1) The most senior teacher from the closed school or schools shall be placed first, the second most senior shall be placed next and so on until all the newly created positions are filled, or until all the teachers in the closed school or schools who wish to transfer into the newly created positions are placed.

(2) The most senior service person from the closed school or schools has priority in filling any position within his or her classification category. The second most senior service person from the closed school or schools then has priority in filling remaining vacancies and so on until all available positions are filled.

(3) If there are fewer new positions in the newly created school or merged school than there are classroom teachers or school service personnel from the school or schools to be closed, the teachers or school service personnel who were not placed in the new positions retain the same rights as all other teachers or service personnel with regard to seniority, transfer and reduction in force.

(4) This section does not grant any employee additional rights or protections with regard to reduction in force.

(e) For the purposes of this section only:

(1) A consolidation means that one or more schools are closed, or one or more grade levels are removed from one or more schools, and the students who previously attended the closed schools or grade levels are assigned to a new school.

(2) A merger means that one or more schools are closed or one or more grade levels are removed from one or more schools and the students who previously attended the closed schools or grade levels are assigned to another existing school.

(f) The provisions of this section do not apply to positions that are filled by a county board prior to the effective date of this section, as reenacted during the regular session of the Legislature, two thousand seven.

WV Legislature