

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 883 Education

SPONSOR(S): PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee, Duggan and others

TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** CS/SB 534

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee	17 Y, 0 N, As CS	D'Souza	Brink
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill improves the processes by which educational personnel who commit sexual misconduct with a student would be prohibited from further contact with students. Additionally, the bill prohibits employment of such individuals in positions that have direct contact with students in public schools, charter schools, and private schools participating in the state scholarship program.

Prohibition From Employment

The bill prohibits employment of an individual at these schools if he or she was previously terminated or resigned in lieu of termination for sexual misconduct with a student. If the prohibited conduct occurs while employed, the bill creates a duty on the employer to report the employee and the disqualifying circumstance to the Department of Education (DOE) for inclusion on the disqualification (DQ) list, as described below. Additionally, the bill provides a process for removing individuals from the DQ list.

Employment Tools

The bill requires the DOE to maintain the DQ list to prohibit individuals who have committed sexual misconduct with a student from being employed. When an employee separates from employment due to termination or resignation in lieu of termination, the bill requires execution of an affidavit-of-separation explaining the facts and reasons for the separation. The affidavit must disclose when the separation is due to sexual misconduct with a student. Before employing an individual in any position that requires direct contact with students, the bill requires the employment history check to include a review of each affidavit of separation from the applicant's previous employers.

Process Improvement

The bill requires the commissioner to find probable cause within 60 days after receiving a legally sufficient complaint that involves sexual misconduct by any certificateholder (i.e. teachers and administrators). Upon receiving a notification from an employer that the subject of a legally sufficient complaint resigns or is terminated before the conclusion of the investigation, the bill requires the DOE to place the person on the DQ list.

The bill adds charter schools and private schools to those educational entities law enforcement is required to notify when an employee is charged with a felony or misdemeanor involving the abuse of a minor child or the sale or possession of a controlled substance within 48 hours of the arrest.

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2020.

FULL ANALYSIS
I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

There have been cases in Florida in which school personnel, substitute teachers, or contractors have committed acts of moral turpitude and continued serving in positions that require direct contact with students.¹ Many times these individuals have resigned before the completion of an investigation, and were subsequently employed because they were never formally charged. For example, in Hillsborough County, five teachers who resigned while under investigation for wrongdoing later returned to the classroom through a company that provides temporary workers for the school district. Of those five, two worked as substitute teachers after resigning.²

Some instances of criminal conduct by teachers have gone unreported or the teacher was not disciplined. Last March, a certified middle school teacher stood trial in Miami-Dade County for sexual misconduct with students over an 11-year time period. Despite numerous complaints against the teacher, he continued teaching and working with students. Allegations included forcible rape, child pornography, inappropriate text messages, unwanted sexual touching, groping a fellow teacher, and verbal sexual comments.³

There also have been reports of untimely investigations and penalties by school districts. Last December, a Broward County school terminated a teacher who faced repeated allegations of acting inappropriately with students. Nearly 2 years later he was arrested on charges he molested a 12-year old girl.⁴ During that 2-year period, he remained on administrative suspension with full salary, while assigned to the school district's book depository. While documented complaints of misconduct against the teacher dated back to 1998, he still found employment at other schools.

Private, charter, and public schools can face challenges in identifying persons whose sexual misconduct should disqualify the individual for continued access to students. For example, a Highlands County teacher who began a sexually inappropriate relationship with a 13-year old student in 2017 was subsequently convicted in May 2019.⁵ Despite being incarcerated, he is still listed as an eligible certified teacher on the Department of Education's database.⁶

¹ Jarrod Holbrook, *I-Team: Hillsborough School Supervisors Lacked Oversight on Substitute Teachers who Misbehave*, <https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/local-news/i-team-investigates/i-team-hillsborough-school-supervisors-lacked-oversight-on-substitute-teachers-who-misbehave> (last visited January 14, 2020).

² Marlene Sokol, *Company in Charge of Hillsborough Substitute Teachers Weighs in on Problem Cases*, https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/Company-in-charge-of-Hillsborough-substitute-teachers-weighs-in-on-problem-cases_168478343 (last visited January 14, 2020).

³ Colleen Wright, *How did this Middle School Teacher Stay So Long*, Miami Herald, <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/education/article226466655.html> (last visited January 14, 2020).

⁴ Scott Travis, *Broward teacher accused in 2017 of molesting student fired*, <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/education/fl-ne-broward-teacher-molest-arrest-fired-20191210-fpofntupzrg65kgbmew7nslbm-story.html> (last visited January 14, 2020).

⁵ Marc Valero, *Dewberry pleads guilty, sentenced to 25 years*, https://www.yoursun.com/sebring/news/dewberyy-pleads-guilty-sentenced-to-years/article_398e3ea0-86f6-11e9-917a-9f96fdcc8209.html (last visited January 17, 2020).

⁶ Florida Department of Education, License Verification, <https://flcertify.fldoe.org/datamart/seiSearchType.do> (last visited January 17, 2020).

Disqualification of Educational Employees and Personnel

Present Situation

Disqualification of Educational Personnel

Background screening is required for instructional personnel and noninstructional personnel employed in positions that require direct contact with students.⁷ An individual who has a conviction for any crime involving moral turpitude may not be employed, engaged to provide services, or serve in any position that requires direct contact with students.⁸ Education personnel who have direct contact with students may not have a conviction for any of the offenses listed in s. 1012.315, F.S., which include:⁹

- enumerated felony offenses such as, unlawful sexual activity with certain minors and lewdness and indecent exposure ;¹⁰
- enumerated misdemeanor offenses relating to battery on a child, or luring, or enticing a child;¹¹
- any criminal act committed in another state or under federal law which, if committed in Florida, constitutes a prohibited felony or misdemeanor offense;¹² or
- any act committed in Florida, another state, or under federal law which qualifies an individual for inclusion on the Registered Juvenile Sex Offender List.¹³

Teacher Certification and Disciplinary Databases

To avoid continued and future employment of certificateholders (i.e. instructional personnel and administrators) who have a conviction for any of the offenses listed in s. 1012.315, F.S., the Department of Education (DOE) provides two screening tools to authorized staff of school districts, charter schools, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and private schools participating in a state scholarship program:

- The Professional Practices' Database of Disciplinary Actions Against Educators.¹⁴
- The Department of Education's Teacher Certification Database.¹⁵

Both databases contain only information necessary for performing employment history checks of the certificated instructional personnel and school administrators included in the databases. The databases do not include educational support employees who are non-certificated employees, but whose work supports the educational process.¹⁶

The Department of Education Investigations of Alleged Misconduct

The DOE is required to expeditiously investigate any legally sufficient complaint, which contains grounds for the revocation or suspension of an individual's educator certificate.¹⁷ The DOE must investigate or continue to investigate and take appropriate action on a complaint even though the original complainant withdraws the complaint or otherwise indicates a desire not to cause it to be investigated or prosecuted to completion.

For certificateholders found to have committed acts of misconduct, the DOE's Office of Professional Practice Services (OPPS) administers the state grievance process, including investigations of alleged

⁷ Section 1012.32(2)(a), F.S.

⁸ Rule 6A-5.056(7), F.A.C., provides a list of offenses that are considered crimes involving moral turpitude, including the offenses listed in s. 1012.315, F.S.

⁹ Section 1012.315(1)(a)-(vv), (3), and (4), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1012.315(1)(a)-(vv), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1012.315(2)(a)-(b), F.S.

¹² Section 1012.315(3), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.315(4), F.S.

¹⁴ Section 1001.10(5)(a), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1001.10(5)(b), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1012.02(6), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1012.796(1)(a), F.S.

misconduct and disciplinary actions.¹⁸ Complaints can be filed by any person or entity, and the OPSS can self-generate complaints on their own using media reports or other sources. Legally sufficient complaints of misconduct that affect the health, safety, or welfare of a student have priority over other pending complaints.¹⁹

Complaints and materials relating to an investigation of a complaint are confidential and exempt from public records laws until a probable cause determination or until the investigation is considered inactive.²⁰ A preliminary investigation is active so long as it is continuing with a reasonable, good faith anticipation that an administrative finding will be made in the near future. Generally, there is no deadline for completion in Florida law. An investigation is presumed to be inactive if no finding relating to probable cause is made within 60 days after the complaint is made.²¹ Once the OPSS finds probable cause, the case is turned over to the Education Practices Commission (EPC) for an administrative hearing.

Education Practices Commission

The State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted standards for educator conduct, referred to as the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession.²² The EPC interprets and applies the principles to certificated educational personnel.²³ At least once each year, the EPC must report to and meet with the SBE.²⁴ The EPC is authorized to revoke or suspend an educator certificate or take other appropriate action as provided in law.²⁵

Upon investigation and finding probable cause, the Commissioner of Education must file a formal complaint and prosecute the complaint according to administrative procedures.²⁶ An administrative law judge must be assigned by the Division of Administrative Hearings of the Department of Management Services to hear the complaint if there are disputed issues of material fact. The administrative law judge makes recommendations to the appropriate EPC panel, which conducts a final hearing and reviews of the recommendations and other pertinent information. The EPC panel enters a final order either dismissing the complaint or imposing one or more penalties.²⁷

Specifically, the EPC may revoke or suspend an educator's certificate if a person has been:²⁸

- Found guilty of gross immorality or an act involving moral turpitude as defined by SBE rule.
- Convicted or found guilty of, or entered a plea of guilty to, regardless of adjudication of guilt, a misdemeanor, felony, or any other criminal charge, other than a minor traffic violation.
- Disqualified from educator certification based on a conviction for certain criminal offenses.

The EPC may impose one or more of the following penalties against a person with an educator certificate:²⁹

- Denial of an application, including prohibiting reapplication for a period of up to ten years or permanently.
- Revocation or suspension of a certificate.
- Imposition of an administrative fine not to exceed \$2,000 for each count or separate offense.
- Probation.
- Restriction of the authorized scope of practice.

¹⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Professional Practices*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-practices/> (last visited January 17, 2020).

¹⁹ Section 1012.796(1)(b), F.S.

²⁰ Section 1012.31(3)(a)1., F.S.

²¹ *Id.*

²² Section 1012.795(1)(j), F.S.; Rule 6A-10.081, F.A.C.

²³ Section 1012.79(7)(a), F.S.

²⁴ Section 1012.79(7)(c), F.S.

²⁵ Section 1012.79(7)(b), F.S.

²⁶ Section 1012.796(6), F.S.; *See* Chapter 120, F.S.

²⁷ Section 1012.796(7); *See* Section 1012.796(7)(a)-(h), F.S.

²⁸ Section 1012.795(1), F.S.

²⁹ Section 1012.798, F.S.

- Written reprimand.
- Referral to the recovery network program.

The DOE may deny certification if it has satisfactory evidence that an applicant has committed an act for which the EPC would be authorized to revoke a teaching certificate.³⁰ The DOE's decision is subject to review by the EPC upon the filing of a written request from the applicant within 20 days after receipt of notice of denial.³¹

Duties of District School Boards and Superintendents

District school boards are required to disqualify instructional and administrative personnel from employment in any position that requires direct contact with students if the personnel are ineligible for such employment due to a felony conviction for a disqualifying offense under s. 1012.315, F.S.³² An elected or appointed school board official forfeits his or her salary for 1 year if:

- the school board official knowingly signs and transmits to any state official a false or incorrect report of alleged misconduct by instructional personnel or administrative personnel which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student;³³ or
- the school board official knowingly fails to adopt policies that require:³⁴
 - instructional personnel and administrative personnel to report alleged misconduct by other instructional personnel and administrative personnel;³⁵
 - the district school superintendent to report misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators that would result in disqualification from educator certification or employment to the law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the conduct;³⁶ or
 - the investigation of all reports of alleged misconduct by instructional personnel and administrative personnel, if the misconduct affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.³⁷

Additionally, a district school superintendent forfeits his or her salary for 1 year if he or she knowingly:

- signs and transmits to any state official a false or incorrect report;
- fails to investigate any allegation of misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student;
- fails to report the alleged misconduct to the DOE; or
- fails to report misconduct to the law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the conduct.³⁸

Each school district must file in writing with the DOE all legally sufficient complaints of misconduct by a certificateholder affecting the health, safety, or welfare of a student within 30 days after the date on which the misconduct comes to the attention of the school district, regardless of whether the subject of the complaint is still employed by the school district.³⁹ The school district must include all known information relating to the complaint at the time of filing. A school district must immediately notify the DOE if the subject of a legally sufficient complaint resigns or is terminated before the conclusion of the school district's investigation.⁴⁰ Upon receipt of the notification, the DOE must place an alert on the person's certification file indicating that he or she resigned or was terminated before an investigation was concluded.

If the district school superintendent determines that misconduct by a certificateholder affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student and the misconduct warrants termination the superintendent still must

³⁰ Section 1012.56(12)(a), F.S.

³¹ Section 1012.56(12)(b), F.S.

³² Section 1001.42(7), F.S.; *See* Section 1012.315, F.S.

³³ Section 1001.42(7)(a), F.S.

³⁴ Section 1001.42(7)(b), F.S.

³⁵ Section 1001.42(7)(b)1., F.S.

³⁶ Section 1001.42(7)(b)2., F.S.

³⁷ Section 1001.42(7)(b)3., F.S.

³⁸ Section 1001.51(b), F.S.

³⁹ Section 1012.796(1)(d)1., F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 1012.796(1)(d)2., F.S.

report the misconduct to the DOE, even if the instructional personnel or school administrators resigns or is terminated.⁴¹ The DOE maintains each report of misconduct as a public record in the instructional personnel's or school administrators' certification files. This requirement does not limit or restrict the power and duty of the DOE to investigate complaints, regardless of the school district's untimely filing, or failure to file, complaints and follow-up reports.

When an allegation of misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators is received, the superintendent in consultation with the school principal, or upon the request of the commissioner, must immediately suspend the individual from regularly assigned duties with pay if the alleged misconduct affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.⁴² The superintendent must also reassign the suspended individual to a position that does not require direct contact with students in the district school system. Such suspension continues until the completion of the proceedings and the determination of sanctions, if any.

Charter Schools

An individual must undergo a background screening⁴³ prior to employment by a charter school or serving on a charter school governing board.⁴⁴ A charter school must disqualify instructional personnel and school administrators from employment in any position that requires direct contact with students if the personnel or administrators are ineligible for such employment due to a felony conviction for a disqualifying offense under s. 1012.315, F.S.⁴⁵

Private Schools Participating in a State Scholarship Program

A private school participating in the state scholarship program must adopt policies establishing standards of ethical conduct for instructional personnel and school administrators.⁴⁶ The policies require all instructional personnel and school administrators to complete training on the standards; establish the duty of instructional personnel and school administrators to report; procedures for reporting, alleged misconduct by other instructional personnel and school administrators, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student; and include an explanation of the liability protections.

Additionally, before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students, a private school participating in a state scholarship program must conduct employment history checks of each previous employer, screen the personnel or administrators through use of the educator screening tools, and document the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, the private school must document efforts to do so.⁴⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

Disqualification of Educational Personnel

The bill requires the DOE to maintain a disqualification list (DQ list) that includes the following:

- The identity of any person who has been permanently denied a certificate or whose educator certificate was permanently revoked and has been placed on the list as directed by the Education Practices Commission (EPC).⁴⁸

⁴¹ Section 1012.796(1)(d)5., F.S.

⁴² Section 1012.796(5), F.S.

⁴³ See Section 1012.32(2)(b), F.S.

⁴⁴ Section 1002.33(12)(g)1., F.S.

⁴⁵ Section 1002.33(12)(g)2., F.S.

⁴⁶ Section 1002.421(1)(n), F.S.

⁴⁷ Section 1002.421(1)(o), F.S.

⁴⁸ See Section 1012.795, F.S., regarding the EPC's authority to discipline.

- The identity of any person who has been permanently disqualified by the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) as an owner or operator of a private school participating in a state scholarship program.
- The identity of any person who has been terminated, or has resigned in lieu of termination, from employment as a result of sexual misconduct with a student.
- The identity of any person who has been disqualified from employment due to a felony conviction for a disqualifying offense under s. 1012.315.

The bill prohibits certificated (i.e. instructional and administrative personnel) and non-certificated (i.e. educational support employees) individuals from employment in any position that requires direct contact with students in a district school system, charter school, or a private school participating in a state scholarship program if that individual is on the DQ list or is listed as a registered as a sex offender.⁴⁹ The bill also prohibits these educational entities, including a charter school's governing board, from employing a certificated or non-certificated individual if he or she was previously terminated or resigned in lieu of termination for sexual misconduct with a student. If the prohibited conduct occurs while employed, the bill creates a duty for the employing entity to report the employee and the disqualifying circumstance to the DOE for inclusion on the DQ list. Additionally, the bill specifies that this requirement does not create a duty for the DOE to investigate non-certificated employees.

The bill provides a process for removing an individual from the DQ list if:

- a completed law enforcement investigation resulted in an exoneration or no conviction or finding of guilt, and a completed investigation and proceeding, as applicable, by the responsible education agency resulted in no finding that the person committed disqualifying conduct;
- the person was not the subject of disqualifying conduct and was included on the DQ list as an error or as a result of mistaken identity; or
- the school district that submitted the person for inclusion on the DQ list requests that he or she be removed and submits supporting documentation.

The bill requires the SBE to adopt rules to implement the DQ list and the removal process. The bill also adds the DQ list to the employment screening tools available to authorized staff of school districts, charter schools, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and private schools that accept scholarship students who participate in a state scholarship program.

Department of Education Investigations of Alleged Misconduct

The bill prohibits the DOE from issuing a new certificate to a person whose educator certificate has expired if he or she committed an act that is the basis for a legally sufficient complaint while that person possessed an educator certificate.

The bill creates a duty on the DOE to place the person on the DQ list upon receiving a notification from a public school, charter school or its governing board, or private school participating in a state scholarship program that the person is the subject of an investigation of misconduct affecting the health, safety, or welfare of a student and has resigned or was terminated before the conclusion of the investigation.

Education Practices Commission

The bill requires the commissioner to make a probable cause determination within 60 days after receiving a legally sufficient complaint that involves sexual misconduct by any certificated personnel and OPSS's preliminary investigation. This time limitation may be tolled upon written request from a state attorney.

The bill adds placement on the DQ list as a penalty the EPC may impose for misconduct due to a felony conviction for a disqualifying offense under s. 1012.315, F.S. or sexual misconduct with a student.

⁴⁹ 42 U.S.C. § 9858f.
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Additionally, the bill prohibits any individual on the DQ list from serving or applying to serve as an employee or contracted personnel at any public school, charter school, or private school participating in a state scholarship program. Any individual who knowingly violates this prohibition commits a third degree felony.⁵⁰

Duties of District School Boards and Superintendents

The bill requires the forfeiture of 1 year's salary if an elected or appointed school board member knowingly fails to adopt a policy requiring the investigation of all reports of alleged misconduct by educational support employees and instructional and administrative personnel, if the misconduct affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, regardless if the individual resigned or was terminated before the conclusion of the investigation. The policy must require the superintendent to notify the DOE of the result of the investigation and whether the misconduct warranted termination, regardless of whether the individual resigned or was terminated prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

The bill requires the forfeiture of 1 year's salary if a district school superintendent fails to completely investigate any allegation of misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, that would be an offense against a student by an authority figure (i.e. sexual or lewd conduct; or a romantic relationship),⁵¹ a disqualifying offense, or sexual misconduct with a student.

The bill limits the amount of time a certificateholder is on administrative suspension to the superintendent's submission of a legally sufficient complaint. The school district must complete the proceedings and sanctions, if any, within 1 year of submission of the legally sufficient complaint.

Duties of Private Schools Participating in a State Scholarship Program

The bill requires private schools participating in a state scholarship program to apply their standards of ethical conduct to educational support employees. The bill prohibits private schools from employing an individual whose educator certificate is revoked or who is barred from reapplying for an educator certificate. The bill also authorizes the commissioner to permanently deny or revoke the authority of an owner or operator to establish or operate a private school in Florida if the owner or operator is operating or has previously operated an educational institution in Florida or another state in a manner contrary to the health, safety, or welfare of the public. The commissioner must include such individuals on the DQ list.

Employment History Check

Present Situation

Before employing an individual in any position that requires direct contact with students, a district school superintendent is required to conduct employment history checks of each of the individual's previous employers, screen instructional personnel and school administrators⁵² though the use of educator screening tools⁵³, and document the findings.⁵⁴ If the district superintendent is unable to contact a previous employer, he or she must document their efforts to do so.⁵⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

⁵⁰ See Section 775.082, F.S. and Section 775.083, F.S.

⁵¹ See Section 800.101, F.S. A person who violates this section commits a felony of the second degree.

⁵² See Section 1012.02(2)(a)-(e), F.S. and Section 1012.02(3)(a)-(c), F.S.

⁵³ See Section 1001.10(5)(a)-(b), F.S.

⁵⁴ Section 1012.27(6), F.S.

⁵⁵ *Id.*

In cases of an employee separating from employment due to termination or resignation in lieu of termination, the bill requires the public school employer to execute an affidavit of separation, on a form adopted by the DOE, explaining in detail the facts and reasons for the separation. The affidavit must expressly disclose when the separation is due to a report of sexual misconduct with a student. The affidavit is executed under oath and constitutes an official statement.⁵⁶ The affidavit of separation must also include language that intentional false execution of the affidavit constitutes a second degree misdemeanor.

Before employing the individual in any position that requires direct contact with students, the bill requires the employment history check to include a review of each affidavit of separation from the applicant's previous employers.

Notification of Arrest

Present Situation

When a public school employee is charged with a felony or misdemeanor involving the abuse of a minor child or the sale or possession of a controlled substance, law enforcement is required to notify the district school superintendent of the name and address of that employee within 48 hours of the arrest.⁵⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill adds charter schools and private schools as educational entities law enforcement must notify when an employee is charged with a felony or misdemeanor involving the abuse of a minor child or the sale or possession of a controlled substance within 48 hours of the arrest.

The Department of Education Office of Inspector General

Present Situation

The DOE Office of Inspector General (DOEIG) is responsible for promoting accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness and detecting fraud and abuse within school districts, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and Florida College System institutions in Florida.⁵⁸ The DOEIG conducts, coordinates, or requests investigations into substantiated allegations relating to waste, fraud, or financial mismanagement for these entities if the commissioner determines that an entity is unwilling or unable to address such allegations. In addition to the concern, any member of the Cabinet; the presiding officer of either chamber of the Legislature; a chair of a substantive or appropriations committee with jurisdiction; or a member of the district school board may request the DOEIG to investigate. Florida law requires investigated entities to give the DOEIG access to all information and personnel necessary to perform its duties.⁵⁹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill authorizes the DOEIG to issue and serve subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents, reports, answers, records, accounts, and other data in any medium. In the event of noncompliance, the DOEIG may petition the circuit court of the county in which the subpoenaed person to comply with the subpoena or subpoena duces tecum.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

⁵⁶ See Section 837.06, F.S.

⁵⁷ Section 1012.797(1), F.S.

⁵⁸ Section 1001.10(4)(e), F.S.

⁵⁹ *Id.*

Section 1. Amends s. 1001.10, F.S., requiring the DOE to maintain a DQ list of certain individuals; and requiring the DOE to provide access to specified information to certain staff for specified purposes.

Section 2. Amends s. 1001.20, F.S., authorizing the DOE Office of Inspector General to issue and serve certain subpoenas for specified purposes; and authorizing the inspector general to petition circuit courts for specified purposes.

Section 3. Amends s. 1001.42, F.S., providing that a school board official forfeits his or her salary for 1 year under certain circumstances.

Section 4. Amends s. 1001.51, F.S., providing that a district school superintendent forfeits his or her salary for 1 year under additional circumstances.

Section 5. Amends s. 1002.33, F.S., prohibiting certain individuals from employment at charter schools; providing requirements for charter schools relating to employing certain individuals; requiring the a charter school governing board to establish the duty of instructional personnel and school administrators to report specified alleged misconduct by certain individuals; and prohibiting a person on the DQ list from employment in specified positions.

Section 6. Amends s. 1002.421, F.S., requiring certain private schools to deny employment to certain individuals; requiring private schools to provide an employment determination for certain prospective employees; and authorizing the commissioner to permanently revoke an owner's or operator's authority to establish or operate a private school in this state under certain circumstances.

Section 7. Amends s. 1006.061, F.S., revising the contents of sign certain educational entities are required to post to include information relating to reporting of certain criminal acts.

Section 8. Amends s. 1012.27, F.S., requiring a district school superintendent to review each affidavit-of-separation from an applicant's previous employers in an employment history check.

Section 9. Amends s. 1012.31, F.S., providing requirements for an affidavit-of-separation form.

Section 10. Amends s. 1012.315, F.S., providing that certain individuals are ineligible for an educator certification or specified employment.

Section 11. Amends s. 1012.795, F.S., revising acts that warrant a disciplinary action by the commission.

Section 12. Amends s. 1012.796, F.S., requiring a district school superintendent to immediately suspend certain individuals and take specified action as a result of alleged misconduct; prohibiting certain individuals from serving or applying to serve in specified positions at public schools and specified private schools; and providing criminal penalties.

Section 13. Amends s. 1012.797, F.S., requiring charter school governing boards and private schools are notified by law enforcement of certain arrests of their respective employees within a specific timeframe.

Section 14. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2020.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. None. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill provides the SBE with rulemaking authority to implement the DQ list and removal process.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On January 21, 2019, the PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee adopted a proposed committee substitute (PCS) and reported the bill favorably. The PCS differs from HB 883 in the following ways:

- Creates one unified disqualification (DQ) list for persons prohibited from employment in public schools, charter schools, and private schools participating in the state scholarship program and includes process for removal from the DQ list.
- Defines misconduct that mandates inclusion on the DQ list as “sexual misconduct with a student” in addition to felony conviction for disqualifying offenses under s. 1012.315, F.S.
- Includes “educational support employees” to those who are subject to the DQ list.
- Prohibits employment of an individual if he or she was previously terminated or resigned in lieu of termination for sexual misconduct with a student.
- Creates a duty on the employer to report the employee and the disqualifying circumstance to the DOE for inclusion on the DQ list if prohibited conduct occurs subsequent to employment.

- Requires a person on the DQ list to be notified that he or she may not serve to apply to serve as an employee or contracted personnel, and commits a third degree felony if he or she knowingly violates this provision.
- Creates an affidavit-of-separation that public school employers must execute when an employee is terminated or resigns in lieu of termination and requires employers to request and review copies of the affidavit from an applicant's previous employers.
- Requires DOE to make a probable cause determination within 60 days of receipt of a legally sufficient complaint of sexual misconduct with a student.
- Limits the amount of time a certificateholder is on administrative suspension to the superintendent's submission of a legally sufficient complaint to DOE and the school district must complete the proceedings and sanctions within 1 year of submission of the legally sufficient complaint.
- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to permanently deny or revoke an owner or operator's authority to establish or operate a private school if the owner or operator is operating or has previously operated in a manner contrary to the health, safety, or welfare of the public. Such individuals must be included on the DQ list.

The bill analysis is drafted to the committee substitute adopted by the PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee.