

## SENATE BILL SUMMARY

Prepared by the Division of Legislative Information for the Senate Bill **AS ORIGINALLY FILED**. For more detail, see Senate Bill Analyses, if available, prepared by the Senate's professional committee staff.

SB 1712

Ethics in Education Act

by the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12

Cites this act as the "Ethics in Education Act." Specifies certain additional offenses against minors that constitute a breach of the public trust. Prohibits the Division of Retirement from paying benefits to any member who has committed certain felony offenses against a victim younger than 16 years of age, or against a victim younger than 18 years of age, by a public officer or employee through the use or attempted use of power, rights, privileges, duties, or position of his or her public office or employment position.

Requires the State Board of Education to establish and adopt a list of criminal or delinquent acts that disqualify a person from acquiring or retaining a Florida Educator Certificate. Requires the Commissioner of Education to provide technical assistance and support to school districts, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and private providers in the development of policies and procedures governing educator ethics and employment.

Requires the district school board to adopt and communicate policies and procedures setting forth ethical standards for all employees, and to establish and adopt a list of criminal or delinquent acts that disqualify a person from employment in any position that involves direct contact with students.

Provides that the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind is considered a school district and shall meet certain requirements governing the screening of educators.

Requires private schools participating in a state school choice scholarship program and private schools participating in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program to establish and adopt a list of criminal or delinquent acts that disqualify a person from employment in a position that involves direct student contact. Requires that private schools participating in said programs adopt and communicate policies and procedures setting forth ethical standards for all employees, and requires that these schools contact the previous employer of a candidate prior to appointing the candidate to any position.

Requires a district school superintendent, before appointing a candidate to any position in the district school system,

to contact the previous employer of the candidate and screen the candidate through the use of educator screening tools provided by the DOE, and report to the DOE the termination of any employee, regardless of cause.

Requires the DOE to immediately investigate any complaint filed before it, or otherwise called to its attention, which involves misconduct by an educator with a student or any complaint which involves the health, safety, and welfare of a minor child. (See bill for details)