

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2016 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Education Pre-K - 12

CS/CS/HB 719 — Education Personnel

by Education Appropriations Subcommittee; K-12 Subcommittee; and Rep. Spano and others (CS/CS/SB 894 by Appropriations Committee; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senator Detert)

The bill (Chapter 2016-58, L.O.F.) modifies and expands several statutory provisions relating to education personnel.

Specifically, the bill:

- Adds Department of Education (DOE) employees and agents, who investigate or prosecute educator misconduct, to the list of individuals authorized to access records relating to child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.
- Authorizes the DOE to use information from the Central Abuse Hotline for educator certification discipline and review.
- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to issue a letter of guidance to an educator in lieu of finding probable cause to prosecute misconduct.
- Modifies the membership of the Education Practices Commission.
- Makes permanent the educator liability insurance program.
- Prohibits postsecondary education institutions and school districts from requiring students participating in a clinical field experience to purchase liability insurance.
- Authorizes DOE to sponsor an educator job fair.
- Requires DOE to coordinate a best practices community to assist school districts with teacher recruitment and other human resource functions.
- Removes State Board of Education rulemaking authority regarding school district assignment of newly hired instructional personnel.
- Establishes in law state approval of school leader preparation programs.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 37-1; House 91-22