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A bill to be entitled An act relating to educational employees; amending s. 1001.10, F.S.; requiring the Department of Education to maintain a disqualification list of certain individuals; requiring the department to provide access to the list to certain staff for specified purposes; amending s. 1001.51, F.S.; providing that a district school superintendent who knowingly fails to investigate an allegation of specified misconduct by certain individuals, rather than instructional personnel or school administrators, forfeits his or her salary for a specified period of time; amending s. 1002.33, F.S.; requiring the governing board of a charter school to establish the duty of instructional personnel and school administrators to report specified alleged misconduct by certain individuals; prohibiting a person on the disqualification list from being a charter school employee, contract employee, or governing board member; amending s. 1002.421, F.S.; requiring certain private schools to deny employment to certain individuals; authorizing the Commissioner of Education to permanently revoke an owner's or operator's authority to establish or operate a private school in this state under certain circumstances; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 1012.315,

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26	F.S.; providing that a person on the disqualification
27	list is ineligible for an educator certificate or
28	employment in a position that requires direct contact
29	with students; amending s. 1012.79, F.S.; conforming a
30	cross-reference; amending s. 1012.795, F.S.;
31	authorizing the Education Practices Commission to
32	place certain individuals on the disqualification list
33	under certain circumstances; amending s. 1012.796,
34	F.S.; requiring the department to immediately
35	investigate certain complaints of specified
36	individuals; requiring such complaints to be given
37	priority over other pending complaints; requiring a
38	district school superintendent to immediately suspend
39	certain individuals and take specified action as a
40	results of alleged misconduct; authorizing a panel of
41	the commission to place certain individuals on the
42	disqualification list under certain circumstances;
43	prohibiting an individual on the disqualification list
44	from serving or applying to serve as certain
45	employees; providing criminal penalties; providing an
46	effective date.
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48	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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50	Section 1. Subsections (4) and (5) of section 1001.10,

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Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1001.10 Commissioner of Education; general powers and duties.—

- (4) The Department of Education shall:
- (a) Provide technical assistance to 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 under chapter 1002 in the development of policies, procedures, and training related to employment practices and standards of ethical conduct for instructional personnel and school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01.
- (b) Maintain a disqualification list, which must include the names of the following individuals:
- 1. Individuals who have been placed on the list by the Education Practices Commission pursuant to s. 1012.796(7)(i) or whose educator certificate has been permanently revoked by a panel of the commission pursuant to s. 1012.796(7)(b); and
- 2. Individuals who were an owner or operator of a private school whose authority to establish or operate a private school in this state has been permanently denied or revoked by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to s. 1002.421(3)(c).
- (5) The Department of Education shall provide authorized staff of school districts, charter schools, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and private schools that accept

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scholarship students who participate in a state scholarship program under chapter 1002 with access to electronic verification of information from the following employment screening tools:

- (a) The Professional Practices' Database of Disciplinary Actions Against Educators; and
- (b) The Department of Education's Teacher Certification Database; and
 - (c) The Department of Education's disqualification list.

This subsection does not require the department to provide these staff with unlimited access to the databases. However, the department shall provide the staff with access to the data necessary for performing employment history checks of the instructional personnel and school administrators included in the databases.

Section 2. Subsection (12) of section 1001.51, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1001.51 Duties and responsibilities of district school superintendent.—The district school superintendent shall exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below and elsewhere in the law, provided that, in so doing, he or she shall advise and counsel with the district school board. The district school superintendent shall perform all tasks necessary to make sound recommendations, nominations, proposals, and

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reports required by law to be acted upon by the district school board. All such recommendations, nominations, proposals, and reports by the district school superintendent shall be either recorded in the minutes or shall be made in writing, noted in the minutes, and filed in the public records of the district school board. It shall be presumed that, in the absence of the record required in this section, the recommendations, nominations, and proposals required of the district school superintendent were not contrary to the action taken by the district school board in such matters.

- (12) RECORDS AND REPORTS.—Recommend such records as should be kept in addition to those prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education; prepare forms for keeping such records as are approved by the district school board; ensure that such records are properly kept; and make all reports that are needed or required, as follows:
- (a) Forms, blanks, and reports.—Require that all employees accurately keep all records and promptly make in proper form all reports required by the education code or by rules of the State Board of Education; recommend the keeping of such additional records and the making of such additional reports as may be deemed necessary to provide data essential for the operation of the school system; and prepare such forms and blanks as may be required and ensure that these records and reports are properly prepared.

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Reports to the department.-Prepare, for the approval of the district school board, all reports required by law or rules of the State Board of Education to be made to the department and transmit promptly all such reports, when approved, to the department, as required by law. If any reports are not transmitted at the time and in the manner prescribed by law or by State Board of Education rules, the salary of the district school superintendent must be withheld until the report has been properly submitted. Unless otherwise provided by rules of the State Board of Education, the annual report on attendance and personnel is due on or before July 1, and the annual school budget and the report on finance are due on the date prescribed by the commissioner. Any district school superintendent who knowingly signs and transmits to any state official a report that the superintendent knows to be false or incorrect; who knowingly fails to investigate any allegation of misconduct by an individual subject to the requirements of s. 1012.315 instructional personnel or school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student; who knowingly fails to report the alleged misconduct to the department as required in s. 1012.796; or who knowingly fails to

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jurisdiction over the conduct pursuant to district school board

report misconduct to the law enforcement agencies with

policy under s. 1001.42(6), forfeits his or her salary for 1 year following the date of such act or failure to act.

Section 3. Paragraph (g) of subsection (12) of section 1002.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.33 Charter schools.-

- (12) EMPLOYEES OF CHARTER SCHOOLS.-
- (g)1. A charter school shall employ or contract with employees who have undergone background screening as provided in s. 1012.32. Members of the governing board of the charter school shall also undergo background screening in a manner similar to that provided in s. 1012.32. An individual may not be an employee or contract employee of a charter school or a member of a governing board if the individual is on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).
- 2. A charter school shall disqualify instructional personnel and school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01, from employment in any position that requires direct contact with students if the personnel or administrators are ineligible for such employment under s. 1012.315.
- 3. The governing board of a charter school shall adopt policies establishing standards of ethical conduct for instructional personnel and school administrators. The policies must require all instructional personnel and school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01, to complete training on the standards; establish the duty of instructional personnel

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and school administrators to report, and procedures for reporting, alleged misconduct by an individual subject to the requirements of s. 1012.315 other instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student; and include an explanation of the liability protections provided under ss. 39.203 and 768.095. A charter school, or any of its employees, may not enter into a confidentiality agreement regarding terminated or dismissed instructional personnel or school administrators, or personnel or administrators who resign in lieu of termination, based in whole or in part on misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, and may not provide instructional personnel or school administrators with employment references or discuss the personnel's or administrators' performance with prospective employers in another educational setting, without disclosing the personnel's or administrators' misconduct. Any part of an agreement or contract that has the purpose or effect of concealing misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student is void, is contrary to public policy, and may not be enforced.

4. Before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students, a charter school shall conduct employment history checks of each of the personnel's or administrators' previous

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employers, screen the instructional personnel or school administrators through use of the educator screening tools described in s. 1001.10(5), and document the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, the charter school must document efforts to contact the employer.

- 5. The sponsor of a charter school that knowingly fails to comply with this paragraph shall terminate the charter under subsection (8).
- Section 4. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (3) of section 1002.421, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (d) and (e), respectively, paragraph (o) of subsection (1) and present paragraph (d) of subsection (3) are amended, and a new paragraph (c) is added to subsection (3) of that section, to read:
- 1002.421 State school choice scholarship program accountability and oversight.—
- (1) PRIVATE SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY AND OBLIGATIONS.—A private school participating in an educational scholarship program established pursuant to this chapter must be a private school as defined in s. 1002.01(2) in this state, be registered, and be in compliance with all requirements of this section in addition to private school requirements outlined in s. 1002.42, specific requirements identified within respective scholarship program laws, and other provisions of Florida law that apply to private schools, and must:

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(o) Before employing <u>an individual</u> instructional personnel
or school administrators in any position that requires direct
contact with students, conduct employment history checks of each
<pre>individual's of the personnel's or administrators' previous</pre>
employers, screen the <u>individual</u> personnel or administrators
through use of the educator screening tools described in s.
1001.10(5), and document the findings. If unable to contact a
previous employer, the private school must document efforts to
contact the employer. The private school must deny employment to
an individual whose educator certificate is revoked, who is
barred from reapplying for an educator certificate, or who is on
the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).

The department shall suspend the payment of funds to a private school that knowingly fails to comply with this subsection, and shall prohibit the school from enrolling new scholarship students, for 1 fiscal year and until the school complies. If a private school fails to meet the requirements of this subsection or has consecutive years of material exceptions listed in the report required under paragraph (q), the commissioner may determine that the private school is ineligible to participate in a scholarship program.

- (3) COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION AUTHORITY AND OBLIGATIONS.—
 The Commissioner of Education:
 - (c) May permanently deny or revoke an owner's or

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operator's authority to establish or operate a private school in this state if the commissioner decides that the owner or operator is operating or has operated an educational institution in this state or another state or jurisdiction in a manner contrary to the health, safety, or welfare of the public and shall include such owner or operator on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).

<u>(e) (d)</u> May immediately suspend payment of scholarship funds if it is determined that there is probable cause to believe that there is:

- 1. An imminent threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the students;
- 2. A previous pattern of failure to comply with this section; or
- 3. Fraudulent activity on the part of the private school. Notwithstanding s. 1002.22, in incidents of alleged fraudulent activity pursuant to this section, the department's Office of Inspector General is authorized to release personally identifiable records or reports of students to the following persons or organizations:
- a. A court of competent jurisdiction in compliance with an order of that court or the attorney of record in accordance with a lawfully issued subpoena, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g.
 - b. A person or entity authorized by a court of competent

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jurisdiction in compliance with an order of that court or the attorney of record pursuant to a lawfully issued subpoena, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g.

c. Any person, entity, or authority issuing a subpoena for law enforcement purposes when the court or other issuing agency has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be disclosed, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g, and 34 C.F.R. s. 99.31.

The commissioner's order suspending payment pursuant to this paragraph may be appealed pursuant to the same procedures and timelines as the notice of proposed action set forth in subparagraph (d) 2. $\frac{(c)}{2}$.

Section 5. Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.315 Disqualification from employment.—A person is ineligible for educator certification or employment in any position that requires direct contact with students in a district school system, charter school, or private school that accepts scholarship students who participate in a state scholarship program under chapter 1002 if the person is on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) or has been convicted of:

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(1) Any felony offense prohibited under any of the following statutes:

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- (a) Section 393.135, relating to sexual misconduct with certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such sexual misconduct.
- (b) Section 394.4593, relating to sexual misconduct with certain mental health patients and reporting of such sexual misconduct.
- (c) Section 415.111, relating to adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation of aged persons or disabled adults.
 - (d) Section 782.04, relating to murder.
- (e) Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter, aggravated manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult, aggravated manslaughter of a child, or aggravated manslaughter of an officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or a paramedic.
 - (f) Section 784.021, relating to aggravated assault.
 - (g) Section 784.045, relating to aggravated battery.
- (h) Section 784.075, relating to battery on a detention or commitment facility staff member or a juvenile probation officer.
 - (i) Section 787.01, relating to kidnapping.
 - (j) Section 787.02, relating to false imprisonment.
- 324 (k) Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a child.

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(1) Section 787.04(2), relating to leading, taking, enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending custody proceedings.

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- (m) Section 787.04(3), relating to leading, taking, enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending dependency proceedings or proceedings concerning alleged abuse or neglect of a minor.
- (n) Section 790.115(1), relating to exhibiting firearms or weapons at a school-sponsored event, on school property, or within 1,000 feet of a school.
- (o) Section 790.115(2)(b), relating to possessing an electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon at a school-sponsored event or on school property.
 - (p) Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.
- (q) Former s. 794.041, relating to sexual activity with or solicitation of a child by a person in familial or custodial authority.
- (r) Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual activity with certain minors.
 - (s) Section 794.08, relating to female genital mutilation.
 - (t) Chapter 796, relating to prostitution.
- (u) Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent exposure.

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351	(v) Section 800.101, relating to offenses against students
352	by authority figures.
353	(w) Section 806.01, relating to arson.
354	(x) Section 810.14, relating to voyeurism.
355	(y) Section 810.145, relating to video voyeurism.
356	(z) Section $812.014(6)$, relating to coordinating the
357	commission of theft in excess of \$3,000.
358	(aa) Section 812.0145, relating to theft from persons 65
359	years of age or older.
360	(bb) Section 812.019, relating to dealing in stolen
361	property.
362	(cc) Section 812.13, relating to robbery.
363	(dd) Section 812.131, relating to robbery by sudden
364	snatching.
365	(ee) Section 812.133, relating to carjacking.
366	(ff) Section 812.135, relating to home-invasion robbery.
367	(gg) Section 817.563, relating to fraudulent sale of
368	controlled substances.
369	(hh) Section 825.102, relating to abuse, aggravated abuse,
370	or neglect of an elderly person or disabled adult.
371	(ii) Section 825.103, relating to exploitation of an
372	elderly person or disabled adult.
373	(jj) Section 825.1025, relating to lewd or lascivious
374	offenses committed upon or in the presence of an elderly person

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or disabled person.

376	(kk) Section 826.04, relating to incest.
377	(11) Section 827.03, relating to child abuse, aggravated
378	child abuse, or neglect of a child.
379	(mm) Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the
380	delinquency or dependency of a child.
381	(nn) Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance by a
382	child.
383	(00) Section 843.01, relating to resisting arrest with
384	violence.
385	(pp) Chapter 847, relating to obscenity.
386	(qq) Section 874.05, relating to causing, encouraging,
387	soliciting, or recruiting another to join a criminal street
388	gang.
389	(rr) Chapter 893, relating to drug abuse prevention and
390	control, if the offense was a felony of the second degree or
391	greater severity.
392	(ss) Section 916.1075, relating to sexual misconduct with
393	certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual
394	misconduct.
395	(tt) Section 944.47, relating to introduction, removal, or
396	possession of contraband at a correctional facility.
397	(uu) Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct in

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or possession of contraband at a juvenile detention facility or

(vv) Section 985.711, relating to introduction, removal,

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juvenile justice programs.

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- (2) Any misdemeanor offense prohibited under any of the following statutes:
- (a) Section 784.03, relating to battery, if the victim of the offense was a minor.
- (b) Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a child.
- (3) Any criminal act committed in another state or under federal law which, if committed in this state, constitutes an offense prohibited under any statute listed in subsection (1) or subsection (2).
- (4) Any delinquent act committed in this state or any delinquent or criminal act committed in another state or under federal law which, if committed in this state, qualifies an individual for inclusion on the Registered Juvenile Sex Offender List under s. 943.0435(1)(h)1.d.
- Section 6. Subsection (10) of section 1012.79, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 - 1012.79 Education Practices Commission; organization.—
- (10) The commission shall be financed from the following: certification fees; fines, penalties, and costs collected pursuant to \underline{s} . $\underline{1012.796(10)}$ \underline{s} . $\underline{1012.796(9)}$; and general revenue.
- Section 7. Subsection (1) of section 1012.795, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 1012.795 Education Practices Commission; authority to

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The Education Practices Commission may suspend the educator certificate of any instructional personnel or school administrator, as defined in s. 1012.01(2) or (3), for up to 5 years, thereby denying that person the right to teach or otherwise be employed by a district school board or public school in any capacity requiring direct contact with students for that period of time, after which the person may return to teaching as provided in subsection (4); may revoke the educator certificate of any person, thereby denying that person the right to teach or otherwise be employed by a district school board or public school in any capacity requiring direct contact with students for up to 10 years, with reinstatement subject to subsection (4); may permanently revoke the educator certificate of any person thereby denying that person the right to teach or otherwise be employed by a district school board or public school in any capacity requiring direct contact with students; may suspend a person's educator certificate, upon an order of the court or notice by the Department of Revenue relating to the payment of child support; may place an employee or contracted personnel of any public school, charter school and its governing board, or private school that accepts scholarship students who participate in a state scholarship program under chapter 1002 on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) if such conduct would otherwise result in the permanent revocation of a

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d51 <u>certificate;</u> or may impose any other penalty provided by law, if the person:

(a) Obtained or attempted to obtain an educator certificate by fraudulent means.

- (b) Knowingly failed to report actual or suspected child abuse as required in s. 1006.061 or report alleged misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student as required in s. 1012.796.
- (c) Has proved to be incompetent to teach or to perform duties as an employee of the public school system or to teach in or to operate a private school.
- (d) Has been guilty of gross immorality or an act involving moral turpitude as defined by rule of the State Board of Education, including engaging in or soliciting sexual, romantic, or lewd conduct with a student or minor.
- (e) Has had an educator certificate or other professional license sanctioned by this or any other state or has had the authority to practice the regulated profession revoked, suspended, or otherwise acted against, including a denial of certification or licensure, by the licensing or certifying authority of any jurisdiction, including its agencies and subdivisions. The licensing or certifying authority's acceptance of a relinquishment, stipulation, consent order, or other settlement offered in response to or in anticipation of the

filing of charges against the licensee or certificateholder shall be construed as action against the license or certificate. For purposes of this section, a sanction or action against a professional license, a certificate, or an authority to practice a regulated profession must relate to being an educator or the fitness of or ability to be an educator.

- (f) Has been convicted or found guilty of, has had adjudication withheld for, or has pled guilty or nolo contendere to a misdemeanor, felony, or any other criminal charge, other than a minor traffic violation.
- (g) Upon investigation, has been found guilty of personal conduct that seriously reduces that person's effectiveness as an employee of the district school board.
- (h) Has breached a contract, as provided in s. 1012.33(2) or s. 1012.335.
- (i) Has been the subject of a court order or notice by the Department of Revenue pursuant to s. 409.2598 directing the Education Practices Commission to suspend the certificate as a result of noncompliance with a child support order, a subpoena, an order to show cause, or a written agreement with the Department of Revenue.
- (j) Has violated the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession prescribed by State Board of Education rules.
 - (k) Has otherwise violated the provisions of law, the

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penalty for which is the revocation of the educator certificate.

- (1) Has violated any order of the Education Practices Commission.
- (m) Has been the subject of a court order or plea agreement in any jurisdiction which requires the certificateholder to surrender or otherwise relinquish his or her educator's certificate. A surrender or relinquishment shall be for permanent revocation of the certificate. A person may not surrender or otherwise relinquish his or her certificate prior to a finding of probable cause by the commissioner as provided in s. 1012.796.
- (n) Has been disqualified from educator certification under $s.\ 1012.315.$
- (o) Has committed a third recruiting offense as determined by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) pursuant to s. 1006.20(2)(b).
- (p) Has violated test security as provided in s. 1008.24.

 Section 8. Subsections (8) and (9) of section 1012.796,

 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (9) and (10),

 respectively, subsection (5) is amended, and paragraph (g) is

 added to subsection (1), paragraph (i) is added to subsection

 (7), and a new subsection (8) is added to that section, to read:
- 1012.796 Complaints against teachers and administrators; procedure; penalties.—

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(g) The department shall immediately investigate any
legally sufficient complaint that involves misconduct by an
employee or contracted personnel of a public school; a charter
school, including its governing board; or a private school that
accepts scholarship students who participate in a state
scholarship program under chapter 1002, that affects the health,
safety, or welfare of a student and would otherwise result in
the permanent revocation of a certificate, giving the complaint
priority over other pending complaints.

- subject to the requirements of s. 1012.315 instructional personnel or school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01, is received, if the alleged misconduct affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, the district school superintendent in consultation with the school principal, or upon the request of the Commissioner of Education, must, at a minimum, immediately suspend the individual instructional personnel or school administrators from regularly assigned duties, with pay, and remove reassign the individual from any position suspended personnel or administrators to positions that may do not require direct contact with students in the district school system. Such suspension shall continue until the completion of the proceedings and the determination of sanctions, if any, pursuant to this section and s. 1012.795.
 - (7) A panel of the commission shall enter a final order

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either dismissing the complaint or imposing one or more of the following penalties:

(i) Place an individual who is not a certificateholder on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) if the conduct meets the standard for revocation of a certificate.

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The penalties imposed under this subsection are in addition to, and not in lieu of, the penalties required for a third recruiting offense pursuant to s. 1006.20(2)(b).

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(8) An individual on the disqualification list pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) may not serve or apply to serve as an employee or contracted personnel at any public or private school in the state. An individual who knowingly violates this subsection commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

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Section 9. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.