By Senator Diaz

	36-00619C-19 20191444
1	A bill to be entitled
2	An act relating to education; amending s. 1001.10,
3	F.S.; requiring the Department of Education to
4	maintain a disqualification list; providing
5	requirements for the disqualification list; requiring
6	the department to provide certain staff with access to
7	information from such disqualification list; amending
8	s. 1002.33, F.S.; prohibiting individuals who are on
9	the disqualification list from being employed or
10	contracted by a charter school or serving as a member
11	of a charter school governing board; amending s.
12	1002.421, F.S.; revising requirements for private
13	schools relating to employment; authorizing the
14	Commissioner of Education to deny or revoke the
15	authority of an owner or operator of a private school
16	to establish or operate a private school under
17	specified conditions; requiring the commissioner to
18	include such individuals on the disqualification list;
19	amending s. 1012.315, F.S.; expanding ineligibility
20	for educator certification or employment to persons
21	who are on the disqualification list; amending s.
22	1012.795, F.S.; expanding the authority of the
23	Education Practices Commission to discipline
24	instructional personnel and school administrators;
25	amending s. 1012.796, F.S.; requiring the department
26	to investigate certain complaints involving misconduct
27	by employees or contracted personnel of specified
28	entities; expanding penalties that may be imposed by
29	the commission; prohibiting individuals on the

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30	disqualification list from serving or applying to
31	serve as an employee or contract personnel at any
32	public school or private school; providing criminal
33	penalties; providing an effective date.
34	
35	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
36	
37	Section 1. Subsections (4) and (5) of section 1001.10,
38	Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
39	1001.10 Commissioner of Education; general powers and
40	duties
41	(4) The Department of Education shall:
42	(a) Provide technical assistance to school districts,
43	charter schools, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind,
44	and private schools that accept scholarship students who
45	participate in a state scholarship program under chapter 1002 in
46	the development of policies, procedures, and training related to
47	employment practices and standards of ethical conduct for
48	instructional personnel and school administrators, as defined in
49	s. 1012.01.
50	(b) Maintain a state disqualification list, which must
51	include the following information:
52	1. The name of any individual who has been placed on the
53	list by the Education Practices Commission pursuant to s.
54	1012.796(7), or whose educator certificate has been permanently
55	revoked by the commission pursuant to s. 1012.796; and
56	2. The names of individuals who have been permanently
57	disqualified from participation in a scholarship program by the
58	department pursuant to s. 1002.421.

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59	(5) The Department of Education shall provide authorized
60	staff of school districts, charter schools, the Florida School
61	for the Deaf and the Blind, and private schools that accept
62	scholarship students who participate in a state scholarship
63	program under chapter 1002 with access to electronic
64	verification of information from the following employment
65	screening tools:
66	(a) The Professional Practices' Database of Disciplinary
67	Actions Against Educators; and
68	(b) The Department of Education's Teacher Certification
69	Database; and
70	(c) The Department of Education's disqualification list
71	maintained pursuant to paragraph (4)(b).
72	
73	This subsection does not require the department to provide these
74	staff with unlimited access to the databases. However, the
75	department shall provide the staff with access to the data
76	necessary for performing employment history checks of the
77	instructional personnel and school administrators included in
78	the databases.
79	Section 2. Paragraph (g) of subsection (12) of section
80	1002.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
81	1002.33 Charter schools
82	(12) EMPLOYEES OF CHARTER SCHOOLS.—
83	(g)1. A charter school shall employ or contract with
84	employees who have undergone background screening as provided in
85	s. 1012.32. Members of the governing board of the charter school
86	shall also undergo background screening in a manner similar to
87	that provided in s. 1012.32. An individual may not be employed

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88	as an employee or contract personnel of a charter school, or
89	serve as a member of a charter school governing board, if the
90	individual is on the disqualification list maintained by the
91	department pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).
92	2. A charter school shall disqualify instructional
93	personnel and school administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01,
94	from employment in any position that requires direct contact
95	with students if the personnel or administrators are ineligible
96	for such employment under s. 1012.315.
97	3. The governing board of a charter school shall adopt
98	policies establishing standards of ethical conduct for
99	instructional personnel and school administrators. The policies
100	must require all instructional personnel and school
101	administrators, as defined in s. 1012.01, to complete training
102	on the standards; establish the duty of instructional personnel
103	and school administrators to report, and procedures for
104	reporting, alleged misconduct by other instructional personnel
105	and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or
106	welfare of a student; and include an explanation of the
107	liability protections provided under ss. 39.203 and 768.095. A
108	charter school, or any of its employees, may not enter into a
109	confidentiality agreement regarding terminated or dismissed
110	instructional personnel or school administrators, or personnel
111	or administrators who resign in lieu of termination, based in
112	whole or in part on misconduct that affects the health, safety,
113	or welfare of a student, and may not provide instructional
114	personnel or school administrators with employment references or
115	discuss the personnel's or administrators' performance with
116	prospective employers in another educational setting, without

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36-00619C-19 20191444 117 disclosing the personnel's or administrators' misconduct. Any 118 part of an agreement or contract that has the purpose or effect 119 of concealing misconduct by instructional personnel or school 120 administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a 121 student is void, is contrary to public policy, and may not be 122 enforced. 123 4. Before employing instructional personnel or school 124 administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students, a charter school shall conduct employment history 125 checks of each of the personnel's or administrators' previous 126 127 employers, screen the instructional personnel or school 128 administrators through use of the educator screening tools described in s. 1001.10(5), and document the findings. If unable 129 130 to contact a previous employer, the charter school must document 131 efforts to contact the employer. 132 5. The sponsor of a charter school that knowingly fails to 133 comply with this paragraph shall terminate the charter under 134 subsection (8). 135 Section 3. Paragraph (o) of subsection (1) and subsection 136 (3) of section 1002.421, Florida Statutes, are amended to read: 137 1002.421 State school choice scholarship program 138 accountability and oversight.-139 (1) PRIVATE SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY AND OBLIGATIONS. - A private 140 school participating in an educational scholarship program 141 established pursuant to this chapter must be a private school as 142 defined in s. 1002.01(2) in this state, be registered, and be in 143 compliance with all requirements of this section in addition to 144 private school requirements outlined in s. 1002.42, specific 145 requirements identified within respective scholarship program

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36-00619C-19 20191444 146 laws, and other provisions of Florida law that apply to private schools, and must: 147 (o) Before employing an individual instructional personnel 148 or school administrators in any position that requires direct 149 150 contact with students, conduct employment history checks of each 151 of the personnel's or administrators' previous employers, screen 152 the individual personnel or administrators through use of the 153 educator screening tools described in s. 1001.10(5), and 154 document the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, 155 the private school must document efforts to contact the 156 employer. The school must deny employment to any individual 157 whose educator certificate is revoked, who is barred from 158 reapplication, or who is on the disqualification list maintained 159 by the department pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).

161 The department shall suspend the payment of funds to a private 162 school that knowingly fails to comply with this subsection, and 163 shall prohibit the school from enrolling new scholarship 164 students, for 1 fiscal year and until the school complies. If a 165 private school fails to meet the requirements of this subsection or has consecutive years of material exceptions listed in the 166 167 report required under paragraph (q), the commissioner may 168 determine that the private school is ineligible to participate 169 in a scholarship program.

170 (3) COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION AUTHORITY AND OBLIGATIONS.-171 The Commissioner of Education:

(a) Shall deny, suspend, or revoke a private school's
participation in a scholarship program if it is determined that
the private school has failed to comply with this section or

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36-00619C-19 20191444 175 exhibits a previous pattern of failure to comply. However, if 176 the noncompliance is correctable within a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed 45 days, and if the health, safety, or 177 178 welfare of the students is not threatened, the commissioner may 179 issue a notice of noncompliance which provides the private 180 school with a timeframe within which to provide evidence of 181 compliance before taking action to suspend or revoke the private 182 school's participation in the scholarship program. (b) May deny, suspend, or revoke a private school's 183 184 participation in a scholarship program if the commissioner 185 determines that an owner or operator of the private school is 186 operating or has operated an educational institution in this 187 state or in another state or jurisdiction in a manner contrary 188 to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or if the owner 189 or operator has exhibited a previous pattern of failure to 190 comply with this section or specific requirements identified 191 within respective scholarship program laws. For purposes of this 192 subsection, the term "owner or operator" has the same meaning as 193 provided in paragraph (1) (p). 194 (c) May permanently deny or revoke the authority of an 195 owner or operator to establish or operate a private school in 196 this state if the commissioner decides that the owner or 197 operator is operating or has operated an educational institution 198 in this state or another state or jurisdiction in a manner contrary to the health, safety, or welfare of the public, and 199 200 shall include such individuals on the disqualification list 201 maintained by the department pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b).

202 <u>(d) (c)</u>1. In making such a determination, may consider 203 factors that include, but are not limited to, acts or omissions

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36-00619C-19 20191444 204 by an owner or operator which led to a previous denial, 205 suspension, or revocation of participation in a state or federal 206 education scholarship program; an owner's or operator's failure 207 to reimburse the department or scholarship-funding organization 208 for scholarship funds improperly received or retained by a 209 school; the imposition of a prior criminal sanction related to 210 an owner's or operator's management or operation of an 211 educational institution; the imposition of a civil fine or administrative fine, license revocation or suspension, or 212 213 program eligibility suspension, termination, or revocation 214 related to an owner's or operator's management or operation of 215 an educational institution; or other types of criminal 216 proceedings in which an owner or operator was found guilty of, 217 regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere 218 or guilty to, any offense involving fraud, deceit, dishonesty, 219 or moral turpitude.

220 2. The commissioner's determination is subject to the 221 following:

222 a. If the commissioner intends to deny, suspend, or revoke 223 a private school's participation in the scholarship program, the 224 department shall notify the private school of such proposed 225 action in writing by certified mail and regular mail to the private school's address of record with the department. The 226 227 notification shall include the reasons for the proposed action 228 and notice of the timelines and procedures set forth in this 229 paragraph.

b. The private school that is adversely affected by the
proposed action shall have 15 days after receipt of the notice
of proposed action to file with the department's agency clerk a

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36-00619C-19 20191444 233 request for a proceeding pursuant to ss. 120.569 and 120.57. If 234 the private school is entitled to a hearing under s. 120.57(1), 235 the department shall forward the request to the Division of 236 Administrative Hearings. 237 c. Upon receipt of a request referred pursuant to this 238 subparagraph, the director of the Division of Administrative 239 Hearings shall expedite the hearing and assign an administrative 240 law judge who shall commence a hearing within 30 days after the receipt of the formal written request by the division and enter 241 a recommended order within 30 days after the hearing or within 242 243 30 days after receipt of the hearing transcript, whichever is later. Each party shall be allowed 10 days in which to submit 244 245 written exceptions to the recommended order. A final order shall 246 be entered by the agency within 30 days after the entry of a 247 recommended order. The provisions of this sub-subparagraph may be waived upon stipulation by all parties. 248 249 (e) (d) May immediately suspend payment of scholarship funds 250 if it is determined that there is probable cause to believe that 251 there is: 252 1. An imminent threat to the health, safety, or welfare of 253 the students; 254 2. A previous pattern of failure to comply with this 255 section; or 256 3. Fraudulent activity on the part of the private school. 257 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:

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262	a. A court of competent jurisdiction in compliance with an
263	order of that court or the attorney of record in accordance with
264	a lawfully issued subpoena, consistent with the Family
265	Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g.
266	b. A person or entity authorized by a court of competent
267	jurisdiction in compliance with an order of that court or the
268	attorney of record pursuant to a lawfully issued subpoena,
269	consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act,
270	20 U.S.C. s. 1232g.
271	c. Any person, entity, or authority issuing a subpoena for
272	law enforcement purposes when the court or other issuing agency
273	has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena
274	or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be
275	disclosed, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and
276	Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g, and 34 C.F.R. s. 99.31.
277	
278	The commissioner's order suspending payment pursuant to this
279	paragraph may be appealed pursuant to the same procedures and
280	timelines as the notice of proposed action set forth in
281	subparagraph (d)2. subparagraph (c)2.
282	Section 4. Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, is amended
283	to read:
284	1012.315 Disqualification from employment.—A person is
285	ineligible for educator certification or employment in any
286	position that requires direct contact with students in a
287	district school system, charter school, or private school that
288	accepts scholarship students who participate in a state
289	scholarship program under chapter 1002 if the person <u>is on the</u>
290	disqualification list maintained by the department pursuant to
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291	s. 1001.10(4)(b) or has been convicted of:
292	(1) Any felony offense prohibited under any of the
293	following statutes:
294	(a) Section 393.135, relating to sexual misconduct with
295	certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such
296	sexual misconduct.
297	(b) Section 394.4593, relating to sexual misconduct with
298	certain mental health patients and reporting of such sexual
299	misconduct.
300	(c) Section 415.111, relating to adult abuse, neglect, or
301	exploitation of aged persons or disabled adults.
302	(d) Section 782.04, relating to murder.
303	(e) Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter, aggravated
304	manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult, aggravated
305	manslaughter of a child, or aggravated manslaughter of an
306	officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or a
307	paramedic.
308	(f) Section 784.021, relating to aggravated assault.
309	(g) Section 784.045, relating to aggravated battery.
310	(h) Section 784.075, relating to battery on a detention or
311	commitment facility staff member or a juvenile probation
312	officer.
313	(i) Section 787.01, relating to kidnapping.
314	(j) Section 787.02, relating to false imprisonment.
315	(k) Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a
316	child.
317	(1) Section 787.04(2), relating to leading, taking,
318	enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or
319	concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending

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320	custody proceedings.
321	(m) Section 787.04(3), relating to leading, taking,
322	enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or
323	concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending
324	dependency proceedings or proceedings concerning alleged abuse
325	or neglect of a minor.
326	(n) Section 790.115(1), relating to exhibiting firearms or
327	weapons at a school-sponsored event, on school property, or
328	within 1,000 feet of a school.
329	(o) Section 790.115(2)(b), relating to possessing an
330	electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon
331	at a school-sponsored event or on school property.
332	(p) Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.
333	(q) Former s. 794.041, relating to sexual activity with or
334	solicitation of a child by a person in familial or custodial
335	authority.
336	(r) Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual activity
337	with certain minors.
338	(s) Section 794.08, relating to female genital mutilation.
339	(t) Chapter 796, relating to prostitution.
340	(u) Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent
341	exposure.
342	(v) Section 800.101, relating to offenses against students
343	by authority figures.
344	(w) Section 806.01, relating to arson.
345	(x) Section 810.14, relating to voyeurism.
346	(y) Section 810.145, relating to video voyeurism.
347	(z) Section 812.014(6), relating to coordinating the
348	commission of theft in excess of \$3,000.

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349
           (aa) Section 812.0145, relating to theft from persons 65
350
     years of age or older.
351
           (bb) Section 812.019, relating to dealing in stolen
352
     property.
353
           (cc) Section 812.13, relating to robbery.
354
           (dd) Section 812.131, relating to robbery by sudden
355
     snatching.
356
           (ee) Section 812.133, relating to carjacking.
357
           (ff) Section 812.135, relating to home-invasion robbery.
358
           (qq) Section 817.563, relating to fraudulent sale of
359
     controlled substances.
360
           (hh) Section 825.102, relating to abuse, aggravated abuse,
361
     or neglect of an elderly person or disabled adult.
362
           (ii) Section 825.103, relating to exploitation of an
363
     elderly person or disabled adult.
364
           (jj) Section 825.1025, relating to lewd or lascivious
365
     offenses committed upon or in the presence of an elderly person
366
     or disabled person.
367
           (kk) Section 826.04, relating to incest.
368
           (11) Section 827.03, relating to child abuse, aggravated
369
     child abuse, or neglect of a child.
370
           (mm) Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the
371
     delinquency or dependency of a child.
372
           (nn) Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance by a
     child.
373
374
           (oo) Section 843.01, relating to resisting arrest with
375
     violence.
376
           (pp) Chapter 847, relating to obscenity.
377
           (qq) Section 874.05, relating to causing, encouraging,
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378	soliciting, or recruiting another to join a criminal street
379	gang.
380	(rr) Chapter 893, relating to drug abuse prevention and
381	control, if the offense was a felony of the second degree or
382	greater severity.
383	(ss) Section 916.1075, relating to sexual misconduct with
384	certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual
385	misconduct.
386	(tt) Section 944.47, relating to introduction, removal, or
387	possession of contraband at a correctional facility.
388	(uu) Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct in
389	juvenile justice programs.
390	(vv) Section 985.711, relating to introduction, removal, or
391	possession of contraband at a juvenile detention facility or
392	commitment program.
393	(2) Any misdemeanor offense prohibited under any of the
394	following statutes:
395	(a) Section 784.03, relating to battery, if the victim of
396	the offense was a minor.
397	(b) Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a
398	child.
399	(3) Any criminal act committed in another state or under
400	federal law which, if committed in this state, constitutes an
401	offense prohibited under any statute listed in subsection (1) or
402	subsection (2).
403	(4) Any delinquent act committed in this state or any
404	delinquent or criminal act committed in another state or under
405	federal law which, if committed in this state, qualifies an
406	individual for inclusion on the Registered Juvenile Sex Offender
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407	List under s. 943.0435(1)(h)1.d.
408	Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 1012.795, Florida
409	Statutes, is amended to read:
410	1012.795 Education Practices Commission; authority to
411	discipline
412	(1) The Education Practices Commission may suspend the
413	educator certificate of any instructional personnel or school
414	administrator, as defined in s. 1012.01(2) or (3), for up to 5
415	years, thereby denying that person the right to teach or
416	otherwise be employed by a district school board or public
417	school in any capacity requiring direct contact with students
418	for that period of time, after which the person may return to
419	teaching as provided in subsection (4); may revoke the educator
420	certificate of any person, thereby denying that person the right
421	to teach or otherwise be employed by a district school board or
422	public school in any capacity requiring direct contact with
423	students for up to 10 years, with reinstatement subject to
424	subsection (4); may permanently revoke the educator certificate
425	of any person thereby denying that person the right to teach or
426	otherwise be employed by a district school board or public
427	school in any capacity requiring direct contact with students;
428	may suspend a person's educator certificate, upon an order of
429	the court or notice by the Department of Revenue relating to the
430	payment of child support; may place an employee or contracted
431	personnel of any public school, charter school, charter school
432	governing board, or private school that accepts scholarship
433	students who participate in a state scholarship program under
434	chapter 1002 on the disqualification list maintained by the
435	department pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) if such conduct would

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36-00619C-19 20191444 436 otherwise result in the permanent revocation of a certificate; 437 or may impose any other penalty provided by law, if the person: 438 (a) Obtained or attempted to obtain an educator certificate 439 by fraudulent means. 440 (b) Knowingly failed to report actual or suspected child abuse as required in s. 1006.061 or report alleged misconduct by 441 442 instructional personnel or school administrators which affects 443 the health, safety, or welfare of a student as required in s. 444 1012.796. 445 (c) Has proved to be incompetent to teach or to perform 446 duties as an employee of the public school system or to teach in 447 or to operate a private school. 448 (d) Has been guilty of gross immorality or an act involving moral turpitude as defined by rule of the State Board of 449 450 Education, including engaging in or soliciting sexual, romantic, 451 or lewd conduct with a student or minor. 452 (e) Has had an educator certificate or other professional 453 license sanctioned by this or any other state or has had the 454 authority to practice the regulated profession revoked, 455 suspended, or otherwise acted against, including a denial of 456 certification or licensure, by the licensing or certifying 457 authority of any jurisdiction, including its agencies and 458 subdivisions. The licensing or certifying authority's acceptance 459 of a relinquishment, stipulation, consent order, or other 460 settlement offered in response to or in anticipation of the 461 filing of charges against the licensee or certificateholder 462 shall be construed as action against the license or certificate. 463 For purposes of this section, a sanction or action against a 464 professional license, a certificate, or an authority to practice

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465	a regulated profession must relate to being an educator or the
466	fitness of or ability to be an educator.
467	(f) Has been convicted or found guilty of, has had
468	adjudication withheld for, or has pled guilty or nolo contendere
469	to a misdemeanor, felony, or any other criminal charge, other
470	than a minor traffic violation.
471	(g) Upon investigation, has been found guilty of personal
472	conduct that seriously reduces that person's effectiveness as an
473	employee of the district school board.
474	(h) Has breached a contract, as provided in s. 1012.33(2)
475	or s. 1012.335.
476	(i) Has been the subject of a court order or notice by the
477	Department of Revenue pursuant to s. 409.2598 directing the
478	Education Practices Commission to suspend the certificate as a
479	result of noncompliance with a child support order, a subpoena,
480	an order to show cause, or a written agreement with the
481	Department of Revenue.
482	(j) Has violated the Principles of Professional Conduct for
483	the Education Profession prescribed by State Board of Education
484	rules.
485	(k) Has otherwise violated the provisions of law, the
486	penalty for which is the revocation of the educator certificate.
487	(l) Has violated any order of the Education Practices
488	Commission.
489	(m) Has been the subject of a court order or plea agreement
490	in any jurisdiction which requires the certificateholder to
491	surrender or otherwise relinquish his or her educator's
492	certificate. A surrender or relinquishment shall be for
493	permanent revocation of the certificate. A person may not

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494	surrender or otherwise relinquish his or her certificate prior
495	to a finding of probable cause by the commissioner as provided
496	in s. 1012.796.
497	(n) Has been disqualified from educator certification under
498	s. 1012.315.
499	(o) Has committed a third recruiting offense as determined
500	by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) pursuant
501	to s. 1006.20(2)(b).
502	(p) Has violated test security as provided in s. 1008.24.
503	Section 6. Paragraph (g) of subsection (1), paragraph (i)
504	of subsection (7), and paragraph (10) are added to section
505	1012.796, Florida Statutes, to read:
506	1012.796 Complaints against teachers and administrators;
507	procedure; penalties
508	(1)
509	(g) The department shall immediately investigate any
510	legally sufficient complaint that involves misconduct by an
511	employee or contracted personnel of any public school, charter
512	school, charter school governing board, or private school that
513	accepts scholarship students who participate in a state
514	scholarship program under chapter 1002 which affects the health,
515	safety, or welfare of a student and would otherwise result in
516	the permanent revocation of a certificate, giving the complaint
517	priority over other pending complaints.
518	(7) A panel of the commission shall enter a final order
519	either dismissing the complaint or imposing one or more of the
520	following penalties:
521	(i) Place an individual who is not a certificateholder on
522	the disqualification list maintained by the department pursuant

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523	to s. 1001.10(4)(b) if the conduct would meet the standard for
524	permanent revocation of a certificate.
525	
526	The penalties imposed under this subsection are in addition to,
527	and not in lieu of, the penalties required for a third
528	recruiting offense pursuant to s. 1006.20(2)(b).
529	(10) An individual on the disqualification list maintained
530	by the department pursuant to s. 1001.10(4)(b) may not serve or
531	apply to serve as an employee or contracted personnel at any
532	public school or private school in this state. An individual who
533	violates this provision commits a felony of the third degree,
534	punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
535	Section 7. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.

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