WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5081

By Delegates E. Pritt, Hornby, Willis, Chiarelli,
Holstein, W. Clark, Smith, Brooks, Dittman, and
Fehrenbacher

[Introduced January 25, 2024; Referred to the Committee on Education]

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A BILL to amend and reenact §18A-2-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to requiring all school employees to pass a Child Protective Services background check in order to be employed in a school.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. SCHOOL PERSONNEL. §18A-2-1. Employment in general.

- (a) The employment of professional personnel shall be made by the board only upon nomination and recommendation of the superintendent, subject to the following:
- (1) The superintendent shall provide the principal at the school at which the professional educator or paraprofessional employee is to be employed an opportunity to interview all qualified applicants and make recommendations to the county superintendent regarding their employment;
- (2) The principal may not recommend for employment an individual who is related to him or her as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother or half sister;
 - (3) Nothing shall prohibit the timely employment of persons to perform necessary duties;
- (4) In case the board refuses to employ any or all of the persons nominated, the superintendent shall nominate others and submit the same to the board at such time as the board may direct;
- (5) All personnel so nominated and recommended for employment and for subsequent assignment shall meet the certification, licensing, training and other eligibility classifications as may be required by provisions of this chapter and by state board rule. In addition to any other information required, the application for any certification or licensing shall include the applicant's Social Security number.
 - (b) Professional personnel employed as deputy, associate or assistant superintendents by

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the board in offices, departments or divisions at locations other than a school and who are directly answerable to the superintendent shall serve at the will and pleasure of the superintendent and may be removed by the superintendent upon approval of the board. Such professional personnel shall retain seniority rights only in the area or areas in which they hold valid certification or licensure.

- (c) All persons applying for employment in any public or state-funded charter school must submit to a background check through Child Protective Services.
- (1) In order to be hired, there must be no substantiated reports or convictions of child abuse in the employee's record.
- (2) Any substantiated reports that have been overturned pursuant to a grievance process shall not be an impediment to employment in a public school or state-funded charter school.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require school personnel to pass a CPS background check prior to being hired.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.