

SB 573 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 2/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) to immediately suspend the license or registration of a teacher or administrator who engages in abuse, sexual conduct, drug or alcohol abuse, physical force on a student, sexual harassment, assault, or domestic violence. Requires the license or registration to remain suspended until TSPC determines that the report is unsubstantiated, decides not to pursue the report, or enacts sanctions against the teacher or administrator.

Requires all school employees suspected of sexual conduct be placed on administrative leave until the Department of Human Services or law enforcement determines if the report is substantiated. Eliminates the ability of school districts to place these employees in non-supervisory positions while waiting for the determination by DHS or law enforcement. Allows education providers to reinstate employee placed on administrative leave if DHS or law enforcement makes a determination on the report and other requirements are met. Declares and emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

TSPC is responsible for disciplining licensed school employees, including suspending, or revoking licenses, registrations or certificates for teachers, administrators, school counselors, school social workers, school psychiatrists and school nurses. TSPC must investigate all reports of sexual conduct or abuse involving TSPC licensed personnel that it receives from the public or school districts. Under current law, TSPC may discipline, suspend or revoke licenses for teachers and administrators for conviction of crimes, gross neglect of duty and any gross unfitness. School districts must require school employees to report suspected abuse and sexual conduct to a person identified by the school district and to DHS or law enforcement. School districts must place employees on administrative leave for reports of abuse and administrative leave or in non-supervisory positions for reports of sexual conduct until DHS or law enforcement has made a determination on the report.