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HOUSE BILL NO. 1679

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled December 23, 2008

A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-296.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to out-of-state child abuse and neglect data for school board applicants.

Patron—Orrock

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 22.1-296.4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 22.1-296.4. Child abuse and neglect data required.

A. On and after July 1, 1997, every school board shall require, as a condition of employment, that any applicant who is offered or accepts employment requiring direct contact with students, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the school board to obtain a search of the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect maintained by the Department of Social Services pursuant to § 63.2-1515. The school board shall ensure that all such searches are requested in conformance with the regulations of the Board of Social Services. In addition, where the applicant has resided in another state within the last five years, the school board shall require as a condition of employment that such applicant provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the school board to obtain information from each relevant state as to whether the applicant was the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect in such state. The school board shall take reasonable steps to determine whether the applicant was the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect in the relevant state. ~~Such reasonable~~ *Reasonable* steps shall ~~include, but not be limited to, mean~~ *include, but not be limited to, mean* contacting any central child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the relevant state, ~~but only if that state provides access to the information contained in the registry to out-of-state school boards.~~ *but only if that state provides access to the information contained in the registry to out-of-state school boards.* The Department of Social Services shall maintain a database of central child abuse and neglect registries in other states ~~that provide access to out-of-state school boards,~~ *that provide access to out-of-state school boards,* for use by local school boards. The applicant may be required to pay the cost of any search conducted pursuant to this subsection at the discretion of the school board. From such funds as may be available for this purpose, however, the school board may pay for the search.

The Department of Social Services shall respond to such request by the school board in cases where there is no match within the central registry regarding applicants for employment within ten business days of receipt of such request. In cases where there is a match within the central registry regarding applicants for employment, the Department of Social Services shall respond to such request by the school board within thirty business days of receipt of such request. The response may be by first-class mail or facsimile transmission.

B. If the response obtained pursuant to subsection A indicates that the applicant is the subject of a founded case of child abuse and neglect, such applicant shall be denied employment, or the employment shall be rescinded.

C. If an applicant is denied employment because of information appearing on his record in the registry, the school board shall provide a copy of the information obtained from the registry to the applicant. The information provided to the school board by the Department of Social Services shall be confidential and shall not be disseminated by the school board.

INTRODUCED

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