

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5552

C 266 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring school districts to request information from employment applicants' out-of-state employers.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Benton, Johnson, Shin, Carrell, Rasmussen, Mulliken and Roach).

Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education **House Committee on Education**

Background: Under legislation passed last session, certificated and classified school district employees who apply to another school district must sign a release authorizing the disclosure of any sexual misconduct information, including any related documents in their previous school district employer's personnel files. Hiring school districts must request from the applicant's previous school district employers any information about that employee's sexual misconduct including related documents. The information must be provided within 20 days of receiving the request.

Sexual misconduct information is only used to evaluate the applicant's qualifications for the position for which he or she has applied and the information is not disclosed to anyone not directly involved in the evaluation process. A person who wrongfully discloses information is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Applicants may be employed on a conditional basis pending review of any sexual misconduct information. School districts must not hire an applicant who refuses to sign the release.

The State Board of Education defined the term "sexual misconduct" for the purposes of this section.

Summary: Language is added regarding the release of information statement signed by the applicant to clarify that this release applies to disclosure by all school district employers including out-of-state employers. Language is added to clarify that school districts must request information from all current and past school district employers including out-of-state employers.

For out-of-state applicants, if the laws or policies of the other state prevent the documents requested from being made available to Washington State school districts or if that out-of-state school district fails or refuses to cooperate with the request, the applicant may still be hired.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 47 0

House 96 0

Effective: July 24, 2005