
Education Committee

HB 1732

Brief Description: Concerning the confidentiality of educator professional growth plans.

Sponsors: Representatives Springer and Bergquist; by request of Professional Educator Standards Board.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides that the Professional Growth Plans in educator license renewals submitted through the electronic certification system in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction are exempt from public inspection and copying.

Hearing Date: 2/7/17

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

The Public Records Act (PRA). The PRA requires all state and local agencies to disclose public records to any person upon request, unless the record falls within certain statutory exemptions. Under the PRA, a public record is any writing containing information relating to the conduct of government or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency, regardless of physical form or characteristics.

Over 500 specific references in the PRA or other statutes remove certain information from application of the PRA, provide exceptions to the public disclosure and copying of certain information, or designate certain information as confidential. For example, personal information in files maintained for employees of any public agency are exempt from disclosure under the PRA to the extent that disclosure would violate the employee's right to privacy.

The provisions requiring public records disclosure must be interpreted liberally while the exemptions must be interpreted narrowly to effectuate the general policy favoring disclosure.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Professional Growth Plans. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has established two levels of certification:

- residency, which is achieved after completion of an approved preparation program; and
- professional, which is a advanced level certificate achieved after a minimum amount of experience and a specified process of additional professional development.

In general, for renewal of a professional certificate, the PESB requires teachers, administrators, school counselors, and school psychologists to complete four annual Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) during a five-year period. A PGP is a plan an educator intends to implement for growth over the coming year.

Summary of Bill:

The PGPs in educator license renewals submitted through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's electronic certification system are exempt from public inspection and copying.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.