



BILL: House Bill 373
TITLE: Education – Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Prevention – Hiring Emergent Employees
HEARING DATE: January 20, 2021
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: Mrs. Ardath Cade, Legislative Representative (410-991-9383)

The Washington County Board of Education (WCBOE) supports House Bill 373.

The General Assembly previously adopted safeguards to assist local school systems with identifying potential employees who have been the subject of child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct allegations or investigations or who have had a license, professional license, or certificate suspended, surrendered or revoked while allegations of child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct were pending or under investigation, or due to an adjudication or finding of child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct.

Pursuant to the specific requirements of the law, a local school system may not hire an individual until the school system completes a review of the candidate’s employment history. This review process generally delays the hiring of a new employee anywhere from two (2) to four (4) weeks, making it difficult to fully-staff classrooms with certificated teachers in a timely manner. In some cases, qualified candidates have accepted other employment opportunities while WCBOE is completing the review. This results in WCBOE losing a desirable candidate and having to start the hiring process from scratch causing even further delay. House Bill 373 seeks to correct these unintended consequences by allowing school systems to hire an emergent employee for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days pending the review and its outcome. WCBOE fully supports this proposed change to the law.

WCBOE also supports the proposed amendments to the definition of “direct contact with minors.”

WCBOE urges the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 373.

Thank you.

cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. Boyd J. Michael, III, Superintendent
Dr. Peggy Pugh, Associate Superintendent for Administration and Leadership
Dr. Gary Willow, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Patricia Ursprung, Deputy Legal Counsel
Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education