**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑25‑410, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE DATE BY WHICH A SCHOOL MUST NOTIFY A TEACHER OF HIS TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PENDING SCHOOL YEAR, SO AS TO CHANGE THE DATE FROM AUGUST FIFTEENTH TO AUGUST EIGHTH; AND TO AMEND SECTION 59‑1‑425, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE BEGINNING AND LENGTH OF A SCHOOL TERM, SO AS TO CHANGE THE EARLIEST DAY ON WHICH THE TERM MAY BEGIN FROM THE THIRD MONDAY IN AUGUST TO THE SECOND MONDAY IN AUGUST.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 59‑25‑410 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑25‑410. (A) On or before April fifteenth of each year, the boards of trustees of the several school districts shall decide and notify, in writing, the teachers, as defined in Section 59‑1‑130, in their employ concerning their employment for the ensuing year. If the board, or the person designated by it, fails to notify a teacher who has been employed by a school district for a majority of the current school year of his status for the ensuing year, the teacher shall be deemed to be reemployed for the ensuing year and the board shall issue a contract to such teacher as though the board had reemployed such teacher in the usual manner. Notices of intent not to renew an employment contract shall be given in writing no later than April fifteenth of each year.

(B) On or before August ~~fifteenth~~ eighth, the superintendent, principal, where applicable, or supervisor shall notify the teacher of his tentative assignment for the ensuing school year.

(C) This section shall not apply to any teacher whose contract of employment or dismissal is under appeal under Section 59‑25‑450.

(D) For purposes of this article, ‘teacher’ means all employees possessing a professional certificate issued by the State Department of Education, except those employees working pursuant to multi‑year contracts.”

SECTION 2. Section 59‑1‑425(A) of the 1976 Code, as added by Act 260 of 2006, is amended to read:

“(A) Each local school district board of trustees of the State shall have the authority to establish an annual school calendar for teachers, staff, and students. The statutory school term is one hundred ninety days annually and shall consist of a minimum of one hundred eighty days of instruction covering at least nine calendar months. However, beginning with the ~~2007‑2008~~ 2016‑2017 school year the opening date for students must not be before the ~~third~~ second Monday in August, except for schools operating on a year‑round modified school calendar. Three days must be used for collegial professional development based upon the educational standards as required by Section 59‑18‑300. The professional development shall address, at a minimum, academic achievement standards including strengthening teachers’ knowledge in their content area, teaching techniques, and assessment. No more than two days may be used for preparation of opening of schools and the remaining five days may be used for teacher planning, academic plans, and parent conferences. The number of instructional hours in an instructional day may vary according to local board policy and does not have to be uniform among the schools in the district.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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