**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 9 TO CHAPTER 25, TITLE 59 SO AS TO ENACT THE “TEACHER BILL OF RIGHTS”, AND TO ENUMERATE THE BASIC RIGHTS TO WHICH ALL CERTIFIED PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THIS STATE ARE ENTITLED; BY ADDING SECTION 59‑25‑60 SO AS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND FULL‑TIME LIBRARIANS ARE ENTITLED TO AT LEAST A THIRTY‑MINUTE DAILY PLANNING PERIOD FREE FROM THE INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS, TO PROVIDE EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY SET FLEXIBLE OR ROTATING SCHEDULES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE DUTY‑FREE PLANNING PERIODS, TO PROVIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE PROVISIONS MAY NOT RESULT IN A LENGTHENED SCHOOL DAY, AND TO PROVIDE TEACHERS OR LIBRARIANS MAY REPORT ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS TO THE OMBUDSMAN OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; AND BY ADDING SECTION 12‑6‑3810 SO AS TO PROVIDE CERTAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH INCOME TAX CREDITS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAXES PAID.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 25, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 9

Teacher Bill of Rights

Section 59‑25‑910. This act must be known and may be cited as the ‘Teacher Bill of Rights’.

Section 59‑25‑920. All certified public school teachers in South Carolina should be able to expect the following:

(1) have their professional judgment and discretion included in regard to disciplinary actions or instructional decisions in the classroom made in accordance with school and district policy;

(2) teach free from fear of frivolous lawsuits;

(3) take appropriate disciplinary measures, pursuant to federal law, school policy and district policy, to facilitate a learning environment developed through a culture of respect between teacher and students;

(4) work in an environment that is conducive to learning;

(5) an unencumbered daily planning time that is coordinated with school administration;

(6) a recognition that the goal of the State should be a competitive salary commensurate with that of other professionals with similar years of experience, and educational degrees;

(7) have the State and district take all necessary steps to ensure that teachers are not burdened with unnecessary paperwork that prevents the fulfillment of the teacher’s primary directive to implement effective instruction for their students;

(8) additional compensation or time for work time above and beyond contracted days; and

(9) receive, as teachers under induction contracts, leadership and support from school and district personnel, including the assignment of qualified mentors who:

(a) commit to helping them become competent and confident professionals in the classroom; and

(b) offer support and assistance as needed to meet performance standards and professional expectations.

Section 59‑25‑930. The provisions of this article do not create or imply a private cause of action for a violation of its provisions.”

SECTION 2. Article 1, Chapter 25, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑25‑60. (A) Each classroom teacher and full‑time librarian is entitled to at least a thirty‑minute daily planning period free from the instruction and supervision of students. Each school district may set flexible or rotating schedules for each classroom teacher or full‑time librarian in the district for the implementation of this duty‑free planning period. Implementation of this section may not result in a lengthened school day. A teacher or librarian who feels that the provisions of this item have not been followed may report the violations to the department’s Ombudsman.”

SECTION 3.A. Article 25, Chapter 6, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 12‑6‑3810. (A) A qualified taxpayer in a qualified county is allowed a refundable income tax credit equal to one hundred percent of the property taxes paid by the taxpayer on his legal residence and not more than one contiguous acre that he owns, which qualifies for the four percent assessment ratio pursuant to Section 12‑43‑220(c). The credit allowed by this section only may be claimed for five consecutive years. To claim the credit allowed by this section, the taxpayer’s legal residence for which he is receiving the credit allowed by this section must be located in a qualifying county. For purposes of this section, a qualified taxpayer means an employee who is employed in a qualifying county as a teacher in a K‑12 public school. For purposes of this section, a qualifying county is a county designated as a Tier IV county, pursuant to Section 12‑6‑3360, in the previous tax year; however, once a taxpayer is allowed the credit pursuant to this section, the taxpayer may continue to claim the credit regardless of a county’s designation, so long as the county of employment and the county of residency remains the same as the year the taxpayer was initially allowed the credit.

(B) A taxpayer shall claim the credit in the year in which the property taxes are paid.

(C) The department shall prescribe the form and manner of proof required to obtain the credit. The department may consult with county tax officials to determine the amount of the credit.”

B. This SECTION applies to tax years beginning after 2019.

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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