

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1598

Title: *An act relating to prohibiting the use of certain psychological techniques in the classroom.*

Brief Description: *Prohibiting educational methods that involve dissociative mental states.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Sterk, Johnson, Talcott and Mulliken.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Meeting Date: *February 14, 1997.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *Bronwyn Mauldin (786-7093).*

Background: All certificated employees of school districts, including teachers, school counselors, and principals, must meet certain requirements established by the State Board of Education. Some certificated employees must also be licensed by specified national or regional professional organizations.

Certificated employees, including teachers and counselors, may have their certificates revoked for any of the following acts of unprofessional conduct:

- Falsifying or deliberately misrepresenting professional qualifications;
- Using alcohol or controlled substances on school premises;
- Disregarding professional standards;
- Violating a written contract;
- Engaging in sexual misconduct; or
- Engaging in unauthorized professional practices.

A teacher whose certificate to teach has been revoked may appeal that decision to the State Board of Education.

If a district superintendent determines that there is probable cause for a certificated employee to be discharged, the employee must first be notified in writing, specifying the cause or causes. The employee may request a hearing before a neutral arbitrator.

Classified employees also have a right to appeal a termination decision of any school official or school board.

Summary of Bill: Educational practitioners are prohibited from using any curriculum or methods that produce or advocate a dissociative mental state. A dissociative mental state is defined as a state where mental processes have been isolated and split off from the main personality, or have lost their normal thought-affect relationship. The prohibited methods include but are not limited to hypnosis, progressive relaxation, guided imagery, and nonsecular meditation.

An educational practitioner who uses any method or curriculum that advocates or produces dissociative states is in violation of professional practices. The penalty for the first violation is suspension without pay for at least ten days. The penalty for any subsequent violation is dismissal and forfeiture of all state-issued educational licenses.

Fiscal Note: *Not requested.*

Effective Date: This bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.