

HB 139 -- ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS

SPONSOR: Richey

This bill defines a "screened volunteer" as any individual who assists a school by providing uncompensated service, who may be left alone with students, and who has successfully completed a criminal background check. School districts are currently required to have policies about how and what information they release about former employees to other public schools. Beginning January 1, 2024, this bill requires such policies to also include information about screened volunteers. The bill further applies existing requirements related to allegations of sexual misconduct against school employees to screened volunteers as well (Section 162.068, RSMo).

The bill establishes "Emilyn's Law". The bill defines "association" as a statewide athletic association or organization that receives any public money and has at least one public school district as a member. Under the provisions of the bill, all employees of such an association are mandated reporters. Additionally, the bill requires DESE to create and maintain a database listing each person who is employed as coach or a member of the coaching staff, or serves as a screened volunteer, for an association member school district. The database must contain information related to specified substantiated allegations of sexual misconduct against such employees and volunteers, as well as specified information obtained by the school districts as a result of criminal background checks. Prior to hiring any new coach or member of the coaching staff, or accepting a screened volunteer, all association members must consult this database (Section 168.631).

This bill is similar to HCS HB 1955 (2022).