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HOUSE BILL NO. 263

Offered January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-23.7, relating to Superintendent of Public Instruction; employment of certified school library specialists.

Patrons—Simonds, Bulova and Cole, N.T.

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-23.7 as follows:

§ 22.1-23.7. Employment of certified school library specialists.

The Superintendent shall employ in the Department at least one certified school library specialist with an endorsement in library media preK-12 who has served as a public school librarian in the Commonwealth for at least five years immediately preceding such employment in the Department. Each such certified school library specialist shall be subject to the provisions of the Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.). The Superintendent shall require any such certified school library specialist to have the following duties:

1. Provide leadership and technical assistance with the implementation and use of information literacy skills to support student achievement to school divisions, Department staff, and other stakeholders;

2. Direct the implementation of state and national school library standards and consult with and provide technical assistance to local school divisions relating to such standards;

3. Collaborate on various grants and other initiatives that promote student literacy through school library programs throughout the Commonwealth;

4. Support student learning through instructional programs in which students are required to demonstrate information literacy, digital literacy and fluency, and effective use of technology and that incorporate science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning and integrate the digital learning integration Standards of Learning;

5. Provide the Department, the Board, the General Assembly, and school boards with support relating to student learning through the use of school library standards and library resources;

6. Research and promote educational applications of technologies to improve instruction and to enhance student learning and literacy through the use of information literacy skills;

7. Create a crosswalk to demonstrate connections between national school library standards and the Standards of Learning;

8. Work with The Library of Virginia and other state organizations to acquire and promote digital resources available to all students in kindergarten through grade 12;

9. Serve as a consultant and specialist regarding school library licensure requirements;

10. Ensure that the Department is up to date on school library issues, terminology, and guidelines, including alignment to current national standards regarding the preparation of school librarians;

11. Assist school divisions in the Commonwealth in which no division-level school library supervisor is employed; and

12. Provide common evaluation practices for school librarians in the Commonwealth and provide professional development for school librarians on how library standards should be integrated with other standards, such as content-specific standards and the Standards of Learning, and on the use of available digital resources, including open educational resources.

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