
Education Committee

ESSB 5100

Brief Description: Regarding health insurance information for students.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Hobbs, McAuliffe, Regala, Fairley, Shin, Weinstein, Murray, Keiser, Prentice, Kline, Spanel, Fraser, Tom, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires public schools to ask whether students have health insurance, and to provide information about health insurance programs to parents and guardians of students for whom such coverage is not indicated.

Hearing Date: 3/27/07

Staff: Andrew Colvin (786-7304).

Background:

School districts are currently required to conduct a number of health-related activities, including screenings for vision, hearing, and scoliosis; review of immunization records; and attainment of a medication or treatment plan for a child with a life threatening health condition.

Many school districts provide an informational packet that includes information on public insurance programs like Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, as well as other programs like free and reduced-price meals. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in conjunction with Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and other departments, distributes a packet of informational materials to all 296 school districts. The 285 school districts participating in the food programs are required by the United States Department of Agriculture to distribute the packet to ensure the application for free and reduced price meals is made available.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Beginning with the 2007-08 school year's enrollment process, public schools are required to ask whether students have health insurance. If the parent or guardian does not provide a response or indicates the student is not insured, the school, or a designated community health care collaborative under a written contract with a school district, must provide parents with information about Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Schools must provide this information in writing via postal mail, electronic mail, or existing communication channels by December 1, 2007.

The OSPI must work with the DSHS and community health care collaboratives to develop a one-page informational sheet on health insurance for children, and the OSPI must post the informational sheet on its web site by August 2007. Beginning December 1, 2008, schools must report annually to the OSPI the number of students that are reported as not having health insurance.

A "community health care collaborative" is defined.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.