

HOUSE BILL REPORT

E2SSB 5212

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to school safety plans.

Brief Description: Providing for school safety plans.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Eide, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Franklin, Rasmussen and Costa.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/21/00, 2/24/00 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)**

- In addition to natural disasters, comprehensive school all-hazard crisis and emergency plans must cover violent acts and serious injuries or death of students and staff.
- A planning grant program is created; to the extent funds are appropriated for this program, they must be used by school districts to update and develop emergency plans for every school, train staff in implementing the plans, acquire materials, and practice the plans.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Quall, Democratic Co-Chair; Talcott, Republican Co-Chair; Haigh, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Carlson; Cox; Keiser; Rockefeller; Santos; D. Schmidt; Schual-Berke; Stensen and Wensman.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Thomas.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

Background:

Current law requires the State Board of Education, upon the advice of the Washington State Patrol's Director of Fire Protection, to adopt rules concerning the evacuation of schools during a "sudden emergency." Pursuant to this authority, the state board has issued rules requiring local school boards and governing bodies of private schools to develop and practice evacuation plans. These plans are to be taught periodically to all school personnel and practiced as frequently as may be necessary.

Under current law, the State Military Department is responsible for comprehensive emergency management. "Comprehensive emergency management" means the preparation and implementation of all civilian emergency functions, including responding to "disasters caused by all hazards, whether natural, technological, or human caused."

Summary of Amended Bill:

The State Board of Education must consult with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Military Department, in addition to the State Patrol, when providing and updating rules for emergency plans for school districts and schools. In addition to evacuations for natural disasters under previous rules, comprehensive all-hazard crisis and emergency plans must cover violent acts and serious injuries or death of students and staff.

The State Board of Education must issue or update rules regarding site-based plans to deal with emergency conditions and require that emergency plans be updated at least once every five years. Emergency plans must include the following: (1) who to contact in an emergency; (2) evacuation procedures; (3) procedures for responding to emergencies; (4) procedures for training students and certificated and classified staff; and (5) procedures for notifying local school staff of the plan. School districts and schools must consult with local law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, and emergency management agencies when developing the plans. Parents and the community must be notified regarding the plans.

The Comprehensive All-hazard Crisis and Emergency Plan Development Assistance Program is created to be administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The funds, to the extent funds are appropriated for this program, must be used by school districts to update and develop emergency plans for every school, train staff in implementing the plans, acquire materials, and practice the plans. The program exists subject to appropriation. Priority must be given to districts that have not yet received funds.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Second Substitute Bill: A provision is added requiring that parents and the community be notified regarding the plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Schools need plans and training to deal with violent acts in addition to natural disasters. This bill is necessary to assist schools in preparing for natural disasters and acts of violence in schools. This planning process involves collaboration between schools, local law enforcement, fire departments, and others. School safety involves a good planning process, training and practicing the plan, coordinating with the community, law enforcement, and the fire department, and a program to address bullying and other problems between students.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Dave Horn, Attorney General's Office; Joe Pope, Association of Washington School Principals; Greg Williamson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Barbara Merton, Washington Association of School Administrators; and Nicholas Carlson, student, Englemoor High School.