
Health Care Committee

HB 1282

Brief Description: Regarding sexual health education.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, Tom, Cody, Jarrett, Fromhold, Hankins, Appleton, Haler, Murray, Nixon, Dickerson, Kagi, Hasegawa, Roberts, Springer, DeBolt, Lantz, Chase, Hunter, Upthegrove, Darneille, Moeller, Morrell, Hunt, Simpson, Williams, Green, Wood, Kenney, Wallace, Linville, Ormsby, Kilmer, Haigh, Santos, McIntire and Walsh.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires school districts that offer sexual health education to teach both abstinence and other methods of preventing teenage pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases.

Hearing Date: 2/8/05

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

All public school curricula must teach the minimum requisites for good health, including methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. The Washington Administrative Code, however, allows local school boards to decide whether or not to have sex education or human sexuality courses in their districts. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 permits the use of federal funds to provide sex education or HIV prevention education in schools as long as the instruction is age appropriate and the health benefits of abstinence are part of the curriculum.

In January 2005, the Department of Health and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction released *Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease Prevention*. These guidelines state that their purpose is to: describe effective sex education and its outcomes; provide a tool for evaluating programs, curricula, or policy; enhance and strengthen sex education programs; and to educate organizations involved in educating youth.

Summary of Bill:

Any school district that offers sexual health education is required to incorporate the January 2005 *Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease Prevention (Guidelines)*. Sexual health education must emphasize abstinence as well as teach other methods of preventing teenage pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases. Information about the effectiveness of

contraceptives and other family planning options must be medically accurate and taught in a comprehensive manner.

The Department of Health (Department) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must make the *Guidelines*, as well as model policies and curricula related to sexual health education, available to the public. The Department will adopt rules to establish what constitutes medically accurate information according to scientific research and research from peer-review journals.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 2, 2005.

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