
Education Committee

2SSB 5197

Brief Description: Taking measures to promote safe school buildings.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Dammeier, Rolfes, Litzow, Billig, Mullet, Becker, Hill, Hargrove, Braun, Honeyford, Roach and Hewitt).

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires school districts to implement a panic alarm system by December 1, 2014.
- Encourages districts to consider installing a perimeter security control mechanism on all school campuses.
- Requires districts to give preference to building plans and designs that promote optimal school security, control and observation of public entrances, and limited public entrance.

Hearing Date: 3/14/13

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

School districts are required to adopt comprehensive safe school plans. At a minimum, the plans must address school safety policies and procedures; emergency preparedness and response; school mapping for emergency first responders; and communication with parents. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has developed a model safe school plan that school districts are encouraged to consider when developing their own plans. There is a School Safety Advisory Committee and a School Safety Center within the OSPI to provide updated information and serve as a resource for school districts. In addition, all building principals are required to be trained in the Federal Emergency Management Agency Incident Command System, which is a standard set of principles and actions appropriate for responding to any type of hazard or emergency.

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.

Summary of Bill:

The OSPI must collaborate with law enforcement and the School Safety Advisory Committee to develop a model policy that school districts may use to implement a panic alarm system to expedite the arrival of law enforcement in the event of a threat at school. The model policy must be made available to school districts by June 1, 2014.

By December 1, 2014, each school district must either:

- work with local law enforcement to develop and implement a panic alarm system to expedite the arrival of law enforcement in the event of a threat at school; or
- implement a model policy developed by the OSPI to implement a panic alarm system.

Each school district must strongly consider installing a perimeter security control mechanism or system on all school campuses, as appropriate to the design of the campus.

Districts must also give preference to building plans and designs for new construction or remodeling of more than 40 percent of an existing building that promote the following:

- an optimal level of security for the school site that incorporates technology and best practices to protect students and staff in the event of a threat during school hours;
- direct control and observation of the public entering school grounds; and
- having the public enter school grounds through as few entrances as possible.

The provisions regarding perimeter security control and preference in building plans do not apply to school designs or construction started before the bill takes effect.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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