

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6410

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As of January 31, 2018

**Title:** An act relating to school safety.

**Brief Description:** Concerning school safety.

**Sponsors:** Senator Padden.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/29/18.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires first responder agencies to notify all schools in the vicinity, including private schools, if there is a situation for which an evacuation or lockdown appears reasonably necessary.
- Provides that all school buildings occupied by public or private school students must be mapped, but nothing requires them to be mapped unless the entire cost of mapping is provided.
- Directs educational service districts (ESDs) to establish regional school safety centers as part of a statewide network.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Safe School Plans. Current law requires school districts to adopt and implement safe school plans. The plans must contain specified information. To the extent funds are available, school districts must annually review and update safe school plans. Safe school plans must be consistent with the school mapping information system.

School Mapping. The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) must operate a statewide mapping information system when funded. The mapping system provides information to emergency first responders such as floor plans and known hazards. All state and local government-owned buildings that are occupied by state or local

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government employees must be mapped when funding is provided by WASPC or from other sources.

Regional School Safety and Security Programs. In 2016, the Legislature enacted ESB 6620, which allowed ESDs to implement a regional school safety and security program subject to appropriations.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill as referred to committee not considered.

**Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute):** First Responder Notifications. Whenever a first responder agency notifies a school of a situation which may necessitate an evacuation or lockdown, the agency must also determine if other schools in the vicinity are similarly threatened and must notify every other school in the vicinity for which an evacuation or lockdown appears reasonably necessary. For purposes of this requirement, "school" includes a private school.

School Mapping. All school buildings that are occupied by public or private school students must be mapped by WASPC or from other sources. Nothing requires any school district or other operator of schools to map a building unless the entire cost of mapping the building is provided by WASPC or from other sources.

Regional School Safety Centers. Subject to appropriations, ESDs must establish regional school safety centers as part of a statewide network.

The purposes of the regional school safety centers include:

- mental health support, threat assessment training, prevention planning, mitigation, preparedness, crisis response, and community recovery concerning emergency incidents;
- supporting safe school plans and school districts with emergency planning and preparedness for natural disasters;
- assisting with coordinating other entities in the region to provide support to school districts before emergencies occur; and
- coordinating staff trainings for school districts to maximize efficiency for quality professional development.

Based on the needs of school districts in the region, the regional school safety centers must provide:

- support for school districts' efforts to meet state safety requirements;
- technical assistance for seeking funding for first aid, health, and safety and security resources including defibrillators and saws with automatic braking systems;
- information related to resources available for anonymous reporting systems for student concerns;
- training for teachers and school staff to respond during the critical period between the time an incident begins and outside help arrives;
- real-time support for school districts in crisis; and
- training for teachers and school staff for the development of crisis teams and community recovery support.

The regional school safety centers may:

- provide assistance, where feasible, in monitoring 911 calls in the vicinity of schools to provide early warnings of dangerous situations; and
- implement a technology-based system to improve communication between schools and emergency responders and provide assistance when alerts are issued.

ESDs must employ a mental health coordinator, a threat assessment coordinator, and a leadership position for their regional school safety centers.

The statute allowing ESDs to implement a regional school safety and security program is repealed. The regional school safety center provisions are subject to a null and void clause.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 26, 2018.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute:** PRO: Many times schools have to call law enforcement for information about emergencies when it should be the other way around. This bill will help improve school safety in all schools, public and private, and it takes a proactive approach by requiring law enforcement to notify schools in certain situations. Private schools serve many students in the state, and they cannot rely on sporadic notification. ESDs have been strong collaborators with private schools in their regions by sharing expertise and professional development opportunities. The capital budget no longer includes funding for school mapping, and many new and renovated schools have not been mapped. School staff need to be trained on how the mapping system works. Regional school safety centers can monitor 911 calls and notify public and private schools and early learning centers when there are incidents in the vicinity.

OTHER: It is best practice for law enforcement to notify schools. Sometimes law enforcement fails to notify schools because of the chaotic nature of some emergencies. Law enforcement would like some liability protection. There are some challenges with using state funds to map private schools. This bill should address school safety drills including lahar and earthquake drills. School mapping is a wonderful program, but it is expensive and has not been funded. School requirements for mapping are not clear. The regional school safety centers should work with the state school safety center.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mike Padden, Prime Sponsor; Joe Sprague, Executive Director, Washington State Catholic Conference; Sara Betnel, Washington State PTA; Geneva Betnel, citizen; Charlie Brown, Venuetize; Suzie Hanson, Washington Federation of Independent Schools; Kevin Chase, Educational Service District 105.

OTHER: James McMahan, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; Mike Donlin, School Safety Center, OSPI.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.