

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1177

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to school district boards of directors.

Brief Description: Clarifying school district boards of directors' responsibilities.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Holland, Leonard, Peery, Brough, Jones and Winsley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 28, 1991, DPA;
Passed House, March 11, 1991, 96-0;
Passed Legislature, 96-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 19 members: Representatives Peery, Chair; G. Fisher, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Vance, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff; Broback; Brumsickle; Cole; Dorn; Holland; P. Johnson; Jones; Neher; Orr; Phillips; Rasmussen; Roland; H. Sommers; and Valle.

Staff: Susan Kirkpatrick (786-7291).

Background: Under RCW 28A.150.230(1), each school board is given the authority and the responsibility to set policies regarding the content and extent of the educational program offered.

Under RCW 28A.150.230(2), school boards are given a specific list of responsibilities. In listing the school board responsibilities, RCW 28A.150.230(2) recites that "it shall be the responsibility of each common school district board of directors, acting through its respective administrative staff, to" perform the specified responsibilities. There has been litigation over the interpretation of RCW 28A.150.230(2) with respect to the division of responsibilities between a school board and its administrative staff.

Many of the specified responsibilities are set forth in other RCWs.

Summary of Bill: The phrase "acting through its respective administrative staff" contained in RCW 28A.150.230(2) is deleted and the school board is required to adopt policies with respect to each of the listed responsibilities.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Renton School District has received two different legal opinions regarding the interpretation of this statute and now there is a lawsuit. This bill is intended to resolve the ambiguity and prevent future problems.

Testimony Against: It is important to have community involvement in the education process. If the list of school board responsibilities is removed, who is in charge? There is particular concern over the deletion of the provision that gives parents the right to a public hearing if they object to teaching materials. Note: The amended bill addressed some of the concerns raised in the testimony against.

Witnesses: Representative Holland, prime sponsor (in favor); Lytle Blaisdell, President of Thomas Jefferson PTA, Federal Way (opposed); Nemesio Domingo, Renton School Board (in favor but suggested the list of responsibilities not be deleted unless they are clearly spelled out in other RCWs); and Peggy Tlapak, League of Women Voters (opposed).