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## Education Committee

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### HB 1683

**Brief Description:** Adjusting school director districts.

**Sponsors:** Representative Ortiz-Self; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires school districts with more than 3,000 enrolled students to elect a minimum of either three or four school directors by designated member districts, with requirements varying according to the school district's enrollment.

**Hearing Date:** 2/10/25

**Staff:** Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

**Background:**

The board of directors of each school district is its governing body. School boards of directors have broad discretionary power to provide for the development and implementation of programs, activities, services, or practices to promote: the education and daily physical activity of public school students; and the effective, efficient, or safe management and operation of the school district. With the exception of Seattle Public Schools, which is governed by requirements for school districts having a city with a population of 400,000 or more and has seven directors, school boards of directors consist of five members.

School directors must be citizens of the United States and the state of Washington and a registered voter of either the school district or the applicable director district, the geographic subunits of school districts. School director positions are nonpartisan and the elected directors

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serve four-year terms.

School directors are elected district-wide, either at-large without representing a specific director district, or in accordance with requirements obligating directors to reside within the applicable director district.

In general, primary elections for director district candidates are voted on district-wide. In the case of Seattle Public Schools, if a primary election is required, only the registered voters of that particular director district determine which candidates advance to the general election.

School districts must redraw their director districts every ten years based on the population information from the most recent federal decennial census. The adopted plan for the redrawn director districts must meet the following requirements:

- each internal director district must be as nearly equal in population as possible to each and every other such district;
- each district must be as compact as possible;
- each district must consist of a geographically contiguous area;
- population data may not be used for purposes of favoring or disfavoring any racial group or political party; and
- to the extent feasible, and if not inconsistent with the basic enabling legislation for the school district, the director district boundaries must coincide with existing recognized natural boundaries and must, to the extent possible, preserve existing communities of related and mutual interest.

**Summary of Bill:**

By calendar year 2027, all elections of school directors must be in accordance with the following:

- for districts with a head count enrollment greater than 5,000 students, no less than four school directors must be elected by designated member districts; and
- for districts with a head count enrollment of 3,001 to 5,000 students, no less than three school directors must be elected by designated member districts.

School districts with head count enrollments of 3,000 or fewer students are exempted from the member district election requirements.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 5, 2025.

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