

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5272

---

---

As of January 28, 2025

**Title:** An act relating to improving school safety by extending penalties for interference by, or intimidation by threat of, force or violence at schools and extracurricular activities and requiring schools to notify the public of such penalties.

**Brief Description:** Improving school safety by extending penalties for interference by, or intimidation by threat of, force or violence at schools and extracurricular activities and requiring schools to notify the public of such penalties.

**Sponsors:** Senators Lovick, Krishnadasan and Saldaña.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/30/25.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Expands the school-related crimes of Interference by Force or Violence and Intimidation by Threat of Force or Violence, and increases the penalties for Interference by Force or Violence.
- Requires standard signage notifying the public of these offenses and possible penalties to be displayed at public school gymnasiums, auditoriums, and public school athletic fields.

---

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

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

**Background:** Interference or Intimidation by Force or Violence. It is a gross misdemeanor for any person to interfere by force or violence with any administrator, teacher, classified employee, person under contract with the school or school district, or student of any common school who is in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties or studies.

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

It is also a gross misdemeanor for any person to intimidate by threat of force or violence. The penalty for both gross misdemeanors is a fine up to \$500, imprisonment for not more than six months, or both a fine and imprisonment.

Any such interference by force or violence committed by a student is grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion of the student.

Emergency Removal. In 2023, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was directed to notify school districts and public schools that the term emergency removal must be used instead of the term emergency expulsion in the context of student discipline.

OSPI rule defines emergency removal to mean the removal of a student from school because the student's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school personnel, or an immediate and continuing threat of material and substantial disruption of the educational process.

State law requires emergency removals to end or be converted to another form of corrective action within ten school days from the date of the emergency removal. Notice and due process rights must be provided when an emergency removal is converted to another form of corrective action.

**Summary of Bill:** Interference or Intimidation by Force or Violence. The offenses of Interference by Force or Violence and Intimidation by Threat of Force or Violence are expanded to include an employee or contractor of a public or private elementary or secondary school, an elementary or secondary student, or an official or volunteer acting as an official for extracurricular athletic activities of elementary or secondary students while that person is in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties.

A public school student's Interference by Force or Violence is grounds for the student's emergency removal. If a public school student interferes during extracurricular athletic activities, the student may be excluded from participating in or attending that activity for up to 12 months.

The penalty for Interference by Force or Violence is a fine up to \$1,000, instead of \$500, imprisonment for not more than 365 days, instead of six months, or both a fine and imprisonment. Upon conviction, a person, other than a student, must be excluded from entering the school where the crime was committed or from attending the extracurricular athletic activities in which the crime was committed for a period of no less than 12 months and no more than 18 months.

The penalty for Intimidation by Threat of Force or Violence is not changed.

Signage. OSPI must develop a standard signage form notifying the public of these offenses

and possible penalties. The signage must be prominently displayed at any entrance to a public school gymnasium or auditorium and wherever other public notices are placed at public school athletic fields.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2025.

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

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