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**SENATE BILL 5272**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Lovick, Krishnadasan, and Saldaña

Read first time 01/15/25. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving school safety by extending penalties  
2 for interference by, or intimidation by threat of, force or violence  
3 at schools and extracurricular activities and requiring schools to  
4 notify the public of such penalties; amending RCW 28A.635.090 and  
5 28A.635.100; adding a new section to chapter 28A.635 RCW; and  
6 creating a new section.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that incidents  
9 of violence in elementary and secondary schools raise concerns about  
10 ensuring and promoting school safety. For learning to occur, schools  
11 must first be safe places for students and staff. The legislature  
12 recognizes that violent behavior tends to escalate if tolerated, thus  
13 it is the intent of the legislature to provide targeted and  
14 appropriate sanctions for the interference with school activities by  
15 force or violence before it rises to the level of substantial or  
16 grievous bodily harm.

17 (2) The legislature understands that extracurricular athletics  
18 provide valuable opportunities for students to develop social and  
19 personal skills that can be useful throughout their lives. These  
20 activities also benefit other students and spectators by building  
21 school spirit, unity, community support, and community identity.

1 Extracurricular athletics would not be possible without the  
2 commitment of officials, judges, referees, and volunteers who work at  
3 the events for little or no financial gain. The legislature finds  
4 that the values engendered in interscholastic activities are being  
5 undermined by participants and spectators who do not respect the  
6 commitment of these officials. Increasingly, these people are  
7 expressing their dissatisfaction through inappropriate verbal abuse  
8 and behavior directed at the officials. The legislature recognizes  
9 that officials, such as judges and referees, and volunteers acting as  
10 officials, for extracurricular athletic activities of elementary and  
11 secondary school students are particularly vulnerable to  
12 inappropriate conduct because their attention is focused on the  
13 athletic activities. Thus, the legislature intends to provide  
14 additional support and protection for officials conducting  
15 interscholastic events.

16 (3) The legislature finds that violence against public and  
17 private students and staff is unacceptable. Thus, to promote a safe  
18 learning environment, the legislature intends to increase the penalty  
19 for those who deliberately ignore posted warnings against acts of  
20 intimidation or violence against school athletic officials.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.635  
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 (1) Signage must be posted notifying the public of the offenses  
24 and possible penalties under RCW 28A.635.090 and 28A.635.100.

25 (2) The signage must be prominently displayed at any entrance to  
26 a public school gymnasium or auditorium and wherever other public  
27 notices are placed at public school athletic fields.

28 (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
29 develop a standard signage form notifying the public of the offenses  
30 and possible penalties under RCW 28A.635.090 and 28A.635.100.

31 (4) As used in this section, "public school" has the same meaning  
32 as in RCW 28A.150.010.

33 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.635.090 and 2003 c 53 s 169 are each amended to  
34 read as follows:

35 (1) It (~~shall be~~) is unlawful for any person, singly or in  
36 concert with others, to interfere by force or violence with (~~any~~  
37 ~~administrator, teacher, classified employee, person under contract~~  
38 ~~with the school or school district, or student of any common school~~

1 ~~who~~) an employee or contractor of a public or private elementary or  
2 secondary school, an elementary or secondary student, or an official  
3 or volunteer acting as an official for extracurricular athletic  
4 activities of elementary or secondary students, while that person is  
5 in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties or studies.  
6 (~~Any such interference by force or violence committed by a student~~  
7 ~~shall be grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion of the~~  
8 ~~student.~~)

9 (2) If a public school student interferes as described in  
10 subsection (1) of this section, the interference is grounds for the  
11 student's emergency removal, subject to RCW 28A.600.015. If a public  
12 school student interferes as described in subsection (1) of this  
13 section during extracurricular athletic activities, the student may  
14 be excluded from participating in or attending that activity for up  
15 to 12 months.

16 (3) A person violating this section is guilty of a gross  
17 misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than (~~five hundred dollars~~)  
18 \$1,000, or imprisoned in jail not more than (~~six months~~) 364 days,  
19 or both such fine and imprisonment. Upon conviction, a person, other  
20 than a student, must be excluded from entering the school where the  
21 crime was committed or from attending the extracurricular athletic  
22 activities in which the crime was committed, for a period of no less  
23 than 12 months and no more than 18 months.

24 (4) As used in this section, "public school" has the same meaning  
25 as in RCW 28A.150.010.

26 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.635.100 and 2003 c 53 s 170 are each amended to  
27 read as follows:

28 (1) It (~~shall be~~) is unlawful for any person, singly or in  
29 concert with others, to intimidate by threat of force or violence  
30 (~~any administrator, teacher, classified employee, or student of any~~  
31 ~~common school who~~) an employee or contractor of a public or private  
32 elementary or secondary school, an elementary or secondary student,  
33 or an official or volunteer acting as an official for extracurricular  
34 athletic activities of elementary or secondary students, while that  
35 person is in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties  
36 or studies.

37 (2) A person violating this section is guilty of a gross  
38 misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than (~~five hundred dollars~~)

1 \$500, or imprisoned in jail not more than six months, or both such  
2 fine and imprisonment.

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