
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5952

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wellman, Nobles, and C. Wilson)

READ FIRST TIME 01/22/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring the recognition of school district
2 decisions to waive physical education requirements for high school
3 students; amending RCW 28A.230.050 and 28A.210.365; and creating a
4 new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature strongly believes in
7 the importance of health and fitness instruction and a well-rounded
8 education as it is one of the primary goals of basic education
9 identified in RCW 28A.150.210.

10 (2) The legislature acknowledges that state law has allowed
11 individual high school students to be excused from participating in
12 physical education for certain reasons and good cause. The
13 legislature further acknowledges that the waiver process from
14 physical education requirements is based on local policy and
15 procedure and can vary widely between school districts. The
16 legislature finds that this variation between school districts leads
17 to confusion for high school students.

18 (3) The legislature intends to require the recognition of school
19 district decisions to waive physical education requirements for high
20 school students.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.050 and 2006 c 263 s 416 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) All high schools of the state shall emphasize the work of
4 physical education, and carry into effect all physical education
5 requirements established by rule of the superintendent of public
6 instruction (~~(: PROVIDED, That individual~~)) and in accordance with
7 this section.

8 (2) Individual high school students may be excused from
9 participating in physical education otherwise required under this
10 section on account of physical disability, employment, or religious
11 belief, (~~(or)~~) because of participation in directed athletics or
12 military science and tactics, or for other good cause.

13 (3) If a school district decides to excuse a high school student
14 from participating in physical education, permitted under subsection
15 (2) of this section, and that student transfers school districts,
16 then other school districts must recognize that decision.

17 (4) This section governs school operation and management under
18 RCW 28A.710.040 and 28A.715.020 and applies to charter schools
19 established under chapter 28A.710 RCW and state-tribal education
20 compact schools subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW to the same extent as
21 it applies to school districts.

22 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.210.365 and 2007 c 5 s 5 are each amended to
23 read as follows:

24 It is the goal of Washington state to ensure that:

25 (1) By 2010, all K-12 districts have school health advisory
26 committees that advise school administration and school board members
27 on policies, environmental changes, and programs needed to support
28 healthy food choice and physical activity and childhood fitness.
29 Districts shall include school nurses or other school personnel as
30 advisory committee members.

31 (2) By 2010, only healthy food and beverages provided by schools
32 during school hours or for school-sponsored activities shall be
33 available on school campuses. Minimum standards for available food
34 and beverages, except food served as part of a United States
35 department of agriculture meal program, are:

36 (a) Not more than thirty-five percent of its total calories shall
37 be from fat. This restriction does not apply to nuts, nut butters,
38 seeds, eggs, fresh or dried fruits, vegetables that have not been

1 deep-fried, legumes, reduced-fat cheese, part-skim cheese, nonfat
2 dairy products, or low-fat dairy products;

3 (b) Not more than ten percent of its total calories shall be from
4 saturated fat. This restriction does not apply to eggs, reduced-fat
5 cheese, part-skim cheese, nonfat dairy products, or low-fat dairy
6 products;

7 (c) Not more than thirty-five percent of its total weight or
8 fifteen grams per food item shall be composed of sugar, including
9 naturally occurring and added sugar. This restriction does not apply
10 to the availability of fresh or dried fruits and vegetables that have
11 not been deep-fried; and

12 (d) The standards for food and beverages in this subsection do
13 not apply to:

14 (i) Low-fat and nonfat flavored milk with up to thirty grams of
15 sugar per serving;

16 (ii) Nonfat or low-fat rice or soy beverages; or

17 (iii) One hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice.

18 (3) By 2010, all students in grades one through eight should have
19 at least one hundred fifty minutes of quality physical education
20 every week.

21 (4) By 2010, all student health and fitness instruction shall be
22 conducted by appropriately certified instructors.

23 (5) (~~Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, any~~) Any
24 district waiver or exemption policy from physical education
25 requirements for high school students permitted under RCW 28A.230.050
26 should be based upon meeting both health and fitness curricula
27 concepts as well as alternative means of engaging in physical
28 activity, but should acknowledge students' interest in pursuing their
29 academic interests.

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