
Education Committee

HB 1414

Brief Description: Requiring a model policy and training standards regarding the use of force in the common schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Quall, Pettigrew, Kagi, O'Brien, Miloscia, Chase, Santos and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop a model policy, and training standards and requirements regarding the use of force and restraint by school building administrators and other security personnel.
- Directs the OPSI to recommend options for the state-wide delivery of training for building administrators and security personnel.
- Requires school districts to adopt a policy and provide annual training regarding the use of force by school employees.

Hearing Date: 2/2/05

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

School district throughout the state use a combination of school security officers and school resource officers to address their security needs. School resource officers are fully commissioned law enforcement officers who spend all or a portion of their day at one or more school sites. School security officers typically are not commissioned law enforcement officers, although some may be retired from law enforcement.

Decisions regarding the qualifications for employment and the training standards and requirements of school security officers are made locally. The state has established no licensing, certification, or registration requirements for school security officers. To meet their training needs, districts may partner with local law enforcement or may contract with private providers for security personnel training. The Legislature has appropriated \$200,000 in each of the last two biennia for the coordination of regional training courses provided by the Criminal Justice Training Commission.

Policies regarding school discipline, including the use of force and restraint are made at the local level and no requirement exists for districts to specify whether use of force or restraint is permitted. A variety of approaches exist statewide, ranging from hands-off policies, to those that permit the use of deadly force.

The School Safety Advisory Committee established through the OSPI has begun to address the need for a more comprehensive set of training standards and requirements for school security personnel, as well as the need for guidance regarding use of force policies. The Advisory Committee's work includes efforts to define the training standards and requirements necessary to meet the full spectrum of school safety issues including prevention, intervention, crisis response, and recovery.

Summary of Bill:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the School Safety Advisory Committee, is directed to develop a model policy and training standards and requirements regarding the use of force and physical restraint in schools. The model policy must reflect a use-of-force continuum appropriate to the school environment and include:

- (1) Strategies for prevention, including verbal and nonverbal de-escalation techniques;
- (2) Criteria for evaluating and identifying student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- (3) Descriptions of appropriate responses by school employees when intervention is required;
- (4) An explanation that if deadly force is permitted by local district policy, it should be used only as a last resort in response to a threat of imminent deadly force by another; and
- (5) Requirements for staff training, parental notification, investigation of complaints, and reporting requirements.

The training standards and requirements for the use of force and restraint must:

- (1) Describe entry-level knowledge, basic minimum skills, a module for annual training, and a continuum for professional development; and
- (2) Identify the scope of subjects in which training should be provided, and recommend a minimum number of hours for training in specific areas.

The OSPI recommendations also must include:

- (1) Options for the structure and delivery of statewide training for school security officers and building administrators;
- (2) Accountability measures for the training required at the district level; and
- (3) A description of the continuing role and function of the School Safety Advisory Committee.

The model policy and training standards and requirements must be developed by December 1, 2006 and be made available to school district via the OSPI website.

By September 1, 2007, school districts must adopt a policy and establish training standards and requirements regarding the use of force and restraint by building administrators and school security officers. Policies should be tailored to reflect the contexts of the district's schools and may be incorporated into existing policies regarding student conduct, discipline, and rights. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year districts must ensure that school employees authorized to use force or restraint receive annual training. A null and void clause is included.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2005.

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