

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5556

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to state schools for the blind, deaf, and sensory impaired.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to state schools for the blind, deaf, and sensory impaired.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Snyder, Deccio and Sutherland; by request of Washington State School for the Blind and Washington State School for the Deaf).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Education, April 1, 1993, DPA.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; Eide; G. Fisher; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland; Stevens; and Vance.

**Staff:** Robert Butts (786-7111).

**Background:** The State School for the Blind and the State School for the Deaf are located in Vancouver, Washington. The School for the Blind serves 65-80 students on-campus and provides vision services to an additional 60 students. The School for the Deaf provides services to 160-170 students on-campus.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** A mandatory requirement that the Department of Social and Health Services provide services if the state schools for the blind, deaf, and sensory impaired request services, is deleted.

A mandatory requirement that the superintendents of state schools for the blind, deaf, and sensory impaired adopt rules, consistent with collective bargaining agreements, regarding the transferability of employees between the schools, is made permissive. Working conditions at the

schools for the blind, deaf, and sensory impaired are required to be consistent with all state merit rules and regulations as well as collective bargaining agreements.

The duties of the superintendent of each state school are expanded to include providing instructional leadership.

Services may be extended to eligible children ages birth through three years, but the state is not obligated to fund these extended services.

The program providing weekend transportation to and from the schools is clarified so that it shall be provided at no cost to the students or their families as allowed within the budgets of each school.

The eligibility for ex-officio membership on the boards is expanded to include a representative of any employee in a bargaining unit for classified employees. The minimum number of meetings per year required of each board of trustees is changed from six to four.

The requirement for local advisory committees for each school is repealed.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** A provision regarding contracting with parents and students for transportation was removed.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** The bill will be helpful to the School for the Blind.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Dean Stenehjem, Washington School for the Blind (supports).