

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1941

As Passed House
March 11, 1993

Title: An act relating to students carrying dangerous weapons on school premises.

Brief Description: Requiring school districts to notify parents of students carrying dangerous weapons at school.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Cothorn, Foreman, L. Johnson, Jones, Vance, Campbell, Pruitt, Shin, Holm, Springer, Brough, Horn, King, J. Kohl, Hansen, Johanson, Miller, Long, Casada, Edmondson, Mielke and Karahalios.)

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, March 2, 1993, DPS;
Passed House, March 11, 1993, 98-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; G. Cole; Eide; G. Fisher; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland; and Vance.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Stevens.

Staff: Margaret Allen (786-7191).

Background: A student who violates the law prohibiting dangerous weapons on school premises is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and subject to expulsion.

Current law and regulations do not explicitly require the parents or guardians to be notified when a student violates the law prohibiting dangerous weapons on school premises, if the student is not suspended, expelled, or otherwise disciplined in a manner requiring parental notification.

Law enforcement authorities need not be notified unless the school district wants charges to be filed against the juvenile. A recent survey by the Washington State School Directors' Association and Association of Washington School Principals indicates schools currently are not reporting all incidents of students possessing dangerous weapons on school grounds to law enforcement agencies.

Summary of Bill: Each school district must adopt and implement a policy for notifying the parents or guardians of any student violating the law prohibiting dangerous weapons on school premises.

The policy must require prompt notification of the local law enforcement agency as well.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Weapons in schools are a widespread problem; it is imperative to send the message that such incidents will be taken seriously. Schools and law enforcement agencies must communicate with one another to provide a safe school environment.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Barbara Cothorn, prime sponsor; and Scott G. Smith, Mountlake Terrace City Police Department.