
HOUSE BILL 1598

State of Washington 55th Legislature 1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Sterk, Johnson, Talcott and Mulliken

Read first time 01/31/97. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to prohibiting the use of certain psychological
2 techniques in the classroom; adding new sections to chapter 28A.150
3 RCW; creating a new section; prescribing penalties; and declaring an
4 emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the
7 responsibility of educational practitioners to fulfill the obligations
8 of the Washington state Constitution and to protect the health, safety,
9 and general welfare of students. The legislature further recognizes
10 certain techniques in some school programs need clarification to ensure
11 educational practitioners, including teachers, administrators,
12 counselors, and other staff, are practicing within the scope of their
13 professional duties. Therefore, educational practitioners are
14 prohibited from using hypnosis, transpersonal psychological techniques,
15 or dissociative mental states, including any techniques that involve
16 the induction of hypnotic states, guided imagery, meditation, or yoga.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) Educational practitioners are prohibited
18 from using any curriculum or methods that produce or advocate a

1 dissociative mental state. These methods include, but are not limited
2 to, hypnosis, progressive relaxation, guided imagery, and nonsecular
3 meditation.

4 (2) The definitions in this section apply to this section and
5 section 3 of this act, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

6 (a) "Dissociative mental state" or "hypnotic state" refers to the
7 separation or isolation of mental processes in such a way that they
8 become split off from the main personality or lose their normal
9 thought-affect relationship. In such a state, the boundary between
10 reality or illusion becomes blurred.

11 (b) "Hypnosis" means a dissociative or altered state of
12 consciousness, usually artificially induced, characterized by a
13 heightened responsiveness to suggestions and commands, suspension of
14 disbelief with a lowering of critical judgment, and the potential of
15 altered perceptions. Hypnosis is also defined as a deliberately
16 induced condition of suggestibility or trance.

17 (c) "Progressive relaxation" is a common induction technique for an
18 altered state of consciousness. This involves the serial or sequential
19 use in some combination of the following: Turning off the lights,
20 reclining, closing the eyes, counted deep breathing exercises,
21 alternate tensing and relaxing of muscle groups, repeating a single
22 word or phrase. This is distinctly different from and should not be
23 confused with simple resting, nap taking, or simple relaxation.

24 (d) "Guided imagery," also known as "visualization," "visual
25 imagery," or "guided fantasy" is used as induction or deepening
26 technique of hypnosis and meditation involving the communication or
27 suggestion describing a scene in which the student or subject is
28 encouraged to experientially participate, normally following a
29 progressive relaxation technique. Guided imagery, a common technique
30 of hypnosis, goes well beyond the normal use of the imagination.

31 (e) "Meditation" or "centering" is an altered state of
32 consciousness, often synonymous with hypnosis sometimes called
33 transcendental meditation, which is induced by progressive relaxation,
34 focusing on deep breaths, and a mantra. This is not to be confused
35 with secular meditation which involves alert, reflective, and cognitive
36 contemplation.

37 (f) "Yoga" is a Hindu philosophy and method of religious training
38 in which eastern meditation and contemplation are joined with physical
39 exercises, allegedly to facilitate the body-mind-spirit.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Educational practitioners who use methods or
2 curriculum advocating or producing dissociative states are in violation
3 of professional practices. The first willful violation of section 2 of
4 this act shall result in suspension without pay for no less than ten
5 days. Subsequent violations shall result in dismissal with forfeiture
6 of all state-issued licenses pertaining to education.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 2 and 3 of this act are each added
8 to chapter 28A.150 RCW.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act is necessary for the immediate
10 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
11 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
12 immediately.

--- END ---