

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 1295

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**Title:** An act relating to school site-councils.

**Brief Description:** Making school site-councils subject to the open public meetings act.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Wensman, Thomas, Benson, Haigh, Keiser and Talcott.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

*Meeting Date:* February 3, 1999.

*Bill Analysis Prepared by:* Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

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**Background:** The Open Public Meetings Act requires that all meetings of the governing body of any public agency be open to the public, with some specified exceptions. A public agency includes all state agencies, committees and commissions, any county, city, **school district** or other political subdivision of the state, or any subagency of a public agency.

The governing body of a public agency must inform the public of the time and location for all regular meetings. The governing body may hold special meetings in addition to regular meetings, but those special meetings must comply with public notification requirements. Emergency meetings may be held without notification, but only in such cases where fire, flood, or earthquake necessitates expedited action, or to deal with situations where injury or damage to persons or property are certain or likely.

There are several exceptions to the open meeting requirements. The governing body of a public agency may meet in executive session to consider certain issues, such as matters of national security, discussion of the qualification of job applicants or candidates for appointment to public office, and discussion of legal matters relating to agency enforcement. In addition, the Open Public Meetings Act does not apply to proceedings involving issuance, revocation, or denial of certain licenses, discussion by a quasi-judicial body that impact specific named parties and not the general public or a class of people, matters governed by the Administrative Procedure Act, and collective bargaining discussions.

A school site-council is a board made up of teachers, parents, and other persons connected to a single school that acts as the representative of the school in certain situations. School site-councils are not created through statute; school districts may

create them and may delegate to them certain functions. Site councils may make binding decisions for the school, or may only make advisory recommendations to the local school board on behalf of the school, depending on the authority granted by the school board.

***Summary of Bill:*** All school site-council meetings are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act. A school site-council is defined to mean a multi-member board, connected to a school, that acts on behalf of a school or school board. The multi-member boards are defined to include teachers and parents. The meeting of school site-councils to approve grant applications is subject to the Open Public Meetings Act.

***Appropriation:*** None.

***Fiscal Note:*** Not requested.

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