

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5285

As of January 23, 2001

Title: An act relating to school safety.

Brief Description: Enacting the school violence reduction and emergency preparedness act.

Sponsors: Senators Kastama, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/29/01.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Current law requires the State Board of Education, upon the advice of the Washington State Patrol's Director of Fire Protection, to adopt and distribute rules concerning the evacuation of schools during a sudden emergency.— Pursuant to this authority, the State Board has issued rules requiring local school boards and governing bodies of private schools to develop and practice evacuation plans. These plans are to be taught periodically to all school personnel and practiced as frequently as may be necessary.

Summary of Bill: School districts, public schools, and private schools are encouraged to develop, within three years, emergency management plans. The plans must be limited in scope to the preparation for, response to, and recovery from human-caused emergencies, including acts or threats of violence, and natural and technological emergencies and disasters. The plans should (1) identify potential hazards posing a threat to the school, staff, and students; (2) describe protective measures to reduce the impacts of potential emergencies; (3) describe responsive measures in the event of an emergency; (4) inform students, staff, volunteers, and parents about the plan; (5) be exercised annually; and (6) be developed in collaboration with local emergency management, law enforcement, and fire agencies.

Funding for the implementation of this act must be provided to local emergency management agencies through the Emergency Management Division of the Washington State Military Department. Funds must be distributed according to a formula based on school district student enrollments. Additionally, the Military Department must be allocated funding sufficient to employ six employees to implement this act in regions not served through funding distributed to the local emergency management agencies.

Finally, school districts that have adopted emergency management plans must report the status of the plans to the Military Department by December 31, 2003, and every third year thereafter. The Military Department must report to the education committees of the Legislature on school emergency management planning activities by February 15, 2004, and every third year thereafter.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 2001.

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