

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6455

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Education, January 31, 2002

Title: An act relating to physical examinations by health practitioners.

Brief Description: Requiring physical examinations prior to participation in interscholastic athletic activities.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Kastama, Thibaudeau, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/30/02, 1/31/02. [w/oRec-HEA]

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That it be referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care without recommendation.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Carlson, Johnson, Kastama, Prentice and Regala.

Staff: Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

Background: Under current Washington law, each school district board of directors is given the authority to control, supervise and regulate the conduct of interschool athletic activities. The board is also given the authority to delegate its control, supervision and regulation of any such activity to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) or any other voluntary nonprofit entity. The WIAA is a voluntary, nonprofit association comprised of member middle level and high schools. All schools that are members of WIAA agree to abide by the policies established by the WIAA. The WIAA has policies in place that require physical examinations prior to the first practice for participation in school athletics, but there is currently no statutory requirement for such an examination.

Summary of Bill: A student wishing to participate in middle level or high school interscholastic athletics must undergo a thorough physical examination prior to the first practice and be approved for athletic competition. The requirements of what must be included in the physical examination may be established by rule by the WIAA or other voluntary nonprofit entity to whom the school district board has delegated this authority. The examination must be performed by one of the listed types of health care professionals. A student wishing to participate for the first time at a high school level must have a new physical examination regardless of when his or her last examination occurred.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Sixteen states let chiropractors perform physical exams for participation in athletics at the high school level and we are already doing exams for other purposes and at other levels of athletics. Chiropractors receive the schooling and training necessary to perform this type of exam and they have the ability to diagnose the problems at issue. Many chiropractors are trained specifically in the arena of sports injuries and are therefore qualified to perform athletic physical exams and if necessary they will refer a student to another physician if the problem is beyond their scope. We are willing to continue to work with the WIAA to get chiropractors included in their rules but this category of doctors has been continually denied admission and we have continually run into barriers.

Testimony Against: The WIAA already has a physical exam requirement. All schools that have athletic competitions must follow those policies. WIAA has dealt with the issue of who can perform the physical exams since our inception. The scope of practice in WA for chiropractors does not include physicals of the type needed here. While we appreciate the services performed by chiropractors, they do not look at such things as the pulmonary system that need to be looked at for this type of physical exam.

Testified: PRO: Lori Bielinski, Randy Dressen, Mark Webber, WSCA; Jeff Crocket, teacher; CON: Mike Colbrese, John Olson, WIAA; Carl Nelson, WSMA.