

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6506

As of February 1, 2002

Title: An act relating to medically accurate sexuality education programs.

Brief Description: Requiring that school and other publicly funded sexuality or abstinence education provide only medically and scientifically accurate information.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, McAuliffe, Winsley, Eide, Thibaudeau, Kline, Horn, Haugen, Fraser, Prentice, Costa, Spanel, Kohl-Welles, Fairley, Jacobsen and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 2/4/02.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Public Schools: Under current statutes, all teachers must stress, among other things, the minimum requisites for good health, including methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. However, under current State Board of Education (SBE) rules, local school boards decide whether or not to have a program about sex education or human sexuality. Current statutes also require annual instruction in the dangers and prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) beginning no later than fifth grade. The AIDS curricula must have been reviewed for medical accuracy by the office on AIDS.

Community Networks: In 1994, the Legislature created Community Public Health and Safety Networks. The networks were charged with reviewing public health data and developing plans to reduce "at-risk" behaviors. A network's plan may include funding for a student designed media and community campaign promoting sexual abstinence.

TANF: When a person applies or is reassessed for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services, they must be offered family planning information and assistance.

Summary of Bill: All public schools and publicly-funded entities under a community network's plan or a TANF plan that provide sexuality or abstinence education must provide only medically and scientifically accurate information. "Medically and scientifically accurate information" means information that is: (1) supported by the weight of research conducted with accepted scientific methods; (2) recognized as accurate and objective by leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field; and (3) published in peer-reviewed journals, where appropriate.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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