
Education Committee

SSB 5436

Brief Description: Regarding foods and beverages sold at public schools.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Jacobsen, Winsley, Thibaudeau, McAuliffe, Prentice and Kline).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the creation and local adoption of model school district policies on nutritious foods and developmentally appropriate exercise.

Hearing Date: 2/25/04

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

Under current federal law, school meals must meet nutrition standards established in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in order to obtain cash subsidies and donated commodities from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. As part of this federal regulation, foods and beverages of minimal nutritional value cannot be sold in the school food service area (such as cafeterias, hallways and common areas) during school meal periods. These regulations do not restrict the sale of those foods or beverages at any other time during the school day. States are authorized to impose additional restrictions on any food or beverage sold at any time throughout their schools.

In Washington, 277 out of a total of 296 public school districts participate in the federal school lunch and school breakfast programs and are therefore subject to the federal regulations.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA), with the assistance of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Department of Health and the Washington Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, must form an advisory committee to develop a model policy on:

- Access to nutritious foods;
- Opportunities for developmentally-appropriate exercise; and
- Accurate information related to these topics.

Each of the three elements must be consistent with the essential academic learning requirements for health and fitness, including nutrition.

The model policy must address the nutritional content of foods and beverages, including fluoridated bottled water, sold or provided throughout the school day or sold in competition with the school lunch and breakfast programs. The policy must also address the availability and quality of health, nutrition and physical education curricula.

By January 1, 2005, WSSDA will submit the model policy and any recommendations on related issues to the Governor and Legislature. The model policy must be posted on the WSSDA website by January 1, 2005.

Each school district must adopt its own policy by August 1, 2005. In its policies, a district is encouraged to place no restrictions on the sale or consumption of dairy products in school during the school day.

An emergency clause is attached.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.