

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1979

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to safe school plans.

**Brief Description:** Changing requirements for safe school plans.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Quall, Lovick, Haigh, Ormsby, Kenney and Hurst.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 2/16/07, 2/23/07 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires school districts to adopt and implement safe school plans.
- Creates a task force on gangs in schools to examine gang activities that are affecting school safety, make recommendations, and report annually to the Legislature.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, McDermott, Roach, Santos and P. Sullivan.

**Staff:** Andrew Colvin (786-7304).

**Background:**

Under current law, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must establish time lines for school districts to develop individual comprehensive safe school plans. School districts are required to report progress on their comprehensive safe school plans to the SPI on a periodic but undefined basis. The SPI is given authority to adopt rules for implementation.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is required to create and operate a statewide first responder building and mapping information system. Beginning in 2003, the Washington Legislature has provided funding through the WASPC to map and assess the security of schools in Washington.

In 2003, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 called for the establishment of a single, comprehensive National Incident Management System (NIMS). Federal preparedness assistance funding for state and local governments is dependent on NIMS compliance. A school district is considered local government. One of the NIMS implementation requirements is to use the Incident Command System (ICS), which provides a common organizational structure for the immediate response to emergencies and coordination of personnel and equipment at the site of an incident. Currently, the Association of Washington School Principals, the Washington Emergency Management Division (EMD), and the SPI are providing the NIMS and the ICS training to school administrators.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Schools and school districts are required to adopt, by September 1, 2008, and implement a safe school plan, consistent with the school mapping information system. Each plan must include required school safety policies and procedures; address emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; include provisions for assisting and communicating with students and staff; comply with training guidance provided by the EMD; require the building principal to be ICS certified; consider how schools can be used in the event of a community-wide emergency; and set guidelines for requesting local emergency management agencies to meet with school districts annually.

On an annual basis, school districts are to: update their safe school plans; update the school mapping information system, which includes identifying staff members trained on NIMS or ICS and identifying school transportation emergency procedures; inventory emergency supplies; and provide information to all staff on the use of emergency supplies and alert procedures. This information must be reported to the WASPC.

Schools are required to conduct no less than one safety-related drill each month, which includes a drill using the school mapping information system, a drill for lock downs, and a drill for shelter-in-place. Schools should also consider drills for earthquakes, tsunamis, or other high-risk local events. Such drills should be documented. School districts are also encouraged to work with local emergency management agencies and responders to hold various types of exercises over a four year-period. Educational Service Districts are encouraged to apply for federal emergency response and crisis management grants with the assistance of the SPI and the EMD.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

A new section is added to create a task force on gangs in schools. Existing sections are modified as follows: detail is added to the transportation procedures for evacuation that must

be included in the annual update on the school mapping system; the requirement is eliminated that schools annually inventory and replenish emergency supplies; and a new subsection is added to encourage school districts to work with local emergency management agencies and responders to conduct various exercises over a four-year period.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** (In support) Out of anywhere our children go, they ought to be a safe in our public schools. A lot of work has been done already to make our schools more safe, and this builds on that work. This is a necessary and next logical step in addressing school safety. The current requirements do not specify times by which things need to be done. Training and drills are a constant need, and we still need building-based drills. We should consider the creation of a gang task force, as has been included in the Senate bill. This bill brings the pieces together for school safety, puts a time deadline in place, and provides money to make it happen.

(Concerns) School safety is important, but there is always concern about unfunded mandates being imposed on the school districts.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Quall, prime sponsor; Craig Apperson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Joe Pope, Association of Washington School Principals.

(Concerns) Mitch Denning, Alliance of Education Associations.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.