
Education Committee

SSB 5097

Brief Description: Regarding safe schools.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rockefeller, McAuliffe, Swecker, Kastama, Regala, Weinstein, Eide, Oemig, Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Keiser, Shin, Berkey, Murray, Kline and Rasmussen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires school districts to adopt and implement safe school plans.
- Creates a gang task force to examine gang activities that are affecting school safety.
- Creates a competitive grant program to assist school districts with the development and updating of safe school plans, training, and drills.

Hearing Date: 3/27/07

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.

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 the NIMS compliance. A school district

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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.

Summary of 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; inventory hazardous materials; update the school mapping information system, which includes identifying staff members trained on the NIMS or the 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 consider additional drills for high-risk local events, and such drills should be documented. Educational Service Districts (ESDs) are encouraged to apply for federal emergency response and crisis management grants.

A task force on gangs in schools is created to examine adult and youth gang activities that are affecting school safety. The task force will annually report its findings and recommendations to the education committees of the Legislature starting December 1, 2007.

A grant program for school districts is created that will be administered by the ESDs for developing and updating comprehensive safe plans, training for school safety, and conducting safety-related drills.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 26, 2007.

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