

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5415

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 26, 2007

Title: An act relating to school health advisory councils.

Brief Description: Creating health advisory councils.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Keiser, Franklin, Murray, Rasmussen, Hobbs and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/22/07, 2/26/07 [DPS-WM, DNP].

Ways & Means: 3/01/07.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5415 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; Eide, Hobbs, Kauffman, Oemig, Rasmussen and Weinstein.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Holmquist, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Clements, Hewitt and Zarelli.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

Background: Numerous agencies and organizations across the state work with school districts on a variety of health issues related to students. Concern has been expressed that the missions of many of these agencies and organizations overlap, creating a duplication of efforts and initiatives placing a strain on limited resources. Some believe consolidating these groups into a statewide school health advisory council could lead to efficiency, non-duplication of efforts, and a coordinated approach to student and school health.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Washington State School Health Advisory Council is created consisting of 21 members from a variety of specified health and

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education agencies and organizations. Council members serve for terms of three years without pay, but may receive reimbursement for travel expenses, if funds are available. The Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) coordinated school health infrastructure initiative will provide office space and staffing for the council.

The duties of the council include, but are not limited to: (1) modeling collaboration and coordination of all aspects of school health programs; (2) identifying and recommending model policies and procedures that result in efficient uses of resources to improve student and school health; (3) developing model program guidelines, sample policies, resource lists, and position papers to further the work of school district health advisory councils, including obesity prevention strategies; and (4) promoting the coordinated school health approach. The council must submit an annual report to the Legislature on the progress of the local school health advisory councils and of their own activities by December of each year.

Subject to available funds, OSPI will allocate grant funds to enable school districts to establish and maintain school district health advisory councils. School districts may use the funds to establish councils at the district level and at each school within a district. Additionally, the funds may be used for coordinated school health programs.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): The changes add the Washington Health Foundation to the Washington State School Health Advisory Council. The grant program is also expanded to include funding the implementation of specific coordinated school health activities requested by local school boards. The grant program is made subject to available finds.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: This is an outgrowth of what has already been happening in school health. Many argue that physically fit students are more likely to be high achieving students. The state advisory council would help facilitate development of district health advisory councils. School health programs have shown results. There have been dramatic increases in WASL scores since nutrition/health program started. This is an excellent approach because it coordinates at the state level and then allows for innovations and initiatives at the local level. The increasing number of students with health issues needs to be addressed. OSPI is currently working with some schools with grant money. If we can address kids health early, then it can prevent disease down the road.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Greg Vigdor, Washington Health Foundation; Debra Gary, Pioneer Elementary School in Auburn; Louise Kaplan, Washington State Nurses Association; Sarah Cherin, Children's Alliance; Lonnie Johns-Brown, School Nurse Organization of Washington;

Michael Shaw, American Heart Association; Pam Tollefsen, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Mitch Denning, Alliance of Education Associations.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute (Ways & Means): This legislation is partially about addressing the important and growing problem of childhood obesity. By creating the local school district health advisory boards and the grant program, this will enable each school district to implement health policies that are targeted and effective based on local needs. Research has shown that schools can make fundamental reform if they have the right tools. There is a strong relationship between healthy students and academic achievement.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Sandi Swarthout, Washington Health Foundation.