
Education Committee

HB 2254

Brief Description: Requiring social media safety curricula and programs for common schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Manweller, Bergquist, Magendanz, Reykdal, Griffey, Parker and Orwall.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a social media safety model curriculum, or update an existing curriculum on social media, that complies with specified provisions.
- Requires school districts to annually make available to all students in common schools at least one age-appropriate educational program, class, or activity designed to teach social media safety.

Hearing Date: 2/1/16

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

In addition to its constitutional charge of supervising all matters pertaining to public schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and its office has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education requirements; and
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties.

With respect to course preparation, the Legislature periodically considers and charges the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) with developing model curricula for use in Washington's school districts, some of which includes safety-oriented themes.

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.

For example, Legislation adopted in 2005 directed the OSPI to develop and make available to school districts a family preservation education program model curriculum. The model curriculum, which was required to be posted on the OSPI's website, was required to include instruction on developing conflict management skills, communication skills, domestic violence and dating violence, financial responsibility, and parenting responsibility.

The OSPI maintains social networking resources and information on its website. According to the OSPI's website, the resources, which include curriculum resources and information about social networking websites and cyberbullying, are designed to help adults in schools and at home better understand what social networking is and how to use it safely.

Summary of Bill:

The OSPI must develop a social media safety model curriculum, or update an existing curriculum on social media, that includes age-appropriate safety lessons on how to respond to alarming or disturbing social media posts, and provides information regarding the availability of means to report these posts anonymously. The model curriculum must be made available to all school districts and be published on the OSPI's web site. The model curriculum, which must be developed by January 31, 2016, must be updated biennially.

School districts are authorized to use the model curriculum developed by the OSPI, develop their own curriculum, or use another curriculum that includes the requisite information.

Each school year, beginning with the 2016-17 school year, school districts must make available to all students in each common school at least one age-appropriate educational program, class, or activity designed to teach social media safety. These programs, classes, or activities must include information about how to respond to alarming or disturbing social media posts, and the availability of means to report these posts anonymously.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/26/16.

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