

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1003

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 25, 2016

Title: An act relating to the development of a model policy on natural disaster school infrastructure recovery by the Washington state school directors' association.

Brief Description: Concerning the development of a model policy on natural disaster school infrastructure recovery.

Sponsors: Representatives Hawkins, Lytton, Magendanz, Bergquist, Hayes, Robinson, Parker, Ortiz-Self, Harris, Reykdal, Johnson, Senn, Muri, Farrell, Klippert, Pollet, Nealey, Manweller, Kretz, Hargrove, Appleton, Gregerson, Condotta, Kilduff and Walkinshaw.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/09/15, 96-0; 1/27/16, 96-1.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/18/16, 2/25/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Billig, Fain, Hill, Mullet, Rivers and Rolfes.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). This association is comprised of all 1477 school board members from Washington's 295 public school districts. WSSDA provides materials and educational services to its members, including model policies and procedures.

Washington's Emergency Management Division (EMD). The Washington State Military Department has several operational divisions, including the EMD. These divisions utilize state and federal resources. The mission of the EMD is to minimize the impact of emergencies and disasters on the people, property, environment, and economy of Washington State.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA supports citizens and first responders to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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.

In 2013, FEMA and other federal agencies published a Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Project. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was awarded a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant in March 2012 from FEMA. The purpose of the project was to identify the risks from natural hazards to students, teachers, and school facilities. In 2014, OSPI published K–12 Facilities Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to reduce the impact of future natural hazard disasters on K–12 schools.

Safe School Plans. Current state law requires school districts to have a safe school plan. Among other things, the plan must:

- include required school safety policies and procedures;
- address emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; and
- consider the guidance provided by the EMD, OSPI's School Safety Center, and the School Safety Advisory Committee.

The School Safety Center has published a safety planning toolkit with planning templates. The planning templates address post-crisis recovery efforts.

Summary of Bill: WSSDA must develop a model policy addressing restoration of the safe learning environment disrupted by natural disaster impacts to school district infrastructures. In developing the model policy, WSSDA may consult with various stakeholders, including the appropriate resources within the following entities:

- OSPI;
- EMD of the Washington State Military Department, and
- risk management entities that work with school districts, nonprofit experts in disaster recovery, educational service districts, and school districts affected by natural disasters.

The model policy must:

- take into consideration any guidance on infrastructure recovery developed by FEMA and the EMD;
- include an infrastructure recovery checklist that a school impacted by a natural disaster can use to restore its essential physical and organizational structures, services, and facilities;
- list the offices or divisions of state agencies that school districts may contact for assistance with infrastructure recovery after a natural disaster; and
- list examples of state and federal emergency funding sources for which school districts impacted by a natural disaster have qualified.

By August 31, 2017, WSSDA must distribute the model policy to the school districts. School districts are encouraged to adopt the model policy locally and review their safe school plans.

This act expires September 1, 2017.

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: Testimony From 2015 Regular Session. PRO: Wildfires recently devastated large parts of the state, including school facilities. School district staff felt overwhelmed by the damage. In these situations, staff might not know who to contact and what resources are available. A model policy will help schools that have facilities damaged by a natural disaster. This bill addresses natural disasters generally, which can include wildfires, mudslides, flooding, and earthquakes. This bill will help school districts be better prepared.

Testimony From 2016 Regular Session. PRO: School district staff can feel overwhelmed when schools are damaged by natural disasters. When a natural disaster occurs, staff may not know who to contact first and what resources are available. School staff has indicated that it would be helpful to have a model policy that provides this information. The model policy could be tailored for different geographic regions around the state. Schools, especially in small communities, play an important role when there are natural disasters and emergencies. A model policy would help restore communities and make schools safe after natural disasters.

Persons Testifying: Persons Testifying From 2015 Regular Session. PRO: Representative Hawkins, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Testifying From 2016 Regular Session. PRO: Representative Hawkins, Prime Sponsor; Lois Davies, Superintendent-Pateros School District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.