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## Education Committee

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### HB 1023

**Brief Description:** Concerning military student participation in varsity extracurricular activities.

**Sponsors:** Representatives MacEwen, Stanford, Muri, Young, Kilduff and Shea.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association from requiring that a transfer student who is a child of an active duty military family meet continuous enrollment prerequisites before becoming eligible for varsity-level extracurricular activities.

**Hearing Date:** 1/19/17

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

#### Background:

Each school district board of directors has statutory authority to control, supervise, and regulate the conduct of interscholastic athletic and extracurricular activities for students of the district. The school board also has the authority to delegate its control, supervision, and regulation to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) or any other voluntary nonprofit entity.

The WIAA is a nonprofit organization and rule-making body that was formed in 1905 to create equitable playing conditions between high school sports teams in Washington. The WIAA consists of nearly 800 high schools and middle/junior high schools, both public and private, that have volunteered to abide by the policies established by the WIAA.

The WIAA has statutory authority to adopt rules related to the eligibility of transfer students participation in extracurricular activities. The Interstate Compact for Military Children, which Washington joined in 2009, specifies that the WIAA and school districts must "facilitate the opportunity for transitioning military children's inclusion in extracurricular activities, regardless

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of application deadlines, to the extent they are otherwise qualified and space is available, as determined by the school district."

In general, the WIAA rules treat children from military families like other students. For example, the WIAA 2016-17 Official Handbook requires that a student continuously attend the school of residence for one year before becoming varsity-eligible, unless the student and his or her family move, and the student enrolls in the new school of residence. However, if the student and his or her family move, and the student enrolls in a school other than school of residence, then the student is subject to one year of subvarsity activities.

The WIAA also has varsity-eligibility exceptions for children from military families. For example, the handbook provides that a student who transfers to a new school of residence due to the deployment of a parent or guardian and in order to live with a relative is varsity eligible without waiting one year. However, if one of the student's parents or guardians remains in the student's original school district, then the student would need a continuous enrollment waiver to become varsity eligible in the new school of residence.

The term "varsity" generally refers to the highest level of competition.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association may not require that a transfer student who is a child of an active duty military family meet continuous enrollment prerequisites before becoming eligible for varsity-level extracurricular activities.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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