
Education Committee

HB 1279

Brief Description: Concerning school safety drills.

Sponsors: Representative Pettigrew.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adds, to annual public school safety drill requirements, one drill for earthquake safety that includes drop, cover, and hold, and, for schools in mapped tsunami hazards zones, one pedestrian evacuation drill.
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Hearing Date: 1/30/17

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Schools and school districts are required by statute to develop comprehensive safe school plans. Specified components of the plans include:

- emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery;
- provisions for assisting and communicating with students and staff; and
- guidelines for requesting law enforcement and emergency response agencies to meet with school districts and participate in safety-related drills.

Schools are directed to conduct no less than one safety-related drill each month that school is in session. Schools must complete at least:

- one drill using the school mapping information system;
- three drills for lockdowns;
- one drill for shelter-in-place;
- three drills for fire evacuation in accordance with the state fire code; and
- one other safety-related drill to be determined by the school.

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 addition, schools are encouraged to consider drills for earthquakes, tsunamis, or other high-risk local events.

A 2012 report from the Washington Emergency Management Council's Seismic Safety Committee included recommendations to make schools resilient: structurally, socially, and educationally. One of the recommendations was to enact legislation that requires school districts to conduct at least one earthquake safety drill per school year, and requires schools in mapped tsunami hazard zones to conduct a pedestrian evacuation drill annually. The recommendation specified that the law should explicitly require drop, cover, and hold as the state's approved earthquake safety technique.

Summary of Bill:

Annual public school safety drill requirements are modified to require that:

- all schools complete one drill for earthquake safety that includes drop, cover, and hold; and
- schools in mapped tsunami hazards zones complete one pedestrian evacuation drill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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