
Education Committee

HB 2311

Brief Description: Reducing barriers to student participation in extracurricular activities.

Sponsors: Representatives Bergquist, Harris, Hudgins, Tarleton, Slatter, Haler, Reeves, Doglio, Muri, Graves and Young.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Limits the fees charged to certain low-income public and private school students for student identification cards and participation in extracurricular activities.
- Creates a grant program to subsidize small school districts unduly impacted by these fee limitations.
- Limits the frequency of physical examinations required for participation in extracurricular activities.

Hearing Date: 1/11/18

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association.

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 following activities are governed by the WIAA: baseball, basketball, girls bowling, cheerleading, cross country, dance/drill, football, forensics/debate, golf, girls gymnastics, music,

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soccer, girls softball, swimming/diving, tennis, theater/drama, track & field, girls volleyball, and wrestling.

Extracurricular Activities Fees.

Each school district board of directors has statutory authority to establish and collect attendance fees for optional noncredit extracurricular activities events. However, districts are required to waive or reduce these fees for students whose families, by reason of their low income, would have difficulty paying the entire amount of the fee. The school board may also establish and collect an optional comprehensive fee for attendance at one or more events.

Free and Reduced Price Meals.

In order for students to qualify for free school meals, their family's income must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Students whose families have an income between 130 percent and 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals. As of May 2017, the number of public school students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM) was 473,309, or 43 percent.

Associated Student Body.

An associated student body (ASB) is a formal student organization at a school. An ASB is approved of and regulated by the school board. Some ASBs allow their members to purchase an "ASB card," which identifies the student as a member of the school. The purchase of an ASB card is required for participation in some school-sponsored activities at some schools. An ASB card can often be used by a student to receive discounts, such as on admission to home athletic games or dances, or purchase of a year book.

Physical Examinations.

The 2017-18 WIAA Handbook states that students must undergo a thorough medical examination and be approved for interscholastic athletic competition by a medical authority licensed to perform a physical exam, prior to the first practice. The handbook also states that the physical examination is valid for 24 consecutive months, unless otherwise limited by local school district policy or the medical authority who performed the exam.

Summary of Bill:

Fee Limitations.

The following fees are limited for public and private school students eligible to participate in the federal FRPM: an ASB and other student identification cards, and extracurricular activities participation fees. The identification card fee is limited to five dollars per school year, and the participation fee is limited to \$5 per extracurricular activity per school year. The limit on extracurricular activities participation fees applies only to students enrolled in a school district that is a member of WIAA.

The process for charging and collecting fees from public and private schools eligible to participate in the FRPM program must be identical to the process for charging and collecting fees from other students.

The Promoting Lively Activities for Youth Grant Program.

The Promoting Lively Activities for Youth (PLAY) Grant Program is created to subsidize small school districts unduly impacted by the fee limitations described above. Subject to funding by the Legislature, beginning in the 2018-19 school year, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must allocate up to \$50,000 per school year for the purposes of the PLAY grant program. The grant dollars must be allocated on a first come basis, with a maximum of \$5,000 per district per year.

To qualify for a PLAY grant, a district must:

- have fewer than 2000 students;
- have 50 percent or more students eligible to participate in FRPM program; and
- be impacted by the maximum extracurricular activities fee limitations described above.

Applications for a PLAY grant must include: The number and overall percentage of students eligible to participate in the FRPM program who participate in one or more extracurricular activities in the prior school year, and an estimate of the number of extracurricular activities fees subject to the participation fee limitation.

Physical Examination Frequency.

Students may not be required to complete a physical examination to participate in extracurricular activities more often than every 24 months, unless recommended by a medical authority licensed to perform a physical examination.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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