

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2543

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to establishing regional school safety centers in educational service districts.

**Brief Description:** Establishing regional school safety centers in educational service districts.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lovick, Irwin, Springer, Kirby, Doglio, Frame, Chandler, Stokesbary, Griffey, Volz, Ortiz-Self, McBride, Senn, Gregerson, Muri and Pollet.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 1/16/18, 1/25/18, 1/29/18 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires the School Safety Summit participants to report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Legislature on the progress of implementing an effective and efficient statewide plan for school safety that meets local needs, by November 1, 2019.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Hargrove, Johnson, Lovick, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Slatter, Steele, Stokesbary and Valdez.

**Staff:** Katie Choate (786-7296) and Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

**Background:**

Safe School Plans. Since 2002 the Legislature has required public schools to have plans and procedures in place in the event of an emergency resulting from natural or man-made disasters. These plans and procedures are known as "safe school plans." Safe school plans

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include procedures for disaster prevention, intervention, all hazard/crisis response, and postcrisis recovery. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) provides guidance to school districts to develop their own safe school plan unique to their geographic location. School districts are encouraged to work with local emergency management agencies and other emergency responders, and apply for federal emergency response and crisis management grants.

School Safety Summit. The OSPI and its School Safety Advisory Committee hold annual School Safety Summits (Summits), as required by the 2016 Legislature. The focus of the summits is to establish and monitor the progress of a statewide plan for funding cost-effective methods for school safety that meet local needs. Other areas of focus may include planning and implementation of school safety planning efforts, training of school safety professionals, and integrating mental health and security measures. Summit participants include four legislators, appointed by their respective caucuses, and representatives from the OSPI, the Department of Health, educational service districts (ESDs), educational associations, emergency management, law enforcement, fire departments, parent organizations, and student organizations. Staff support for the summit is provided by the OSPI and its School Safety Advisory Committee.

Regional School Safety and Security Programs. In 2016 legislation was enacted authorizing ESDs to implement regional school safety and security programs that include: the establishment of a network of ESD school safety coordinators; the creation of technology-based systems that enable communication between schools and emergency response entities; ongoing training of school personnel and emergency responders to establish a system for preventative identification, intervention strategies, and management of risk behaviors; and collaboration with other ESDs, the OSPI, and the School Safety Advisory Committee. The regional school safety and security programs, which are subject to funding by the Legislature, have not received funding.

Washington State Institute for Public Policy Evaluation. The 2016 Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to evaluate how Washington and other states fund school safety and security programs. The WSIPP made the following findings in its December 2017 report: (1) states use a variety of funding sources to support school safety and security measures, though these sources may be specifically dedicated to school safety, or may allow, but not require, the money to be used for school safety and security purposes; and (2) in Washington, funding through the prototypical school formula accounts for the majority of dedicated school safety resources, though state and federal grants and state budget provisos are also used.

Funding School Safety and Security. The state allocates funding to school districts based on assumed levels of staff and other resources necessary to support a "prototypical" school that serves an assumed number of students at defined elementary, middle, and high school levels. Prototypical schools are intended to illustrate the level of resources needed to operate a school of a particular size using commonly understood terms such as class size, hours of instruction, and specified staff positions. The minimum allocation for classified staff providing student and staff safety is 0.0825 per 400 elementary school students, 0.092 per 432 middle school students, and 0.141 per 600 high school students. In addition, school

districts receive a minimum of \$121.94 per student for security and central office administration. Districts have discretion over how the money is spent, subject to some limits.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

By November 1, 2019, the Summit participants must:

- review various proposed and implemented models for regionalizing school safety planning, including proposals to establish regional safety centers;
- review the 2017 report on funding for safety and security in schools prepared by the WSIPP; and
- report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Legislature on the progress of implementing an effective and efficient statewide plan for school safety that meets local needs.

The report must include:

- recommendations to ensure that local, regionalized school safety plans are created and updated;
- identification of best practices for collaboration and communication within regions for the purpose of improving school safety;
- an analysis of the most effective and efficient methods for providing regional coordination of school safety efforts, such as providing mental health support, staff trainings, prevention planning, mitigation, crisis response, and community recovery;
- an analysis of the most effective and efficient methods for funding regional coordination of school safety efforts, including an evaluation of the current allocation model of state appropriations for school safety and security;
- identification of obstacles that impede school districts from using school safety services offered by ESDs;
- identification of obstacles that impede ESDs from offering school safety resources and services to local school districts; and
- an evaluation of the comparative capacity of ESDs and of school districts to deliver the most effective and efficient school safety resources and services.

Private schools are added to the list of possible participants in the annual school safety summit.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Provisions in the original bill related to requiring ESDs to establish regional school safety centers as part of a statewide network are removed. Instead, the substitute bill requires the Summit participants to report on the progress of implementing an effective and efficient statewide plan for school safety that meets local needs by November 1, 2019.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on January 29, 2018.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) No one knows when an act of violence or a natural disaster will occur. Policymakers owe it to students and school districts to prepare for disasters. There is nothing more basic than safety. These regional school safety centers will provide continuous school safety planning. Regional coordination is needed to refine the work around emergency preparedness. After school tragedies, the need for school support is overwhelming. There are equity gaps, such that small schools rarely receive adequate resources for emergency preparedness.

Disasters have cognitive, mental, and socially adverse effects on students and the community. Students who experience disasters are more likely to commit suicide. In rural Washington there have been wildfires that also cause health issues. The Legislature put money into the system, but it was only temporary. Educational service districts have run into issues coordinating school safety because they are short on funding. In addition, the capital budget did not provide funding for emergency preparedness system mapping.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) School safety is incredibly important. There are ESDs with safety programs similar to the one described in this bill that train school employees to press their panic button, rather than call 911. School safety mapping must also be coordinated with these centers.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; Greg Lynch, Educational Service District 114; Mick Miller, Educational Service District 101; Michelle Price, North Central Educational Service District; Kevin Chase, Educational Service District 105; and Alex Hur, Clear Risk and United School Insurance Program.

(Other) James McMahan, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; Mike Donalin, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Charlie Brown, Rapid Response Monitoring Services.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.