

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5129

As Passed House:
April 6, 2017

Title: An act relating to charter school students participating in interschool athletics and extracurricular activities.

Brief Description: Concerning charter school students participating in interschool athletics and extracurricular activities.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Fain, Zeiger, Mullet and Palumbo.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/13/17, 3/23/17 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/6/17, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the statutory provision requiring the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) rules to limit charter school students participation in interschool athletic activities or other interschool extracurricular activities to those activities offered by the student's resident school district, unless approved by a nonresident school district or the WIAA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Hargrove, Johnson, Kilduff, Lovick, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Slatter, Springer, Steele, Stokesbary and Volz.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

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.

The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (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.

A charter school is a public school that operates separately from the common school system. Charter schools are open to all children and may offer, tuition-free, any program or course of study that any other public school may offer. In general, charter schools are exempt from most state laws and rules governing other public schools.

The eligibility of a charter school student to participate in interschool athletic activities or other interschool extracurricular activities (interschool activities) governed by the WIAA is subject to rules adopted by the WIAA.

As required by statute, the WIAA rules only allow charter school students to participate in interschool activities offered by the resident school district, unless approved by a nonresident school district or the WIAA. In addition, statute requires that the WIAA rules provide that it is the responsibility of the charter school to pay the full cost, minus any student participation fee, for any student who participates in interschool activities governed by the WIAA.

Summary of Bill:

The following two provisions specifying what WIAA rules must provide are removed:

- The rules must limit charter school students' participation in interschool activities to those activities offered by the student's resident school district, unless approved by a nonresident school district or the WIAA.
- The rules must provide that the charter school is responsible for the full cost, minus any student participation fee, for any student who participates in interschool activities governed by the WIAA.

Instead, it is specified in statute that the charter school is responsible for the full cost, minus any student participation fee, for any student who participates in interschool activities governed by the WIAA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Last year the Legislature added a floor amendment to the charter school bill to try to deal with interscholastic activities at charter schools. Some people do not want to see charter schools created for certain athletic teams or activities. The prime sponsor tried to work with the WIAA, but there was not time to perfect the amendment. The language of this

bill was created in consultation with the WIAA and stakeholders, and is consistent with what happens with other schools in the state.

This bill is a technical fix to make sure that charter school students do not receive more of an opportunity than private school students. The current statutory language conflicts with the WIAA guidelines. The service fees charged to students should be determined by the local school district.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Hunt, prime sponsor; and Mike Colbrese, Washington Interscholastic Activities Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.