

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5129

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 2, 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: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/24/17, 2/02/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that charter school students are not restricted to their resident school district for purposes of participating in athletic or other extracurricular activities.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Zeiger, Chair; Rolfes, Ranking Minority Member; Billig, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Alia Kennedy (786-7405)

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

Under current law, the eligibility of a charter school student to participate in interschool athletic or other extracurricular activities is governed by the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA). The WIAA is a nonprofit organization and rule-making body that was formed in 1905 to create equitable playing conditions between high school

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sports teams in Washington. The WIAA consists of nearly 800 high schools and middle schools, both public and private, that have volunteered to abide by the policies established by the WIAA.

WIAA rules must provide that, unless approved by a non-resident school district or the WIAA, a student attending a charter school may only participate in interschool athletic or other interschool extracurricular activities offered by the student's resident school district. The WIAA rules must also provide that it is the responsibility of the charter school to pay for the full cost, minus any student participation fees, for any student who participates in interschool athletic or other extracurricular activities governed by the WIAA.

Summary of Bill: The provision that, unless provided otherwise, students at charter schools may only participate in interschool athletic or other interschool extracurricular activities offered by the student's resident school district is removed from statute.

Charter schools are responsible for the full cost, minus any student participation fee, for any student who participates in an interschool athletic or other interschool extracurricular activity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a technical clean-up bill. The goal from last year's legislation was to ensure that charter school students have the ability to play sports, but that schools were not creating sports factories.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Mike Colbrese, Washington Interscholastic Activities Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.