

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 1974

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Moving state board of education and educational service district elections to the Washington state school directors' association.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ybarra and Callan; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**House Committee on Education**

**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**

### **Background:**

#### Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In addition to its constitutional charge of supervising all matters pertaining to public schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and its office has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education requirements;
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties;
- fulfilling financial responsibilities, including distributing legislatively allocated funds to districts for the operation of the public school system, and awarding numerous state and federally funded grants; and
- satisfying numerous reporting and other duties assigned by the Legislature.

#### State Board of Education.

The 16-member State Board of Education (SBE) is comprised of five members elected by geographic regions by school directors, one member elected by private school directors, seven members appointed by the Governor, the SPI, and two nonvoting student members.

The SBE has various duties and powers prescribed in statute, including:

- providing advocacy and strategic oversight of public education;

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- establishing high school graduation requirements or equivalencies;
- identifying scores students must meet to achieve standard on statewide assessments;
- and
- accrediting private schools.

The elections of the SBE members by school directors and private school board members, including duties pertaining to the calling of elections, are conducted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in accordance with statutory requirements and rules adopted by the OSPI.

#### Educational Service Districts.

Washington has nine regionally based educational service districts (ESDs) that provide cooperative informational services to local school districts and assist the OSPI and the SBE in the performance of their duties. Among other responsibilities, the ESDs serve as a depository and distribution center for instructional materials, and they assist school districts in the preparation of their budgets. The ESDs are governed by boards of seven or nine members elected by school directors within each of the ESDs.

The elections of the ESD board members, including duties pertaining to the calling of elections, are conducted by the OSPI in accordance with statutory requirements and rules adopted by the OSPI. The tallying of votes cast in the ESD board member elections is conducted by the SPI and a three-person election board appointed by the SPI.

The SPI has additional duties related to ESD board positions. In the event there are more than three vacancies in a seven-member board, or four vacancies in a nine-member board, the SPI must appoint members so that a quorum is serving on the applicable board.

#### Washington State School Directors' Association.

The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) is the state agency that provides advice and assistance to local school boards. The WSSDA is charged with coordinating policymaking, control, and management of the state's school districts, and is empowered to prepare and adopt materials for its own organization. The WSSDA also adopts model policies and procedures that school districts may adopt, often in response to legislative directives.

#### **Summary:**

The duty of the OSPI to conduct the elections of the SBE members chosen by school directors and private school board members, including the calling of elections, is transferred to the WSSDA. The WSSDA is directed to adopt related procedures for the elections.

The duty of the OSPI to conduct the elections of the ESD board members chosen by school directors is transferred to the WSSDA, and the responsibility for the calling of elections is transferred from the SPI to the executive director of the WSSDA. The WSSDA is directed

to adopt related procedures for the elections and the executive director of the WSSDA is made responsible for assisting with the count and appointing a three-person election board to tally votes cast in the ESD board member elections.

Other related duties pertaining to the ESDs are also transferred from the OSPI to the WSSDA. In the event there are more than three vacancies in a seven-member board, or four vacancies in a nine-member board, the WSSDA president, instead of the SPI, must appoint members so that a quorum is serving on the applicable board.

Provisions governing the general authority of the WSSDA are modified to expressly provide that the WSSDA is empowered to prepare and adopt materials for the election of SBE members and for the ESD elections.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	95	1
Senate	48	0

**Effective:** June 9, 2022