

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5322

As Passed House:

March 24, 2021

Title: An act relating to prohibiting dual enrollment between school employees' benefits board and public employees' benefits board programs.

Brief Description: Prohibiting dual enrollment between school employees' benefits board and public employees' benefits board programs.

Sponsors: Senators Robinson and Wilson, C.; by request of Health Care Authority.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/11/21, 3/15/21 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/24/21, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires an employee who is eligible for both Public Employees' Benefits Board and School Employees' Benefits Board insurance coverage to choose health, dental, and vision coverage from the same program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Background:

Medical, dental, vision, and related insurance benefits for all eligible school employees are provided by the School Employees' Benefits Board (SEBB). The SEBB is responsible for determining the terms of employee and dependent eligibility and enrollment policies, generally subject to the statewide condition that employees anticipated to work 630 hours per year or more qualify for coverage.

Medical, dental, vision, and related insurance benefits for all eligible state employees are provided by the Public Employees' Benefits Board (PEBB). Similar to the SEBB, the PEBB is responsible for determining eligibility and enrollment policies, subject to the condition that employees' work half time or more, generally 1,040 hours per year, to qualify for coverage.

Beginning with the 2022 plan year, dual coverage under the SEBB and the PEBB is prohibited for the same type of coverage, though individuals eligible for both programs may be able to choose some insurance benefits from the SEBB and others from the PEBB.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in the 2022 plan year, an employee eligible for both the PEBB and the SEBB health insurance coverage must choose coverage from the same program, rather than selecting some benefits from each program.

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) This is a clarification of the decision made last session to prohibit dual enrollment in the PEBB and SEBB programs. Without this, there would be hundreds of enrollment options, making it much more difficult to administer at the state and school district level. Dental benefits, for example, are largely the same benefits, but differ between the PEBB and the SEBB because of different risk pools and different premium calculation methods. There is little benefit in being able to choose between them.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Before the SEBB was created, dual coverage was allowed in many school districts. The loss of dual coverage is a frequent complaint from the members of the Washington Education Association. The changes in this bill, however, are a clarification of the policy enacted last year.

Persons Testifying: (In support) David Iseminger, Washington State Health Care Authority.

(Other) Julie Salvi, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.