

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1759

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As of February 16, 2022

**Title:** An act relating to requiring school districts and other public education entities to make information from the department of health about substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and firearms and ammunition, available through their websites and other communication resources.

**Brief Description:** Requiring school districts and other public education entities to make information from the department of health about substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and firearms and ammunition, available through their websites and other communication resources.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Callan, Harris, Berry, Davis, Ramos, Santos, Senn, Sullivan, Valdez, Pollet, Peterson, Goodman, Macri and Dolan).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/8/22, 66-30.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/16/22.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Health (DOH) to post and periodically revise information about substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medication, and firearms and ammunition.
- Requires school districts, charter schools, state-tribal compact schools, and educational service districts to post a prominent link on their homepages to this DOH information.
- Tasks these educational entities with making this DOH information accessible through digital and non-digital communications.

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*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.*

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Recently enacted legislation has addressed communicating information about suicide prevention and mental health and substance abuse resources to students in public schools.

In 2020, public schools that issued student and staff identification cards were directed to print on these cards the contact information for a national suicide prevention organization and the contact information for one or more campus, local, state, or national organizations specializing in suicide prevention, crisis intervention, or counseling.

In 2021, public schools were required to publish on their website home pages the contact information for organizations specializing in suicide prevention or crisis intervention; depression, anxiety, or counseling; eating disorders; substance abuse; and a mental health referral service for children and teens.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Health (DOH) must post and periodically revise information about substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and firearms and ammunition. The information must be formatted for the needs of of public school students and families.

The information must be a template that can be revised as necessary and:

- include website addresses and telephone numbers of one or more public health agencies and may include private organizations with applicable information;
- can be replicated for other health and safety topics that are germane to public schools;
- can be easily shared with schools and districts; and
- includes format and content options that may be used to reflect regional, demographic, and cultural differences.

Within existing resources, school districts, charter schools, state-tribal compact schools, and educational service districts must post a prominent link on their homepages to this DOH information.

These educational entities must also make this DOH information accessible through other internet-based communications such as social media accounts and through other digital and non-digital communications to help inform students, families, and others about available health and safety resources. School districts, charter schools, and state-tribal compact schools may post this information multiple times annually and must post at least twice each school year. Educational service districts must post this information at least quarterly.

**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: Students are experiencing ongoing behavioral crises at home and school. Suicide is a leading cause of death for children and teens, and it is often an impulsive act that relies on availability of lethal means. This information will provide reminders to families of how to keep their children safe with secure storage of these lethal means. The number of drug overdoses for students is increasing. Schools can effectively communicate this safety information to their communities. Schools will be able to easily use the DOH information and plug it into their websites and existing communication channels, so schools are not burdened by these requirements. Many of the prevention materials already exist.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Lisa Callan, Prime Sponsor; April Schentrup; Brad Finegood, Public Health – Seattle & King County; Michelle Nims, Washington State PTA; Jennifer Dolan Waldman; Karyn Brownson, Public Health – Seattle & King County.

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