

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5340

As of January 28, 2021

Title: An act relating to qualifications for school board directors.

Brief Description: Concerning qualifications for school board directors.

Sponsors: Senators Salomon, Das, Dhingra, Hunt, Lovelett, Nguyen and Saldaña.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/01/21.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the eligibility criteria for school board directors to allow lawful permanent residents to qualify, rather than only United States citizens.
- Provides that a school board director does not need to be a registered voter to qualify, but still must be at least 18 years old and reside within the district.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Alexandra Fairfortune (786-7416)

Background: School Board Director Elections. Each member of a school district board of directors is elected by the registered voters of the school district to serve a term of four or six years. Some school districts are divided into director districts, where school directors are elected by the residents of their respective district for a term of two, four, or six years.

Individuals are eligible to run for the office of school director if they are a citizen of the United States and the state of Washington, and are a registered voter of the school district or director district.

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.

Voter Eligibility. Individuals are eligible to vote in the state of Washington if they are:

- a citizen of the United States;
- a legal resident of Washington State;
- at least 18 years old by Election Day;
- not disqualified from voting due to a court order; and
- not under Department of Corrections supervision for a Washington felony conviction.

Summary of Bill: The eligibility criteria for qualifying as a school director candidate are modified. An individual is eligible to run for the office of school director if they are at least 18 years old, a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident, a resident of Washington, and a resident of the school district or director district. The requirement that an individual be a registered voter of the school district or director district is eliminated.

Declaration of candidacy forms for school director candidates must be modified to reflect the new criteria.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2021.

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

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