
Education Committee

HB 1230

Brief Description: Requiring school districts and other public education entities to make information from the department of health available.

Sponsors: Representatives Callan, Harris, Thai, Reeves, Senn, Ortiz-Self, Ormsby, Kloba, Duerr, Doglio, Berry, Riccelli, Morgan, Davis, Ramel, Bergquist, Pollet, Tharinger, Peterson, Stonier and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Health (DOH) to post and periodically revise on its website information about substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and firearms and ammunition.
- Requires school districts to post a prominent link on their homepage, and the homepage of each school within the district, to the delineated DOH information and to make the information accessible through various communication means.
- Makes comparable posting requirements for the DOH information for educational service districts, charter schools, and state-tribal compact schools.

Hearing Date: 1/26/23

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Department of Health.

The Department of Health (DOH) administers various programs and services that promote public

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health through disease and injury prevention, immunization, newborn screening, professional and health care facility licensing, and public education. The DOH is also involved in the promotion of safe and healthy schools, including duties related to environmental health, immunization, and sexual health education.

Information about Behavioral Health Resources.

Recently enacted legislation has established new public school requirements for providing students with information about behavioral health resources. Legislation adopted in 2020 (Substitute House Bill 2589, enacted as ch. 39, Laws of 2020), requires public schools that issue student identification cards, staff identification cards, or both, to print on the 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, if available.

Legislation adopted in 2021 (Substitute House Bill 1373, enacted as ch. 167, Laws of 2021), requires public schools that maintain websites to publish on their homepage specific information about behavioral health resources, including contact information for suicide prevention organizations, and organizations specializing in depression, anxiety, or counseling for adolescents.

The 2021 legislation also directed public schools to post information on social media websites used by school districts for the purpose of notifying students, families, and the public of the behavioral health resources published on their website homepages.

Educational Service Districts.

Washington has nine regionally based educational service districts (ESDs) that provide cooperative informational services to local school districts and assist the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education in the performance of their duties. Among other duties, the ESDs serve as a depository and distribution center for instructional materials and assist school districts in the preparation of their budgets.

Summary of Bill:

Department of Health.

The DOH must post and periodically revise on its website 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 provided or otherwise made accessible to school districts, charter schools, state-tribal compact schools, and ESDs, and must be formatted for the needs of public school students and families.

The posted information must be in the form of a template that can be revised as necessary and that:

- includes website addresses and telephone numbers of one or more public health agencies with applicable information;

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

Education Entities—Information from the Department of Health.

Within existing resources, each school district that maintains a website must post a prominent link on their homepage, and the homepage of each school within the district, to information from the DOH that addresses substance use trends, overdose symptoms and response, and the secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and firearms and ammunition.

Each school district, for the purpose of informing students, families, and other persons about available health and safety resources, must also make the DOH information accessible through other internet-based communications, such as social media accounts used by the district, and through other digital and nondigital communications of the district. The required information postings may be made multiple times annually and no less frequently than quarterly.

The website and other communication requirements for school districts pertaining to the delineated information from the DOH applies also to charter schools, state-tribal compact schools, and, with some modifications, ESDs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2023.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.