

# WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

**Date:** April 9, 2025

**To:** Washington State Board of Health Members

**From:** Kelly Oshiro, Board Member

**Subject:** Rules Briefing, Chapter 246-650 WAC, Auditory Screening Standards – School Districts

## Background and Summary:

Under state law (RCW 28A.210.020), the Washington State Board of Health (Board) sets the rules for yearly hearing screenings in schools. These rules are in chapter 246-760 WAC. The rules ensure that schools can identify students with diminished hearing and refer them for follow-up care.

In August 2023, the Lake Chelan Lion's Club requested that the Board update its hearing screening rules. They suggested adding another screening technology called otoacoustic emission screening (OAE). The Board accepted the request and filed a CR-101, Preproposal Statement of Inquiry, in October 2023 to consider this update and other minor changes.

Since then, Board staff have worked with hearing experts, reviewed potential rule changes, and gathered feedback from interested parties and affected communities through school site visits, informational sessions, and a survey for school screening staff. Board staff used this feedback to draft proposed rules for informal comment and supporting analyses.

I have invited Molly Dinardo, Board staff, to brief the Board on progress to date and the next steps in the rulemaking process. This is an informational briefing, and no Board action is required. Staff plan to file the CR-102, Proposed Rulemaking, at the end of April for public review and comment. The official public hearing for the proposed rules is tentatively scheduled for the Board's June meeting.

## Staff

Molly Dinardo

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PO Box 47990 • Olympia, WA 98504-7990  
360-236-4110 • [wsboh@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:wsboh@sboh.wa.gov) • [sboh.wa.gov](http://sboh.wa.gov)