

Executive Summary: Health Impact Review of ESSB 5395

Concerning comprehensive sexual health education (2020 Legislative Session)

Evidence indicates that ESSB 5395 has the potential to increase provision of inclusive, comprehensive sexual health education, which will improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes for students and decrease inequities for multiple groups of students. It is unclear how the bill will impact health inequities for students that are opted-out of school-based, comprehensive sexual health education curriculum.

BILL INFORMATION

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, C., Randall, Keiser, Saldaña, Takko, Mullet, Wellman, Das, Nguyen, Billig, Pedersen, Rolfes, Darneille, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Hunt, Kuderer)

Summary of Bill:

- Requires every public school (K-12) to provide comprehensive sexual health education, which is evidence-informed, medically and scientifically accurate, age-appropriate, and inclusive of all members of protected classes by September 1, 2021.
- Directs Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop a list of comprehensive sexual health education curricula that meet state requirements and to create instructional materials review tools.
- Requires public schools to either implement a comprehensive sexual health education curriculum from the OSPI curricula list or to use the OSPI review tools when choosing curricula other than those on the list.
- Allows parents or legal guardians to excuse their child from planned instruction in comprehensive sexual health education through a written request.

HEALTH IMPACT REVIEW

Summary of Findings:

The Health Impact Review found the following evidence regarding the provisions in ESSB 5395:

- This review made the **informed assumption** that requiring every public school (K-12) in Washington to provide comprehensive sexual health education that meets state standards would result in more school districts becoming more compliant with and/or implementing evidence-informed, comprehensive, inclusive sexual health education curriculum. This assumption is based on discussions with staff at OSPI, Oregon Department of Education, and Rhode Island Department of Education.
- **Strong evidence** that implementing evidence-informed, comprehensive, inclusive sexual health education curricula in public schools would improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes for students.
- **Very strong evidence** that improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes would reduce health inequities for multiple groups of students.
- **Unclear evidence** for how ESSB 5395 will impact health inequities for students that are opted-out of school-based comprehensive sexual health education.

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FULL REVIEW

For review methods, logic model, strength-of-evidence analyses, and citations of empirical evidence refer to the full Health Impact Review at:

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2020-08-ESSB5395.pdf>

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