
SENATE BILL 5272

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senator Lovick

1 AN ACT Relating to improving school safety by extending penalties
2 for interference by, or intimidation by threat of, force or violence
3 at schools and extracurricular activities and requiring schools to
4 notify the public of such penalties; amending RCW 28A.635.090 and
5 28A.635.100; adding a new section to chapter 28A.635 RCW; and
6 creating a new section.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that incidents
9 of violence in elementary and secondary schools raise concerns about
10 ensuring and promoting school safety. For learning to occur, schools
11 must first be safe places for students and staff. The legislature
12 recognizes that violent behavior tends to escalate if tolerated, thus
13 it is the intent of the legislature to provide targeted and
14 appropriate sanctions for the interference with school activities by
15 force or violence before it rises to the level of substantial or
16 grievous bodily harm.

17 (2) The legislature understands that extracurricular athletics
18 provide valuable opportunities for students to develop social and
19 personal skills that can be useful throughout their lives. These
20 activities also benefit other students and spectators by building
21 school spirit, unity, community support, and community identity.

1 Extracurricular athletics would not be possible without the
2 commitment of officials, judges, referees, and volunteers who work at
3 the events for little or no financial gain. The legislature finds
4 that the values engendered in interscholastic activities are being
5 undermined by participants and spectators who do not respect the
6 commitment of these officials. Increasingly, these people are
7 expressing their dissatisfaction through inappropriate verbal abuse
8 and behavior directed at the officials. The legislature recognizes
9 that officials, such as judges and referees, and volunteers acting as
10 officials, for extracurricular athletic activities of elementary and
11 secondary school students are particularly vulnerable to
12 inappropriate conduct because their attention is focused on the
13 athletic activities. Thus, the legislature intends to provide
14 additional support and protection for officials conducting
15 interscholastic events.

16 (3) The legislature finds that violence against public and
17 private students and staff is unacceptable. Thus, to promote a safe
18 learning environment, the legislature intends to increase the penalty
19 for those who deliberately ignore posted warnings against acts of
20 intimidation or violence against school athletic officials.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.635
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 (1) Signage must be posted notifying the public of the offenses
24 and possible penalties under RCW 28A.635.090 and 28A.635.100.

25 (2) The signage must be prominently displayed at any entrance to
26 a public school gymnasium or auditorium and wherever other public
27 notices are placed at public school athletic fields.

28 (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
29 develop a standard signage form notifying the public of the offenses
30 and possible penalties under RCW 28A.635.090 and 28A.635.100.

31 (4) As used in this section, "public school" has the same meaning
32 as in RCW 28A.150.010.

33 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.635.090 and 2003 c 53 s 169 are each amended to
34 read as follows:

35 (1) It (~~shall be~~) is unlawful for any person, singly or in
36 concert with others, to interfere by force or violence with (~~any~~
37 ~~administrator, teacher, classified employee, person under contract~~
38 ~~with the school or school district, or student of any common school~~

1 ~~who~~) an employee or contractor of a public or private elementary or
2 secondary school, an elementary or secondary student, or an official
3 or volunteer acting as an official for extracurricular athletic
4 activities of elementary or secondary students, while that person is
5 in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties or studies.
6 (~~Any such interference by force or violence committed by a student~~
7 ~~shall be grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion of the~~
8 ~~student.~~)

9 (2) If a public school student interferes as described in
10 subsection (1) of this section, the interference is grounds for the
11 student's emergency removal, subject to RCW 28A.600.015. If a public
12 school student interferes as described in subsection (1) of this
13 section during extracurricular athletic activities, the student may
14 be excluded from participating in or attending that activity for up
15 to 12 months.

16 (3) A person violating this section is guilty of a gross
17 misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than (~~five hundred dollars~~)
18 \$1,000, or imprisoned in jail not more than (~~six months~~) 364 days,
19 or both such fine and imprisonment. Upon conviction, a person, other
20 than a student, must be excluded from entering the school where the
21 crime was committed or from attending the extracurricular athletic
22 activities in which the crime was committed, for a period of no less
23 than 12 months and no more than 18 months.

24 (4) As used in this section, "public school" has the same meaning
25 as in RCW 28A.150.010.

26 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.635.100 and 2003 c 53 s 170 are each amended to
27 read as follows:

28 (1) It (~~shall be~~) is unlawful for any person, singly or in
29 concert with others, to intimidate by threat of force or violence
30 (~~any administrator, teacher, classified employee, or student of any~~
31 ~~common school who~~) an employee or contractor of a public or private
32 elementary or secondary school, an elementary or secondary student,
33 or an official or volunteer acting as an official for extracurricular
34 athletic activities of elementary or secondary students, while that
35 person is in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties
36 or studies.

37 (2) A person violating this section is guilty of a gross
38 misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than (~~five hundred dollars~~)

1 \$500, or imprisoned in jail not more than six months, or both such
2 fine and imprisonment.

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