
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6503

AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL POOL SAFETY.

SUMMARY:

This bill (1) requires all public schools to have at least two qualified staff members on duty for all classes at a swimming pool and (2) establishes minimum qualifications for pool staff.

It requires all local and regional boards of education to develop swimming pool safety plans. Also, by July 1, 2014, the public health commissioner must adopt regulations to include swimming pools and natatoriums in schools in the existing regulations regarding public pools.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

QUALIFICATIONS AND STAFFING

Minimum Staffing

The bill requires a board of education that offers a physical education course using a swimming pool to have at least one instructor and another instructor or a lifeguard on duty to supervise the students for all pool classes. The instructor and the lifeguard must meet the bill's qualifications.

Instructors

The bill requires all certified physical education instructors (i.e., teachers, administrators, or other professional staff) who teach courses using a swimming pool to (1) be a certified lifeguard; (2) be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation offered by the American Heart Association (AHA) or the American Red Cross (ARC); and (3) complete a first aid course offered by the AHA, ARC, public health department, or any health director, as certified by the agency or director offering the course.

Lifeguards

The bill allows a local or regional board of education to hire a lifeguard to help the swimming instructor supervise the swimming class if the lifeguard is at least 16 years old and meets the above criteria for an instructor. The lifeguard must be under the supervision of the certified instructor.

POOL SAFETY PLAN

Under the bill, any board that offers a physical education course using a pool must develop a pool safety plan. The plan must, at a minimum, include best practices regarding pool safety and conform with the bill's provisions and the state Public Health Code. The bill does not set a deadline to complete the plan.

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5113 (File 393), favorably reported by the Public Safety and Security Committee also (1) establishes qualifications that a school's swimming teacher, coach, or instructor must meet and (2) generally requires that when a student is using a school pool for aquatic activities, at least one person must be present, besides the instructor, whose primary responsibility is to monitor the pool for swimmers in distress.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/22/2013)