

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5911

As Passed Senate, March 16, 1999

Title: An act relating to school director positions, residency, and vacancies.

Brief Description: Changing school director eligibility provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Hochstatter and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 3/1/99, 3/3/99 [DP, DNP].
Passed Senate, 3/16/99, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Bauer, Brown, Finkbeiner, Goings, Hochstatter, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Sellar and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Benton.

Staff: Natalie Adams (786-7444)

Background: School directors are elected by registered voters in regular elections. To be elected in a school district election, candidates must be citizens of the United States and the state of Washington. In addition, candidates must be registered voters in the school district or, if the school district has director districts, the candidates must be registered voters in the director district in which they run.

Summary of Bill: If the elected school board director continues to be a citizen of the United States and of the state of Washington and a registered voter in the school district, but no longer resides in the director district, the director remains eligible for the director position until the next regular school district election. A successor must be elected at the next election to serve the unexpired term or a new term.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: We do not know how many school districts will be affected by this bill. However, we feel this is a problem that needs addressed. In one school district, three directors were disqualified from their positions within five years. This creates the appearance of impropriety because the school board must appoint someone to fill the

vacancy. We want to allow the director to stay in the position until the next regular school district election.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Tracey Eide, prime sponsor (pro); Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors Association (pro).

House Amendment(s): A new section is added to the code, rather than an amendment to existing law. If an elected school director no longer resides in the director district, but continues to reside in the school district, the director may complete the remainder of the term of office if the change in status results from a boundary change. If, however, the change in status results from a voluntary change in residence, the director may only remain in office until a successor is elected to serve the remainder of the term.