

School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Newsletter

Issue #4—May 22, 2008



Team Forwards Editing Suggestions to Board

After five daylong meetings, a stakeholder workgroup has completed its proposed edits to a working draft of the school environmental health and safety rule revisions. These recommendations have been forwarded to a committee of the State Board of Health for consideration along with a list of 40 outstanding policy issues.

The last editing meeting was held May 7 and produced a color-coded document containing different types of editing suggestions. The bulk of the document is highlighted in yellow or blue, although other colors are used in special situations.

- Blue highlights indicate sections on which there is broad agreement. Some of these sections contain no proposed edits or contain only consensus wording changes that seemed to be consistent with the policy intent of the Board and the Department of Health (DOH).
- Yellow sections indicate areas of disagreement. Mostly, these are where the participants had conflicting opinions, but proposed changes that had broad support from the group are also highlighted in yellow if they conflict with the policy intent of the Board and DOH. Areas of disagreement were also captured in a second document referred to during the meetings as “the parking lot.”

In a few instances, participants agreed they wanted to add new language to strengthen the rule. In three instances, they suggested adding completely new requirements. These had to do with restrictions on animals in the classroom, restrictions on donated stuffed furniture, and a requirement to let carpet dry after cleaning before a room can be occupied. These three proposals were added to the edits, and referred to the Board as consensus recommendations that did not seem to conflict with the policy directions it had established.

The final document of potential wording changes has been sent to participants for review and will be available by request once it has been reviewed.

The Board briefly discussed the parking lot at its May 14 meeting in San Juan County. That document and all related materials from the meeting are available at the meeting materials section of the Board’s Web site at www.sboh.wa.gov.

Next Meeting

June 9, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Holiday Inn SeaTac

Meetings are open to the public for observation.

Participation in the discussion will be limited to invitees.

What Happens Next?

The State Board of Health received a rule update May 14. Members had an opportunity to ask questions about the 40 items in the “parking lot.” The Board referred the proposed edits and the parking lot items to its Environmental Health Committee, which has begun meeting with Board and Department of Health (DOH) staff members to decide whether to accept the edits and whether to make other changes based on parking lot requests. The two staffs have begun revising the working draft based on the committee’s input.

DOH, meanwhile, has started developing initial cost and benefit figures based on the latest language. State law requires a draft “significant analysis” be submitted when the rule proposal is published for public comment and hearing, as well as a small business economic impact statement.

The rule revision team will convene one last time on June 9 to review an early draft of the significant analysis. This will give participants a chance to review and comment on the economic assumptions and costs before they are formalized. Board staff will brief participants on the latest working draft so they understand the rule language being analyzed.

The Board will receive a briefing about close-to-final language and costs on June 11 in Pierce County. It will publish the proposed rule language, along with the preliminary economic analyses, in July. Because of the high level of interest in this rule, it has decided to hold two public hearings—one on the East side (probably Spokane on August 27) and one on the West side (probably Olympia on September 10). Logistics for all three meetings are still being worked out—please check the Board’s Web site for the latest information about dates, times, and locations.

School Rule Revision Web Site

<http://www.sboh.wa.gov/rules/schooleh/index.htm>.

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