



Updating School Health and Safety Standards

At the June 2025 State Board of Health meeting, the Board approved a report to the Governor and Legislature that recommends new draft rules for school environmental health and safety. The draft rule will establish updated minimum health and safety standards.



The Challenge

Since 2010, the state budget has prevented the Board from implementing updated health and safety rules for schools. Schools and local health jurisdictions remain subject to standards that are more than 60 years old. The outdated rules do not address modern environmental health concerns such as air quality.



A Collaborative Approach

In 2024, the Legislature directed the Board to review and propose updated minimum health and safety standards. The Board formed a technical advisory committee (TAC). The TAC included school representatives, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, parent groups, and local health officials. Together, they drafted a legislative report with proposed rules, a fiscal analysis, and an environmental justice assessment.



Making a Difference

The new rule helps to foster partnerships between schools and local health agencies. It lets each school adjust to its own needs while keeping student safety and costs in check. For the first time, Washington will have indoor air quality requirements for schools to protect student health.

Phased Implementation

The legislative report recommends filing updated rules in phases to balance student safety and mitigate costs.

Phase 1

Modernizes safety standards by clarifying facility requirements, developing readiness plans for indoor air quality, radon testing, and extreme temperatures

Phase 2

Strengthens partnerships between schools and local health jurisdictions to better protect student health and safety

Phase 3

Includes remaining sections with new requirements such as specialized rooms and indoor air quality

Next Steps

If the Legislature lifts the proviso in 2026, we can begin the Phase 1 rulemaking as early as summer 2026.

The Board is committed to continuing conversations with interested and affected parties.





Who Does What?



Public & Private Schools

Provide and maintain clean and safe facilities



State Board of Health

Adopts environmental health and safety requirements for schools serving K-12 students



Local Health Jurisdictions

Inspect schools and respond to public health concerns

Washington Schools by the Numbers



1.2+ million

Students in Washington's public and private schools



180

Days per year students spend in school facilities

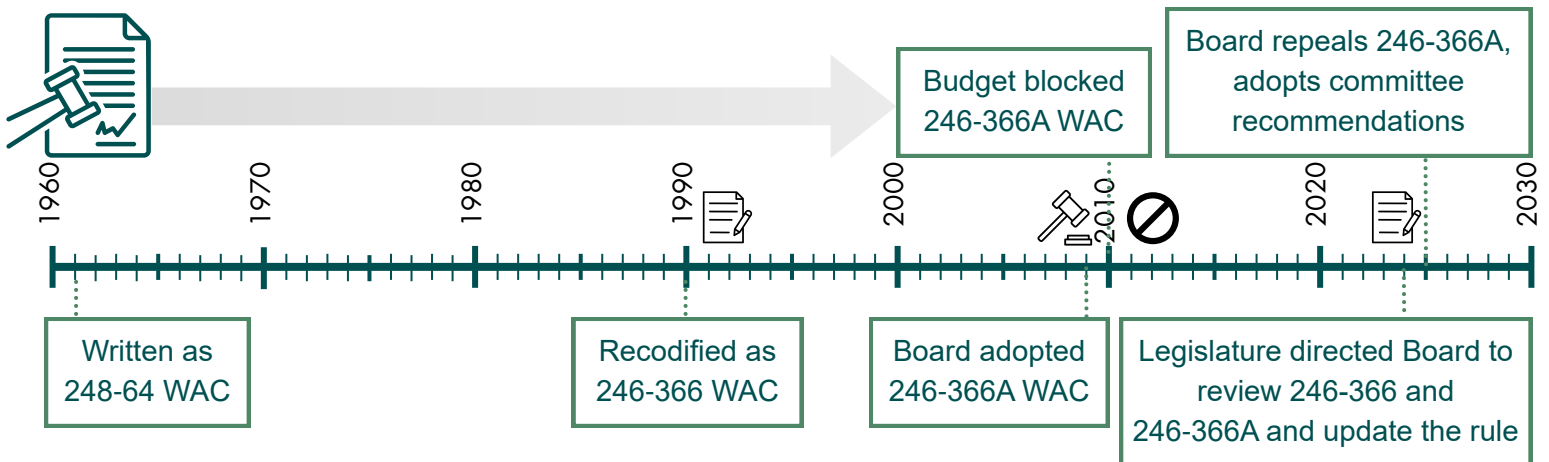


13,320

Hours students spend in schools over 13 years during their K-12 journey



Rulemaking Timeline



WASHINGTON STATE 
BOARD OF HEALTH

Contact Us: schoolehs@sboh.wa.gov

Learn More: [School Environmental Health and Safety Rule](#)

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