

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

The safe schools levy, formerly known as the crime levy, allows school districts to levy for costs associated with student and staff safety issues. Eligible expenses include: (1) police liaison services; (2) drug abuse prevention programs (DARE); (3) gang resistance education training; (4) school security measures; (5) other crime prevention and student and staff safety measures; and (6) for school support staff services including services provided by licensed school counselors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, and chemical dependency counselors.

The safe schools levy was increased from \$11 per pupil unit to \$30 per pupil unit beginning with taxes payable in 2003 (fiscal year 2004), lowered by the 2003 Legislature to \$27 per pupil unit for taxes payable in 2004 through 2007, and increased by \$3 back to \$30 per pupil for taxes payable in 2008 and later.

The 2008 Legislature required that as a condition of receiving the safe schools levy, school districts were required to meet a maintenance of effort level of spending on the school support staff listed in clause (6). The maintenance of effort may be met either on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis or a total spending basis, whichever is less.

This bill expands the FTE definitions for school districts that are members of cooperatives to include the FTEs of those same student support employees providing services through the cooperatives.

- 1 Safe schools levy.** Authorizes a school district that is a member of a cooperative district (e.g. a special education cooperative or an intermediate school district) to include in its count of FTEs staff who are providing school support services through the cooperative district for purposes of determining maintenance of effort.