Notice of Environmental Justice Assessment:

Phase 1: Minimum Environmental Health and Safety Standards in K-12 Schools

Updated June 24, 2026

WHAT

The State Board of Health (Board), in collaboration with the Department of Health (Department) is conducting an Environmental Justice Assessment for proposed rules regulating environmental health and safety standards for K-12 schools. The Board has the authority to make rules on this topic under RCW 43.20.050(2)(d).

The new chapter will set minimum statewide health and safety standards for schools. Topics that may be addressed in proposed rules are:

- Good Safety Practice and Guidance
- General Building Requirements
- Indoor Air Quality and Ventilation Plans
- Extreme Temperature Readiness Plans
- Noise Levels
- Light Levels
- Injury Prevention

The purpose of this environmental justice assessment is to identify:

- Who might be most impacted by the proposed rules
- Environmental benefits, harms, and health impacts of the proposed rules
- Ways to minimize or eliminate negative environmental impacts
- How to equitably distribute positive environmental impacts

Visit the Department's Environmental Justice webpage to learn more about Environmental Justice Assessments.

WHY

The Washington State Board of Health's school rule hasn't been updated since 1991. Between May 2024 and June 2025, the Board worked with a committee to recommend updates to the rule. The Board sent its ideas in a report to the legislature in 2025. The report suggested that the rule be updated in three phases so that schools and local health departments have time to adjust and to keep costs low.

In 2026, the legislature gave the Board permission to implement the Phase 1 suggestions from the report. Phase 1 focuses on schools making plans to make sure the air inside buildings is safe and getting ready for times when the weather is very hot or cold, and making sure buildings are safe for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

The Board is considering creating a new chapter of rule to set minimum standards for environmental health and safety in K-12 schools (Chapter 246-370 WAC). The Board will also consider repealing portions of Chapter 246-366 WAC.

WHO

The proposed rulemaking will directly impact over one million K-12 students in Washington State served by public, charter, and private schools as well as school staff, parents, and other visitors to the schools.

If you identify as a member of one or more of these groups and would like to share your thoughts or connect with one of our staff, please contact us at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov or see ways to get involved below.

WHEN

See below for our proposed timeline and how the environmental justice assessment fits into this process. We highlighted in grey when the public can engage in the assessment and rulemaking process:

Date	Milestone/Action	Purpose
July 2026	File CR-101 documents	Formally begins rulemaking process
July 2026	Initiate Environmental Justice Assessment	• Identify potentially impacted communities and populations • Engage with potentially impacted communities and populations • Begin Tribal engagement
Fall 2026	Informal public comment period	Solicit feedback from interested parties on recommended rule language.
Fall 2026	Information sharing sessions	Share information about the Phase 1 rule project
Fall 2026	Cost surveys distributed	Solicit information on the fiscal impact to schools, school districts, and LHJs for use in CR-102 fiscal analyses.
May 2027	File CR-102 documents	Formally proposes rule language.
May 2027	Environmental Justice Assessment published	• Demonstrate how the agency incorporated input from impacted communities and Tribes • Demonstrate how the agency intended to equitably distribute benefits and mitigate harms
May 2027	Formal public comment period begins	Solicits public feedback on proposed rule.
June 2027	Public hearing	Formal determination by the Board to adopt the proposed rule.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Please subscribe at https://airtable.com/appInSCDg3PQGljEz/pag9Thdid5W2N8kiu/form to receive notifications about this rule update or to participate in information sessions or provide informal comments. For more information, please visit our website at: https://sboh.wa.gov/rulemaking/agency-rules-and-activity/2024-2025-school-rule-review-project.

For questions about this rulemaking or the environmental justice assessment, please contact us at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov.

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To request this document in an alternative format or a different language, or if you would like to request meeting accommodations, please contact the State Board of Health at 360-236-4110 or by email at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email wsboh@sboh.wa.gov.