

Until 2020, school districts offered their own health care benefit plans to employees

Prior to January 1, 2020, qualifying school employees received health care benefits through their local school district. Plans, premiums, and eligibility for part-time and intermittent employees varied by district.

The School Employee Benefits Board now provides benefits for qualifying school employees statewide

Beginning January 1, 2020, qualifying school employees became eligible for health care benefits under a consolidated program called the School Employees' Benefits Board (SEBB).

The program is administered by the Health Care Authority's SEB Board (Board). The Board approves insurance benefit plans and establishes eligibility criteria for school employees and their dependents. Statute requires that school employees anticipated to work at least 630 hours per year qualify for coverage. Like the health benefits model for state employees, employers (school districts) must pay to cover all eligible employees, even if they waive their health coverage. Employees may waive coverage if they have benefits provided through another source, such as their spouse's employer.

The state provides funding for employee health benefits to school districts through various funding models. School employees also pay for a portion of the costs.

The 2020 Legislature directed JLARC to study health benefit coverage for school employees before and after SEBB

JLARC staff will collect data from the state's school districts to answer the following questions:

1. How many school employees worked full-time and less than full-time during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years?
 - a. What were the ranges of hours these employees worked?
 - b. What types of jobs did they perform as their primary duty, such as teacher, educational staff associate, paraprofessional, bus driver, and substitute teacher?
2. How many of the above employees were eligible for and covered by employer-sponsored health benefits before and after SEBB?
 - a. Of those who were eligible, how many waived benefits?
 - b. How much did each district pay for the health benefits of their eligible employees?

JLARC staff will work with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to answer:

3. How much funding did the state provide to each district in the 2019-20 school year to cover the cost of employee health benefits? How much of this funding is associated with different funding areas, such as special education, pupil transportation, etc.?

JLARC staff will also identify information that should be incorporated into OSPI's and the Health Care Authority's regular data collection efforts related to employee health benefits.



Study Timeframe

Preliminary Report: September 2021

Proposed Final Report: December 2021

Study Team

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JLARC Study Process

