

Rep. Steffen: Student strip search bill receives public hearing

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Madison, WI – Today, Assembly Bill 108, which would prohibit strip searches of students conducted by school personnel, received a public hearing in the Assembly Education Committee. State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) and State Senator Eric Wimberger (R-Green Bay) introduced the legislation in response to an incident at the Suring School District involving six teenage girls being ordered to strip down to their underwear by a school official. The search was allegedly conducted in search of a nicotine vape pen.

“The disturbing event that took place last year brought to light the need to update our statutes to protect our students from such invasive searches. Treating kids with dignity and providing them with basic privacy is something we should all expect, especially when they are in the care of our schools,” said Rep. Steffen.

Under current law, strip searching a student is a Class B misdemeanor. However, the statutory definition of “strip search” is a search that would expose a student’s private areas. Because of this limited definition, the school official who ordered the young girls at Suring to disrobe down to their underwear could not be charged with this offense. AB 108 extends the definition of “strip search” to include searches that would require a student to strip down to their underwear, making this a chargeable offense moving forward.

“Today’s public hearing was the next step in changing our state’s law to ensure that, moving forward, students will be protected from such humiliating and intrusive searches. It’s important that we close this statutory loophole,” said Rep. Steffen.

The bill will next be considered for a committee vote before making its way to the Assembly chambers for consideration.



For more information please contact the office of Representative Steffen at (608)237-9104 or by email at Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov.