

Health Care

HB 1328

Brief Description: *Requiring the registration of certain school health personnel.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Cody, Campbell, Conway, Schual-Berke, Talcott, Keiser, Santos, Edwards, Kenney, Veloria, Lovick and Edmonds.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Establishes a registration program for school health aides including training requirements.*

Hearing Date: *1/25/01*

Staff: *John Welsh (786-7133).*

Background:

School districts routinely employ school nurses to meet the health needs of students in the state's school districts, but the supply of licensed school nurses is diminishing. To account for the nursing shortage, school nurses are delegating nursing tasks to untrained teachers, teacher's aides, and secretaries. The delegation of complex nursing tasks to unlicensed certificated and non-certificated education personnel is of questionable legality and presents health and safety risks to students with some serious life-threatening consequences.

Summary of Bill:

There is a declaration of legislative intent that the training of school health aides for serving the health needs of students in the state's school districts is necessary to counter the diminishing supply of school nurses. In addition, the current practice of delegating nursing tasks to unlicensed and untrained school personnel, such as teachers, teacher's

assistants, and secretarial staff, is compromising the health of students and exposes school districts to legal liability. Removing health barriers to learning by recognizing established nursing practice standards in the state school districts is essential to the successful education of students.

A school health aide is a person who performs health care tasks under the training and supervision of a registered nurse. Typical health care tasks include oral, topical medications, clean intermittent catheterization, and clean dressing changes. Nursing tasks delegated to school health aides include those nursing procedures applicable to school districts provided by law as well as those tasks determined by the state Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission by rule.

School health aides are required to register with the Department of Health, and no school district employees may practice or represent themselves as school health aides without being registered.

Registration of school health aides does not affect the practice of health care by other regulated health professionals, nor federal employees, nor students in approved educational programs.

The Secretary of Health is given authority to implement this act, including the determination of education or training requirements for school health aides, rule making authority, and the setting of registration fees to fund the program. The state nursing commission, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, must establish by rule the standards and procedures for approval of educational and alternative training programs.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act for the regulated health professions provides procedures and sanctions for unprofessional conduct, and the Secretary is the disciplining authority.

Effective Date: *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*