
Education Committee

HB 1753

Brief Description: Clarifying the authority of a nurse working in a school setting.

Sponsors: Representatives Liias, Hope, Clibborn, Maxwell and Billig.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that only a registered nurse (RN) or advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) may supervise, direct, or evaluate a licensed nurse working in a school setting with respect to the practice of nursing.
- Defines practice of nursing for purposes of this provision.

Hearing Date: 3/18/11

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Students attend school with a broad range of health conditions. These range from potentially life-threatening acute and chronic conditions to correctable vision problems.

The attendance of children at public schools in the state is conditioned upon the presentation, before or on each child's first day of attendance, of a medication or treatment order addressing any life-threatening health condition that the child has that may require medical services to be performed at the school. Once such an order has been presented, the child is allowed to attend school.

Nursing is one of many professions whose practice is defined in, and governed by, provisions found in the Businesses and Professions title of the Revised Code of Washington.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The following findings are made with respect to nursing practice in general, and school nurses in particular:

- Nursing is governed by specific laws and requires a license to practice.
- Student health needs have changed over the last 20 years and the number of students with special health care needs has risen exponentially.
- School nurses are held accountable through two different chapters in statutory law.
- Individuals who are not nurses are unqualified to make nursing judgments and assessments, and the ability of a nurse to practice nursing without the supervision of a non-nurse supervisor is important.

Intent is expressed, in light of these findings, to reaffirm the authority of a licensed nurse working in a school setting to practice nursing without the supervision of a person who is not a licensed nurse. It is specifically *not* the intent to:

- prohibit a non-nurse from supervising a licensed nurse working in a school setting with respect to matters other than the practice of nursing, such as matters of administration, terms and conditions of employment, and employee performance; or
- require a school to provide clinical supervision for a licensed nurse working in a school setting.

Provisions are added to the school code stating that only a registered nurse (RN) or an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) may supervise, direct, or evaluate a licensed nurse working in a school setting with respect to the practice of nursing. "Practice of nursing" is defined as registered nursing practice, advanced nursing practice, and licensed practical nursing as defined in the Businesses and Professions title of the Revised Code of Washington, including but not limited to the administration of medication pursuant to a medication or treatment order and the decision to summon emergency medical assistance. Such practice also encompasses compliance with any state or federal statute or administrative rule specifically regulating licensed nurses, including any statute or rule defining or establishing standards of patient care or professional conduct or practice.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.