
Education Committee

HB 1790

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

Sponsors: Representatives Springer, Muri, Ortiz-Self and Reykdal.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that only a registered nurse or advanced registered nurse practitioner 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.
- Specifies that nothing prevents a non-nurse supervisor from conferring with a licensed nurse in a school setting regarding the practice of nursing; prevents a non-nurse supervisor from supervising with respect to matters other than the practice of nursing; or requires clinical supervision in a school setting.

Hearing Date: 2/10/15

Staff: Robin Hammond (786-7291).

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 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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/5/15.

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