

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6662

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As of February 6, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to school nurses.

**Brief Description:** Increasing the number of school nurses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kauffman, McAuliffe, Hobbs, Keiser, Tom, Marr, Kilmer, Rasmussen, Kohl-Welles, McDermott, Weinstein, Spanel and Shin; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/07/08.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** The state allocates funds to school districts based primarily on a ratio of students to staff, including certificated administrators, certificated instructional staff (teachers, librarians, nurses, counselors, etc.), classified staff (teacher aides, secretaries, custodians, nurses, etc.), and non-employee related costs (NERC). The state does not mandate a specific use or spending pattern to school districts for these funds. Expenditure of these funds are largely at the discretion of the school district. The most recent personnel report by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) provides that for the 2005-06 school year, school districts reported that 415 nurses were in the K-12 system. This number does not capture the extent that nursing services were contracted out, or the number of nurses paid by federal or local funds.

Additionally, since 1999 the state has provided funds to SPI through the biennial budget to create a corps of nurses at Educational Service Districts (ESDs), to serve the most needy schools and to provide direct care to students, health education, and training for school staff.

**Summary of Bill:** Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, the basic education allocation must phase-in over five years a ratio of one certificated nurse per 750 students and school districts must provide professional registered nurses as provided by the allocation.

The nurse corp at the ESDs is established in statute, and if funded, requires a school nurse at each ESD to provide health services to students, annually assess school district health services, provide technical assistance and consultation to school districts, coordinate and collaborate with community partners to address school health-related issues, and provide

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orientation, mentoring and professional development for school nurses. Beginning December 1, 2008, the SPI must annually report to the Legislature regarding the school nurse corp.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 31, 2008.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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