



Oregon School Employees Association

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April 3, 2017

Representative Margaret Doherty, Chair
House Committee on Education
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for House Bill 2223

Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today on behalf of the more than 21,000 members of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) in support of the school nurse bill, House Bill (HB) 2223.

OSEA represents employees working in Oregon school districts, community colleges, education service districts, Head Start agencies, libraries and park and recreation districts. This includes educators in early learning, special and general education, public safety, health and nutrition.

HB 2223 directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to develop a program to develop and maintain school nursing services, assist school districts in meeting recommended nurse to student ratios, fund nurse positions and create a nurse sustainability plan. This bill would also permit ODE to establish school nursing standards including outcome measures for students' health and academic performance. Finally, this bill promotes collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) in order for school nurses to be able to bill Medicaid for medical procedures being provided to students.

This bill is important to OSEA members because until school districts are adequately staffed with school nurses, non-medical school support personnel are providing, and will continue to provide, complex medical procedures for their students. This school year I've heard from OSEA members in our Bend-La Pine, Central, Coos Bay, Corvallis, Dallas, Eugene, Gresham-Barlow, Hermiston, Lake County, Lake Oswego, Lane County Head Start, Lincoln County, Madras, Medford, Newberg, North Clackamas, Oregon City, Oregon Trail, Parkrose, Phoenix-Talent, Rainier, Reynolds, Sherwood, Silver Falls, Siuslaw, St. Helens, Sweet Home, Tigard-Tualatin, Vernonia and West Linn-Wilsonville school districts on this issue.

Beyond basic first aid treatment, non-medical school support personnel are being directed to provide the following types of medical procedures for their students: catheterizations (two different types), tube feeding, seizure treatments, administration of pharmaceuticals (including medically

prescribed narcotics), blood glucose monitoring and insulin injections. Most of the members I heard from said they recently (with in the last year) received training and felt it was sufficient for the medical procedures they are performing. With very few exceptions, the non-medical school support personnel providing these complex medical procedures were not previously employed as medically trained or licensed professionals.

OSEA members are being provided with sufficient training, have someone they can talk to about questions related to the medical needs of their students, and for the most part are comfortable providing these medical procedures. However, in many cases there are consequences for non-medical school support personnel when they refuse to provide procedures that in any other setting would be provided by a medical professional. Other possible consequences that should be considered when non-medical school support personnel are providing these procedures are mistakes, for which OSEA members fear could mean being written-up, terminated or a lawsuit. For students, a mistake can result in serious injury, comas and possibly death.

For these reasons OSEA supports HB 2223 and any other effort of the Oregon Legislature to provide on-site nursing staff in all Oregon schools to perform medical procedures.

Thank you,
Soren Metzger
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