
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2090 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY PHILLIPS, BELFANTI, FAIRCHILD, DALEY, GEORGE,
HESS, JAMES, KOTIK, R. MILLER, MURT, PICKETT, RAPP, REICHLEY,
SOLOBAY, STABACK, STERN, SURRA, WATSON, WOJNAROSKI, M. SMITH,
MOYER AND MICOZZIE, DECEMBER 5, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, DECEMBER 5, 2007

AN ACT

1 Establishing and providing for a task force on school nurses;
2 and providing for duties and responsibilities.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Every Child
7 Needs a School Nurse Act.

8 Section 2. Findings.

9 The General Assembly finds that:

10 (1) All children must be ready to learn, having their
11 basic needs first met so that they may achieve optimal
12 physical, emotional, social and educational development and
13 be prepared for full participation in society.

14 (2) A school nurse provides unique and valuable services
15 to students, parents and school personnel.

16 (3) School nurses are pivotal members of a coordinated
17 school health system, delivering services to children and,

1 thereby, eliminating health disparities and barriers and
2 supporting academic success for all children.

3 (4) School nurses provide vital links between public and
4 private resources and programs, collaboration between schools
5 and health and human service agencies to bring school and
6 community services to schools and support efforts to connect
7 families to insurance programs to meet the needs of children
8 and families.

9 (5) School nurses create and maintain safe school
10 environments, provide mandatory health education, health
11 screenings and immunizations, deliver early intervention
12 services, design wellness-driven programs and provide vital
13 medical services to students with chronic and acute
14 illnesses.

15 (6) Essential services require specially educated and
16 experienced professional personnel.

17 (7) School nurses should be supported as providers of
18 necessary health care for children that ensures academic
19 success.

20 (8) The employment of at least one full-time school
21 nurse in every school building would benefit the school
22 children of this Commonwealth.

23 Section 3. Definitions.

24 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
25 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
26 context clearly indicates otherwise:

27 "School nurse." A licensed registered nurse as defined in
28 section 1401 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
29 as the Public School Code of 1949.

30 "Task force." The task force on school nurses.

1 Section 4. Task force on school nurses.

2 (a) Establishment.--The task force on school nurses is
3 established.

4 (b) Composition.--The task force shall consist of 12 members
5 appointed as follows:

6 (1) Two members of the House of Representatives, one
7 each to be chosen by the Majority Leader and the Minority
8 Leader of the House of Representatives.

9 (2) Two members of the Senate, one each to be chosen by
10 the President pro tempore and the Minority Leader of the
11 Senate.

12 (3) Two members chosen by the Secretary of Education
13 from among persons recommended by the Department of
14 Education.

15 (4) Four members chosen by the Secretary of Education
16 from among the following:

17 (i) A labor organization representing nurses.

18 (ii) An organization representing local school
19 boards.

20 (iii) An organization representing school
21 administrators.

22 (iv) A school nurse.

23 (5) Two members chosen by the Secretary of Health from
24 among persons recommended by the Department of Education.

25 (c) Transaction of business.--The members shall be appointed
26 within 30 days of the effective date of this act, and names
27 shall be furnished to the Secretary of Education and the
28 Secretary of Health. A majority of the members of the task force
29 shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

30 Official action by the task force shall require the approval of

1 a majority of the members of the task force. The task force
2 shall elect one of its members to serve as chairperson. If there
3 is a vacancy for any cause, a replacement shall be appointed.
4 Members of the task force shall not be entitled to compensation
5 or reimbursement and shall serve as volunteers on the task
6 force.

7 (d) Duties and responsibilities.--The task force shall
8 convene no later than 60 days after the effective date of this
9 act. The task force is authorized to hold hearings, take
10 testimony and make its investigations at such places as it deems
11 necessary in this Commonwealth. The task force shall meet at
12 times and places specified by the call of the chairperson or of
13 a majority of the members of the task force. In undertaking its
14 investigation regarding school nurse services, the task force
15 has the following powers and duties:

16 (1) To adopt rules necessary for the operation of the
17 task force.

18 (2) To meet with all segments of the basic and secondary
19 education communities, representatives of the public school
20 community of this Commonwealth and providers of school health
21 services within this Commonwealth.

22 (3) To evaluate and make recommendations on, but not
23 limited to:

24 (i) The variety of services school nurses offer.

25 (ii) The availability of nursing services in the
26 public schools of this Commonwealth.

27 (iii) School nurse staffing issues, including the
28 student-to-nurse ratio as provided for in section 1402 of
29 the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
30 Public School Code of 1949, and the feasibility of

1 lowering the current ratio of 1,500 to 1 to 750 to 1 or a
2 fraction thereof for regular students, 225 to 1 or a
3 fraction thereof for mainstreamed special education
4 students with health care needs or 125 to 1 or a fraction
5 thereof for severely or profoundly handicapped students,
6 or requiring school districts to provide a full-time
7 school nurse all day, every day for each school.

8 (iv) Best practices to improve school nurse services
9 in this Commonwealth's public schools.

10 (v) The funding of school nurses.

11 (4) To transmit a report of its activities, findings and
12 recommendations, including possible legislation, to the
13 chairperson of the Public Health and Welfare Committee of the
14 Senate, the chairperson of the Health and Human Services
15 Committee of the House of Representatives, the chairperson of
16 the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairperson of
17 the Education Committee of the House of Representatives
18 within one year of the task force's first meeting.

19 (c) Staff support.--The Department of Education and the
20 Department of Health shall provide staff support to the task
21 force.

22 Section 5. Sunset.

23 The task force shall cease to exist upon the chairperson of
24 the Public Health and Welfare Committee of the Senate, the
25 chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of the
26 House of Representatives, the chairperson of the Education
27 Committee of the Senate and the chairperson of the Education
28 Committee of the House of Representatives receiving a report of
29 the task force's activities, findings and recommendations,
30 unless it is reestablished by action of the General Assembly.

1 Section 6. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect in 60 days.