



Senate Education Committee

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BILL SUMMARY

Senate Bill 802, Printer's No. 831

Prime Sponsor: Piccola

A. SYNOPSIS:

Senate Bill 802 would permit school districts to hire registered nurses who complete a program of in-service training in school nursing approved by the PA Department of Education (PDE).

B. BILL ANALYSIS:

Current law requires school districts to have at least one school nurse for every 1,500 students.

To be certified as a 'school nurse,' an individual must hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, be a registered nurse (RN), and complete an additional school nurse certification course at one of eighteen approved Pennsylvania colleges or universities. The certification program consists of 24 credit hours of instruction and 100 hours of practicum or field experience.

In order to meet the student-to-nurse ratio requirement, the bill will allow for the school district to hire either a school nurse certified by PDE through the current process, or a school nurse who is a licensed registered nurse who has completed a training program on nursing in a school environment that has been approved by PDE.

The bill also strikes archaic references to the 'Superintendent of Public Instruction' and replaces that term with 'Secretary of Education.'

The bill shall take effect in 60 days.

C. SUMMARY OF RELEVANT EXISTING LAW:

The bill expands the definition of 'school nurse' contained in Section 1401 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L. 30, No. 14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.