



TEXAS SCHOOL NURSES ORGANIZATION

Legislative Agenda, 86th Legislative Session

School Nurse Personnel

Last session, the legislature passed a bill that would have required schools to inform parents if there is not a school nurse on campus. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed the bill. This information is critical to parents, but we also understand that our opponents see this as a burden for schools. With that in mind, we will be working with other organizations and state leadership to determine an alternative approach. We hope that all of the stakeholders will come together to find a creative solution.

Emergency Asthma Medication

Texas currently allows nurses to hold and administer asthma medication for students that have a prescription. The state also allows students to bring their own inhalers. But nurses in Texas cannot stock asthma medication for non-specific patient use, putting students who don't know they suffer from asthma and students who have not shared their prescription with school faculty at risk. TSNO will be working to alleviate that problem by allowing physicians and other providers to prescribe albuterol to schools under a standing order. Should an emergency situation arise, the school nurse will be prepared to treat the student immediately.

Concussion Oversight Teams

Texas schools have what are called concussion oversight teams. These teams establish a return-to-play protocol for a student's return to interscholastic athletics following a concussion. The team must include an athletic trainer, an advanced practice registered nurse, a neuropsychologist, or a physician assistant. If the district employs an athletic trainer, the trainer must also be on the team. School nurses not only have the expertise to help inform the protocol, but they have an integral role in caring for the student during school hours. TSNO is working on a bill that would require schools to invite school nurses to the oversight teams.

Removal From Play

In Texas, a student must be removed from interscholastic athletic activities immediately if a coach, physician, advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, athletic trainer, or neuropsychologist believes that the student might have sustained a concussion. Unfortunately, concussions can go unnoticed at the time of impact. If a student visits the nurse the next day and shows symptoms of a concussion, the nurse should have the ability to initiate the return-to-play protocol.

Board of Nursing

School nurses are not currently represented on the Texas Board of Nursing (BON). School nurses have an extremely unique practice model, and the lack of representation has led to a set of rules that are unsuitable for the school setting. Having a school nurse on the BON will help inform rulemaking discussions in the future. This is absolutely critical in a state like Texas, where a school nurse is often the primary or only caregiver that a child has.