



June 14, 2020

NJSSNA Opposition Statement to S-2518

The New Jersey State School Nurses Association (NJSSNA) strongly advocates for the health and safety of all New Jersey students. NJSSNA vehemently opposes Senate Bill-2518 including the recent amendments. These changes permit student-athletes who were cleared to play sports during the 2019-2020 school year, to play a 2020 fall sport with only:

- NJDOE revised Parent Health History Questionnaire (HHQ)
- A “promise” to submit a sports physical by the end of the fall season which could potentially be the end of November 2020.

An updated annual physical is currently required through statute P.L. 2013, c.71 (C.18A:40-41-7) for those students who want to engage in school sponsored intramural and interscholastic team sports or squads. Legislators previously acknowledged the criticality of student athletes having updated physicals with P.L. 2013, c. 71. The Scholastic Student-Athlete Safety Act includes a cardiac screening component. N.J.S.A. 6A:16-2.2 serves as a safety net for students that have difficulty accessing health providers for sports examinations. In accordance to N.J.S.A. 6A:16-2.2, each candidate for a school athletic team must have a medical examination conducted in a "medical home" of the student. If a student does not have a medical home, the school district shall provide the examination at the school physician's office or other comparably equipped facilities, pursuant to 18A:40-4.” N.J. Admin. Code § 6A:16-2.2.

Retrieved from: <https://www.state.nj.us/education/news/2002/medical.htm>

To be clear, NJSSNA is strongly opposed to S-2518 as originally proposed and the amended bill set forth by the Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee. To uphold a higher level of student safety, NJSSNA submits the following recommendations:

1. School physicians must review and sign-off on the Parent Health History Questionnaire for the Fall 2020 sports season.
2. Request that parents present proof of a scheduled sports physical if they have not been able to make an appointment that meets the practice deadline.

In light of the potential health implications related to COVID-19, it is imperative that the currently mandated deadlines for sports physicals, as per current NJ statutes, are upheld for the health and safety of all student athletes.

Respectfully,
NJSSNA Executive Board