

Kansas School Nurse Organization Response to House Bill No. 2478: “An ACT relating to health care concerning self-medication by students in secondary schools”

School nurses’ primary concern is for the health and safety of all students. It is important that students with a health diagnosis that requires them to carry and self-medicate, be allowed to do so as long as they know how, when, and why to use the medication, are knowledgeable in what actions to take if the medication is not effective, and know what side effects may occur from the medications they are taking. The student needs to demonstrate knowledge and responsibility before being allowed to carry their own emergency or asthma medications. This would need to include knowing when to self-medicate and notifying an adult if they self-medicated so that proper follow up could occur, e.g. self-medication with an epipen would need to be followed up as a second reaction can occur within 15 minutes. The Registered Professional School Nurse needs to have an active role in coordinating medication management in the school setting to ensure that care is appropriately integrated throughout the student’s school activities. Health management plans must be written and in place for asthma and other health issues such as diabetes, seizures, severe allergies, and migraines. Many schools already have policies that allow students to carry their medications, once the student has had an evaluation with their physician, has a health care plan in place and has clearly demonstrated the ability to carry out this responsibility.

The Kansas School Nurse Organization would like to suggest the following changes to House Bill No. 2478:

Sec 3 (a) – Change to “a student in middle/junior high/high school”.

Rationale: For some Kansas schools, 6th grade is part of elementary school. It would be confusing to have a different policy for just the 6th grade students in an elementary school.

Sec 3 (b,c,d, &e)

(b) All school districts shall create a policy for management of self-administration of emergency medications for students in middle/junior high/high school. The student shall meet all requirements of said policy which may include:

- (1) Providing a written statement from the student’s health care practitioner stating the name and purpose of the medication; the prescribed dosage; the time the medication is to be regularly administered, under what additional special circumstances the medication is to be administered; and the length of time for which the medication is prescribed.
- (2) Providing a written authorization stating such student has been instructed by the physician on self-administration of the medication and is authorized to do so in school.

(c) Further, the school district or governing body of each public and non-public and its employees and agents shall incur no liability as a result of any injury sustained by the student from the self-administration of such medications. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to relieve liability of the school, its employees or its agents for negligence.

(d) Schools may require annual renewal of permission for self-administration of medications.

The Kansas School Nurse Organization would re-evaluate our support of this bill if the bill were rewritten as suggested. We cannot support passage of House Bill 2478 as it is written today. We, Kansas School Nurses of The Kansas School Nurse Organization believe “Every Child Needs a School Nurse”.

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Kansas School Nurse Organization