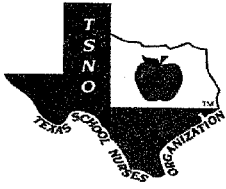


TEXAS SCHOOL NURSES ORGANIZATION



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Senator Shapiro and distinguished members of the Texas Senate Education Committee, as the School Health Issues chair for the Texas School Nurses Organization, I want to thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to address the issue of school policies for the care of students with anaphylaxis. The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network estimates that 1 out of every 25 children lives with a food allergy. That translates into one child in every classroom in Texas. In addition to food allergies, students present with allergies to medications and insects which also put them at risk for life-threatening anaphylactic reactions.

Professional registered school nurses address these issues on the front line daily. For students who have been diagnosed with a life-threatening allergy, school nurses establish Individualized Health Plans and Emergency Plans to address the student's health needs. These plans include collaboration with and training of essential school staff. School nurses help establish allergen free zones so that these children can eat in safety, provide training in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors to school staff so life saving medication can be given without delay, work with school food service departments to provide diet modifications, and provide ongoing case management in the school setting for students with anaphylaxis.

Because 25 % of first time anaphylactic reactions occur at school, the professional registered school nurse is often the first person to identify these life threatening reactions. This school year, one of my staff nurses reported a student who presented with a previously undiagnosed peanut allergy at school. Because of progressive facial swelling and declining blood pressure 911 was summoned. The student was transported to the hospital and required life saving epinephrine in route.

Not all school children in Texas have access to a school nurse who can provide the education and planning for school staff that is essential to these children at risk for anaphylaxis. Senate Bill 27 addresses the needs of those children by establishing a standard of care for ALL children across the state. The Texas School Nurse Organization supports Senate Bill 27 and welcomes the opportunity to work with other stakeholders in developing guidelines for the care of students diagnosed with food allergies at risk for anaphylaxis.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today.

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EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- 2005 to Present - Klein Independent School District Health Services Coordinator
- 1991 - 2005 - Klein Independent School District Nurse
- 1990 - 1991 - Visiting Nurse Association of Houston, Hospice Case Manager
- 1988-1992 - Multiple school based volunteer leadership positions
- 1980 - 1987 - Touro School of Nursing Faculty
- 1976-1978 - River Oaks Psychiatric Hospital, Staff Nurse/Group Leader

EDUCATION/AWARDS

- 1976 - Bachelor of Science, Nursing, Louisiana State University Medical Center, New Orleans, Louisiana
 - 1976 Jo Ellen Smith Student Nurse of the State Award, Louisiana Association of Student Nurses
 - LSU Association of School Nurses President, Vice-President
- 1980 Master of Nursing, Louisiana State University Medical Center, New Orleans, Louisiana
 - LSU Medical Center Graduate Nursing Program Outstanding Student
 - LSU Medical Center Graduate Nursing School Student Body President
 - Sigma Theta Tau National Nursing Honor Society

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- National Association of School Nurses
- Texas School Nurse Association School Health Issues Chair
- Sigma Theta Tau National Nursing Honor Society