

Chairman Schaible and members of the Education Committee. It is my pleasure to stand before you and introduce SB2235.

With the Covid-19 pandemic, we learned very quickly how vital it is to have some basic health care protocols in place to protect our children in the school setting. Administrator, school secretaries, custodial personal, teachers, parents and students have all had to make adjustments in order to assure that our schools are safe. However, these kinds of services have not only been an issue this year or only because of Covid.

There have been increases in medical needs for students over the last two decades. More children with complicated medical conditions such as feeding tubes, ports, and the need for dispensing of medication have been increasing. Often time, these duties have been left up to an untrained individual. If school nurses were available, they could provide the necessary treatment or at the very least train others to perform these procedures correctly.

This bill would provide 20 grants that would allow school districts to hire a nurse either full time or part time to work with their district on the training and implementation of needed health care services, policy development, or training. The wide range of services that can be made available through a school nurse is far reaching and can be a benefit to students, teachers and staff.

How I envision this working is that school districts would apply to the State Public Health Department for one of the grants. The criteria for the grant would be established by the Health Department and School Districts would submit their applications. A full grant would provide \$150,000 and a part time grant would be \$75,000 over the biennium.

Those districts that have already established a school nursing program have found them to be extremely successful and it has taken the stress off of school secretaries and teachers as they are not trained medical personal.

That is the bill and I will stand for questions at this time.