



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 23, 2014

TO: The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

FROM: Terri Hancharick, Chairperson
GACEC

RE: **House Bill No. 263 (School District Nurse Funding)**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed House Bill No. 263, which authorizes districts to apply for supplemental State funds to cover funding school nurses subject to annual appropriations. The bill also authorizes a district which receives the supplemental State funds to increase its local tax to pay for the local share of employment costs without referendum. See line 11 and Title 14 Del.C. §1902(b). The GACEC **endorses** the proposed legislation.

As background, Title 14 Del.C. §1310 currently authorizes school nurse funding for districts based on one nurse per 40 state units of pupils. Districts are also required to have "at least 1 school nurse per facility". If the "1-40" funding formula is insufficient to provide for one nurse per facility, the districts are directed to use either Division III equalization funds (§1707), academic excellence funds (§1716), or discretionary local operating expense funds to make up the shortfall.

The synopsis to House Bill No. 263 infers that some public schools may still lack a nurse despite the statutory requirement. The availability of school nurses has several valuable effects. First, it promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities who may require some nursing services in order to be successful in integrated settings. Second, it enables the screening of students for health issues. Third, it provides a more immediate response in the event of a student injury or emergency such as a seizure.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me or Wendy Strauss should you have questions.