



TO: Senate Health and Welfare Committee

FROM: Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director, Vermont School Boards Association

RE: S.187 Draft 1.1

DATE: February 27, 2024

Good morning. I am Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.187.

I want to start by saying that VSBA supports the intent of this bill: to allow students to have and apply sunscreen at school with the permission of a parent or guardian. My testimony is limited to subsection (b) in section 1 of the bill.

Subsection (b) states "A school may adopt policies to allow school personnel to assist a student in applying topical, nonaerosolized sunscreen if written permission from the student's parent or guardian is obtained." We think this language is confusing and unnecessary for three reasons.

First, in the public school realm, schools don't adopt policies; school boards adopt policies. 16 V.S.A. Section 563(1) provides that the school board of a school district "Shall determine the educational policies of the school district. Board policies shall be of general application to the school district and shall be in writing, codified, and made available to the public. Board policies shall be adopted at regular or special school board meetings. A school board shall give public notice of its intent to adopt a board policy, stating the substance of the proposed policy, at least ten days prior to its adoption. A school board may also approve or disapprove rules and regulations proposed by the principal or superintendent for the conduct and management of public schools in the district."

Second, it is not necessary to include in this bill the authority for school boards to adopt a policy; they already have the authority under 16 V.S.A. Section 563(1).

Third, the language in subsection (b) stating schools may adopt policies allowing school personnel to apply sunscreen is confusing when read with subsection (c) which states that school personnel shall not be required to assist students in applying sunscreen.

We recommend removing subsection (b) from the bill. If this bill becomes law, VSBA will analyze the final language to determine whether a model policy would be helpful to school boards. If the answer is yes, we will develop a model policy and notify school boards. This is a process we undertake each year after the conclusion of the legislative session.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on S.187.