
TESTIMONY

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Education

Respectfully Submitted by: Courtney O'Brien, Interim Operations Director, Agency of Education

Subject: H. 209 - An act relating to intranasal epinephrine in schools

Date: May 14, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional testimony on proposed bill H.209. The Agency Operations team, in support of other school health and safety initiatives, regularly partners with the Department of Health to support and respond to concerns raised by school nurses and representatives from the VT School Nurse Association. In alignment with other proposals related to school health and safety, the AOE and VDH support the inclusion of expanded access to epinephrine and encourage that these changes move forward in a way that is not overly specific and does not inadvertently limit school and district ability to store this life-saving medication.

The Department of Health has submitted a mark-up of H. 209 as passed by the House for consideration by the Senate Committee on Education. This language is the result of multiple conversations between our colleagues at VDH, the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR)/Board of Nursing, and the Vermont State School Nurses Association (VSSNA), with ongoing review and consult with AOE. All partners, including the AOE, have reviewed and expressed support for the recommended consensus language provided to the Committee. These changes allow for clarification of roles and responsibilities for school administrators and school nurses, allow for expanded access to emergency epinephrine stock in multiple, approved forms, and ensure both safety and flexibility for schools in the management and delivery of emergency epinephrine stock.

The proposed changes address the Agency's previous concerns that overly-specific language may inadvertently create barriers or limitations to allowing all schools epinephrine stock.

In preparation for this testimony, members of the VSSNA raised important concerns and considerations for ensuring that school nurses are provided with appropriate high-quality training and development opportunities, commensurate with expectations for nurses to provide high-quality care. The AOE will continue to discuss these concerns with the VDH and VSSNA and work towards solutions that can be implemented within the appropriate scope, authority, and expertise afforded to both Agencies.

