



One Hundred First Legislature - Second Session - 2010
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 713

Chairperson: Greg Adams
Committee: Education
Date of Hearing: January 19, 2010

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Current state statute requires every school district to separately and carefully inspect every child for 1)defective sight and hearing, 2) dental defects, 3) other conditions as prescribed the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. This has been interpreted to mean that all students must have all the prescribed screenings every year. Statute also dictates that these screening be done in the first quarter of the school year. Schools are often unable to meet the statutory deadline of the first quarter of the school year. For instance, in some districts optical screenings annually take place in the spring semester instead of the first quarter in the fall. Large numbers of students or a school nurse that works at several schools can also mean health screenings have to be scheduled throughout the year.

LB 713 directs the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to set the schedule for screenings as well as prescribing what screenings, in addition to hearing, vision and dental, are done. Current medical practice suggests that not every type of screening needs done on every student every year. The U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that students be screened for age appropriate items at developmentally significant years. That translates into screenings done nearly every year in grade school. Longer intervals may be appropriate for older students unless a health or learning issue develops for a particular student. This schedule of prescribed screenings sets the minimum level but school districts could increase screenings according to their local needs. For students that transfer in during the middle of a school year, the screenings would have to be confirmed as having been done by the previous school; otherwise they would need to be performed by the current school district.

Aggregating this student health data can be useful for analysis of public health trends. The bill also allows the department to make available to schools a method for gathering this information in compliance with applicable privacy laws. The intention of the department is to use an adapted CDC tool for this collection of data and to use a schedule of screening consistent with American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. The exact schedule of screenings, with guidance on methodology, will be determined by NDHHS rule and regulation.

Principal Introducer: _____
Senator Mike Gloor