

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 421
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 23, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 421 of 1996 requires health services in every school district to be provided by a certified school nurse. Each nurse would have to hold an educational services certificate with an endorsement as a school nurse issued by the State Board of Examiners. No person shall be issued such a certificate unless the person is licensed as a registered nurse.

Current law (18A:40-1) requires that each board of education employ one or more school nurses. According to a representative of the New Jersey State School Nurses Association, every operating school district has a certified school nurse with most districts having more than one. However, in order to save money, some districts are hiring personnel under different titles and salary ranges, who are not certified school nurses to provide health services to pupils.

OLS is unable to estimate the cost of this bill. However, there would be no additional cost to the State as a result of this bill because under the current school funding formula, no aid is specifically appropriated for health services and state aid calculations will not change under the bill. In addition, all districts are meeting the minimum requirement provided by law of employing at least one certified school nurse. If local districts have to hire certified nurses to replace uncertified personnel additional costs would be incurred by the local districts. An estimate provided by the Department of Education (DOE) for an identical bill introduced in the 1992-93 legislative session was based on the median salary for school nurses and the approximate number of school buildings without school nurses. The DOE estimated a first year cost of \$9.8 million. Costs were estimated to increase annually by five percent up to \$10.3 million and \$10.8 million in the second and third years respectively. However, there is insufficient data available to provide an updated estimate of the impact of this bill on local school districts.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.