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Sarah Fowler Arthur
State Representative

Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

At the moment, every school is required to have a policy on prescription medications. This bill is intended to require that policy to include over-the-counter medications as well. As you know many drugs, whether prescription or not, can have negative effects when taken together. By requiring school boards to create a policy that includes over-the-counter medications, we accomplish three goals: 1) we better protect children's health from unexpected reactions to medications, 2) we assist school nurses and parents in better communicating about the child's health history and needs, and 3) we decrease potential liability to schools.

This bill stems from the unfortunate situation of a child becoming ill from the administration of an over the counter (OTC) medicine that interacted with her prescription medication. Unfortunately, the parent was not aware that the school might provide an OTC medication to her child and the nurse was not aware of the child's medical contradiction to the medication she administered.

Upon inquiry, we learned that Ohio law is silent regarding OTC medication administration within a school. This has already led to confusion for a parent and a negative health situation for a child.

We are proposing a small change to Ohio law that requires local school districts to include OTC Medication in their school policy, along with the currently required policy for prescription medication. Our goal is to ensure parents recognize that a school nurse may administer OTC medications and to improve communication between the school and parents if a child has medical contradictions.

In summary, this bill seeks to patch an oversight in existing policies for more uniform and consistent protection of student health.



Sarah Fowler Arthur