



April 25, 2011

**SB 161 (Huff) – FLOOR ALERT - STRONG OPPOSE**

Dear Members of the Senate,

The California Teachers Association, California School Employees Association, American Nurses Association-California, California Nurses Association, California Labor Federation, United Nurses Association of CA-Union of Health Care Professionals, Service Employees International Union-Nurses Alliance of California, The California Federation of Teachers, LIUNA Local 777, UTLA, & California Association For Nurse Practitioners, all strongly oppose SB 161 (Huff) on diastat administration. This bill would allow unlicensed individuals to administer this dangerous drug.

- 1) Diastat (valium) is also a dangerous medication that must be administered rectally to control "cluster" or "breakthrough" seizures. There are many types of seizures so it is important to assess what type of episode the child is exhibiting. Diastat must be administered when a child is seizing. The rectal syringe is made of hard plastic so there is a possibility of piercing the rectal cavity during administration. There are both adult and child dosages for diastat. If the appropriate dosage is not given (for instance if the dosage is not properly locked in or the adult syringe is

administered instead of the child syringe) death due to respiratory failure can occur. Additionally, because a seizure is unpredictable, providing for any level of privacy for the child is nearly impossible. School Nurses and LVNs are trained to control the area, and provide appropriate care at a moment's notice.

- 2) School employees face legal liability if something goes wrong. School districts generally do not cover employees for punitive damages. When unlicensed school employees are multi-tasking and having to assume the duties of licensed medical professionals, there is always a risk that something will go terribly wrong.
- 3) The Legislature has already cut \$18 billion from education in the last two budget cycles and thousands of school staff have been laid off. Employees are being asked to do more, with less. In some cases, unlicensed staff are being asked to perform these injections illegally and on top of their other duties.

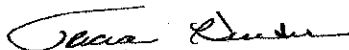
The law requires that insulin be administered by competent health professionals, such as RNs, LVNs, and others for whom administering insulin to children in schools is within their existing scope of practice. We believe you have the responsibility to ensure the safety of our children and not to seek to weaken safety measures or advocate for a lesser standard of care than what is both needed and deserved. We cannot risk further erosion of our public education system and educational experience of our children. Our children are already bearing the brunt of far too many cutbacks. We urge legislators to avoid placing children in harm's way under pressure of political expediency. Schools must be properly staffed so that each child will receive a quality education and adequate health care.

Therefore it is imperative that schools, at the very minimum, maintain existing legal standards. We strongly support having licensed, appropriately trained health care personnel provide the high quality care that is required to assure that not only children with disabilities but all school children have access to a free, fair and appropriate education. We believe that weakening existing standards will have the unintended consequences of putting even more students at risk, especially minorities, the poor and the disenfranchised. We have a duty to equitably provide the highest standard of care to all, not just districts with vocal and educated parents.

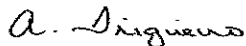
Sincerely,



Dolores Duran-Flores, CSEA



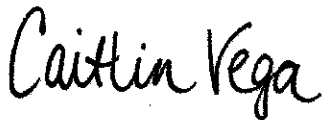
Trisha Hunter, ANA-C



Toni Trigueiro, CTA



Stephanie Roberson, CNA



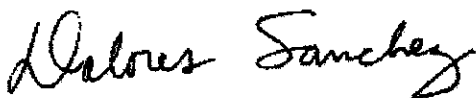
Caitlin Vega, California Labor Federation



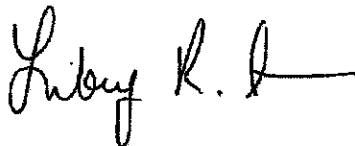
Barbara Blake, RN, Secretary of UNAC



Ingela Dahlgren, RN, SEIU Nurse Alliance of California



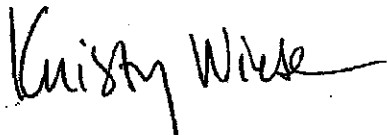
Dolores Sanchez, California Federation of Teachers



Liberty Sanchez, LIUNA Local 777



Harold Boyd Jr., UTLA



Kristy Wiese, California Association for Nurse Practitioners

Cc: Senator Huff