

Senate Bill No. 53

[Passed March 11, 2006; to take effect July 1, 2006.]

§18-9A-10a. Allowance for student health services.

(a) The Legislature finds that the need for health services has grown over the years in the public schools, particularly with respect to serving special needs students and regulations on the administration of medications, and the existing statutorily required ratio of one nurse for each one thousand five hundred students in net enrollment in grades kindergarten through seven is no longer adequate. The Legislature further finds that limits on state-funded professional personnel, required ratios for instructional personnel and declining student population and population density require county boards to make increasingly difficult decisions with respect to the instructional personnel employed in the classroom and those that provide health and other services to students. Therefore, the intent of this section is to augment the funding of instructional personnel and to assure improved health services for students by partially funding nurse positions for certain counties as an intermediate step toward improving instructional personnel staffing. The Legislature intends to further examine the state basic foundation program in context with the changing educational environment and address the staffing and other needs of the public schools as may be indicated through that examination.

(b) Commencing with the school year beginning on the first day of July, two thousand six, notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary and not subject to nor counted toward the respective ratios of professional and instructional personnel per students in adjusted and net enrollment set forth in sections four and five-a of this article, counties shall receive funding at the state average contracted salary for nurses plus fixed charges, retirement and the public employee insurance employer premium for nurse positions as determined by applying a ratio of one nurse per each one thousand five hundred students in net enrollment, or major fraction thereof, in grades prekindergarten through twelve, less existing nurses employed during the two thousand five-two thousand six school year, to the extent funds are available.