



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB1268: Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements

House Ways and Means Committee

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00PM

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

In the 2017 Regular Session, the Heroin and Opioid Education and Community Action Act of 2017, or “Start Talking Maryland Act,” ([SB1060/HB1082](#)) was passed, signifying a monumental step towards addressing the opioid epidemic in Maryland. The legislation required that schools carry naloxone on campus; permitted nurses, school health services personnel, and other school personnel to administer an opioid overdose reversing medication; created protections from liability for those authorized to administer an opioid overdose reversing medication who respond in good faith; created opioid overdose awareness training for incoming students at a higher education institution, and created instruction regarding heroin and opioid addiction and prevention; amongst other things.

This legislation has been instrumental for educating students and faculty on the dangers of overdoses, and has exponentially increased the preparedness of schools and faculty for a potential overdose emergency. Despite these massive improvements, there is still more that needs to be done to protect students and prevent overdose deaths on school campuses.

Currently, only a school nurse, school health services personnel, or other school personnel may administer an opioid overdose reversing medication. Unfortunately, in practice, this is not adequate for every case of an overdose emergency in schools. For example, in the event of a student overdosing in a school restroom or under the bleachers— by the time another student races to the nurses office to inform them of the emergency, and the nurse or authorized faculty races to the student experiencing the overdose, it may be too late.

HB1268 would update existing code to authorize any student; member of the school’s staff; or lawfully present individual at the school or school-sponsored event or activity to possess naloxone or other opioid overdose reversing medication. HB1268 would update code to authorize an individual acting in good faith to administer naloxone or another opioid overdose reversing medication to an individual reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid overdose. This legislation would also expand the protections from liability that exist in code for an individual who responds in good faith to the overdose emergency to include a school staff member; or any other individual lawfully present at the school. Additionally, this bill would modify existing instruction on drug education to include information on the mitigating effects of naloxone or other opioid overdose-reversing medications, and would modify existing heroin and opioid addiction and prevention awareness training to include information on the mitigating effects of naloxone or an other opioid overdose reversing medication.

It is imperative that students and lawfully present individuals on campus are authorized to carry naloxone or another overdose reversing medication, and are protected for using it in good faith.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB1268.