

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Declan Donahue 271-3324

HB 360, prohibiting public schools from performing surgical procedures or prescribing pharmaceutical drugs.

Hearing Date: April 15, 2026

Time Opened: 11:01 a.m.

Time Closed: 11:23 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Avard, Birdsell and Rochefort

Members of the Committee Absent : Senators Prentiss and Long

Bill Analysis: This bill prohibits public schools from performing surgical procedures or prescribing pharmaceutical drugs.

Sponsors:

Rep. Noble
Rep. Litchfield

Rep. Layon
Rep. Corcoran

Rep. J. Aron
Rep. Perez

Who supports the bill: Rep. Kristen Noble, Rep. RObert Wherry, Aubrey Freedman, Simon B. Amaya Price, Claire Aberhathy, Melissa Blasek, Rep. Jonah Wheeler, and 191 others who signed in online in support of the bill. Please contact Sophie Walsh (sophie.walsh@gc.nh.gov) for a comprehensive list.

Who opposes the bill: 81 people signed in online in opposition to this bill. Please contact Sophie Walsh (sophie.walsh@gc.nh.gov) for a comprehensive list.

Summary of testimony presented:

Representative Kristen Noble (Hillsboro - District 2)

- School-based health centers have existed for decades across the country, offering services ranging from primary care to mental health and sexual health services.
- New Hampshire was among the last states to implement these centers. One is currently operational at Somersworth High School, and Manchester recently received a \$15 million federal grant to include a health center in a new school building.

- HB 360 aims to prevent public schools from becoming medical facilities by prohibiting surgeries and the prescribing of pharmaceutical drugs on school grounds.
- Many school-based centers nationwide offer IUDs and other birth control implants, which qualifies as a surgical procedure that risks undermining parental authority when parents are not present.
- There have already been instances in New Hampshire, specifically with school vaccine clinics, where children were treated against the express written wishes of their parents.
- Schools should remain focused on their primary purpose of education rather than becoming medical hubs, especially as local taxpayers may be left to fund these centers once federal grants expire.
- **Senator Rochefort** asked for clarification on the statement that schools should not be medical facilities.
 - While some want schools to be everything to everybody, the focus must remain on academics. Every minute spent on medical services is a minute a student is out of class.
- **Senator Rochefort** asked if this legislation would impact the Rural Health Transformation grant intended to expand healthcare access.
 - Representative Noble did not have the answer to that specific impact.
- **Senator Rochefort** noted that current law allows schools to keep a bulk supply of epinephrine for emergency administration by a nurse and asked if this bill would create a conflict.
 - A carve-out or clarification might be necessary to ensure the emergency administration of bulk epinephrine remains protected.

Aubrey Freedman

- Mr. Freedman supports the bill and noted that the whole child concept which suggests that providing medical and mental health services in schools will improve academic results is not supported by current data.
- Proficiency rates in Manchester and Somersworth remain low (28% and 41% respectively) despite the presence of these services.
- He expressed concerns regarding liability and taxpayer risk if medical complications occur on school grounds, as well as the long-term financial burden on local taxpayers once federal grants run out.

- Mr. Freedman cited a case from Maine where a 17-year-old girl was sent home with Zoloft in a plastic bag without her father's knowledge. New Hampshire should act proactively to prevent similar occurrences.

Simon Amaya Price

- HB 360 is a necessary step to keep public schools in the realm of education and out of healthcare.
- Some schools have crossed a line through frameworks like Multi Tiered Systems of Support for Behavioral Health (MTSS-B), using mental health screenings and gender support plans that function as psychological interventions and therapies without meaningful parental consent.
- Planned Parenthood assists schools with sexual health policy development.
- These school-based interventions can cause iatrogenic harm, making adolescents more anxious or symptomatic and steering them toward irreversible medical paths.
- His personal experience shows that school support systems can feed delusions. Without parental intervention, he would have been irreversibly damaged.
- Medical decisions belong with parents and licensed professionals, not school staff playing the role of therapists or doctors.
- **Senator Birdsell** asked if the bill would prevent the administration of already prescribed medications, such as an EpiPen for an allergy.
 - The bill prohibits school staff from prescribing drugs or performing surgeries, but nothing in the text prevents the administration of medications that have already been prescribed by a child's outside physician.

Claire Abernathy

- This bill reaffirms that parents have the primary right and responsibility to direct the medical care of their children.
- HB 360 ensures that serious medical actions, like prescribing medication or performing surgery, remain in the domain of licensed professionals working with parents outside of the school environment.
- The bill is not about denying care, but about ensuring that care is delivered with proper safeguards and full parental involvement.

Melissa Blazik (RebuildNH)

- HB 360 addresses the fundamental question of what schools are for; they are not hospitals or clinics.
- Embedding healthcare into schools changes the environment, blurring the educational mission with medical decision-making.
- While parental consent is required, safeguards fail when parents are not physically present. The natural pause of parents scheduling an appointment is a vital safeguard that disappears in a school clinic.
- Federal law allows minors over 12 to access certain services like birth control, but traditionally this required seeking care outside of school. School clinics remove those barriers and create unfettered access during the school day.
- Ms. Blazik detailed a case from Maine where a student was prescribed oral birth control, an implant, and Plan B simultaneously, along with Zoloft, all through a school clinic without her parents' knowledge.
- New Hampshire should learn from other states where these clinics have expanded to include gender counseling and puberty blockers.

Representative Jonah Wheeler (Hillsboro - District 33)

- Admitted to "following the flag" and voting incorrectly on the House floor based on claims that the bill was unnecessary.
- He stated clearly that the bill is necessary because schools should not be performing medical procedures, surgeries, or prescribing anti-depressants.
- Guardrails must be put in place before serious incidents occur.
- Schools are for education, and this should not have to be discussed
- **Senator Avard** thanked the Representative for having the courage to admit a previous voting error.