

MEMORANDUM

To: School Superintendents, Principals, and School Nurses

From: Cathy Danyluk, Director of Student Services

Date: April 27, 2018

Re: National School Nurse Day – May 9, 2018

Dear School Administrators and School Nurses,

Since 1972, National School Nurse Day has been set aside to recognize school nurses. This day was established to foster a better understanding of the role of the school nurse in the educational setting. This year, National School Nurse Day will be celebrated on May 9th.

School nurses contribute significantly to the health, safety and learning of our students. According to the National Association of School Nurses, school nurses benefit a school by contributing in the following ways:

Attendance - School nurses improve attendance through health promotion, disease prevention and disease management. Students with a full-time school nurse have about half the student illness/injury-related early releases from school as compared to a school where no school nurse is present. Students with chronic and acute health conditions have their health needs met at school because of their school nurse's clinical assessment, judgment, and planning. School staff are trained by school nurses to understand emergency signs and symptoms, and when and how to get help, allowing maximum in-class time for students who require medical interventions. Improved attendance means healthy students are in the classroom and ready to learn.

Time - School nurses save time for principals, teachers and staff. Studies have shown that without a school nurse in the building, school staff spend the following amounts of time each day addressing health concerns of students:

- Principals almost an hour a day
- Teachers almost 20 minutes a day
- Clerical staff over 45 minutes a day

School nurses are instrumental in the identification of students who present with health risks and are able to make appropriate referrals for students to health care providers and community resources. In fact, school nurses are often the only health care professional a student may see on a regular basis. School nurses understand the social determinants of health and their impact upon our most vulnerable populations, and work to mitigate those impacts to support student health and learning.

In Indiana, school corporations are required to provide health services at the elementary and secondary school level. Indiana Administrative Code (511 IAC 4-1.5) defines health services as programs and services that promote and protect the health, safety, and well-being of students to assure a healthy environment that nurtures academic growth. The code defines persons responsible for providing these health services as persons who hold credentials in the area of registered nursing. Per this code, schools corporations are required to employ at least one registered nurse who holds a bachelor of science in nursing to coordinate health services. The code describes the role of the registered school nurse in providing health services as including, but is not limited to, the areas of prevention, assessment, intervention and referral.

School nurses optimize student health and learning every day of the year. On National School Nurse Day, please take special time to celebrate and recognize the contributions your school nurse makes to the health and learning of your students.

To learn more about school nursing, please visit the following websites:

- School nurses: An investment in student achievement
<http://www.kappanonline.org/maughan-school-nurses-investment-student-achievement/>
- National School Nurse Day
<https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/school-nurse-day>

For questions regarding school nursing, please contact Jolene Bracale at jbracale@doe.in.gov.