

*National Association of State School Nurse Consultants
Position Statement*

State School Nurse Consultant Position

POSITION

The National Association of State School Nurse Consultants recognizes the significance of state school health nurse consultant(s) in providing leadership, consultation and direction for school nurses and endorses the establishment of such positions in every state. The State School Nurse Consultant is a specialist in school nursing practice who works with school districts and school nurses to promote quality school nursing services and school health programs that address the broad health needs of students. Minimum educational preparation should be a registered nurse (RN) who is master's prepared. Candidates for the position should also have management experience and leadership and education administration training/skills. Positions should be affirmed by state law or state policy, with adequate support staff and full funding. State school nurse consultants should be administratively housed in state departments of education and health and work collaboratively to achieve mutual goals.

RATIONALE

School nursing services is a vital component of the support services required for the health and safety of students and staff while at school. School Nurses are qualified health professionals working in an educational setting, often with limited clinical supervision, and administrative supervision from a person who has a background in education administration or personnel management. The nurses come to their positions with varied educational backgrounds and professional work experience obtained in a variety of health care settings. Pursuant to state law, ancillary staff may be used in some settings to meet growing student health needs and to support the school nurse. The school nurse's role encompasses assessing, planning, training, supervising, and evaluating unlicensed assistive personnel.

The State School Nurse Consultant is responsible for promoting statewide quality standards for school health policies, nursing scope of practice and clinical procedures, documentation, and for initiating and coordinating a quality assurance program for accountability. S/he works in collaboration with the state board of nursing, provides guidance in health program development and planning, establishes a continuum of staff development, and serves as a liaison and resource expert in school nursing practice and school health program(s)

RESPONSIBILITIES

The State School Nurse Consultant responsibilities include:

- Serving as liaison and resource expert in school nursing and school health program areas for local, regional, state and national school health care providers, and policy setting groups;
- Providing consultation and technical assistance to local school districts, parents and community members;
- Coordinating school health program activities with public health, social services, environmental, and educational agencies as well as other public and private entities;
- Monitoring, interpreting, synthesizing and disseminating relevant information associated with changes in health and medical care, school nursing practice, legislation, and legal issues that impact schools;
- Facilitating the development of policies, standards, and/or guidelines. Interprets updates and disseminates policies, standards, guidelines and/or procedures to enhance coordinated school health programs;
- Fostering and promoting staff development for school nurses. This may include planning and providing orientation, coordinating and/or providing educational offerings and networking with universities and other providers of continuing education to meet identified needs;
- Promoting quality assurance in school health services by initiating and coordinating a quality assurance program that includes needs assessment, data collection and analysis, and evidenced-based practice;
- Participating in state level public interagency/private partnerships with statewide stakeholders to foster a coordinated school health program, representing school nurses in multi-disciplinary collaborations;
- Initiating, participating in, and utilizing research studies related to a coordinated school health program, the health needs of children and youth, school nursing practice, and related issues; and
- Serving as legislative liaison regarding school health issues with the state department of health, state department of education and/or the state legislative body;

SUMMARY:

State School Nurse Consultants provide nursing leadership to ensure effective school nurse services within their state. Consultants develop and promote quality standards for school health services programs that reflect current school nursing practice. Their leadership fosters a better understanding among educators, parents and the general public regarding the relationship between health status and a student's capacity to learn.

For assistance in developing a state school nurse consultant position description and sample job descriptions/organizational models please contact NASSNC or one of its members.

Approved: January 1992. Revised: April 2000. Revised: February 2008.