

Legislative Updates from NHSNA President

Dear New Hampshire School Nurses;

Gallup recently polled people about honesty and ethical standards in different occupations, finding that nurses top the honesty league for the 16th year in a row!

https://news.gallup.com/poll/224639/nurses-keep-healthy-lead-honest-ethical-profession.aspx?g_source=Economy&g_medium=newsfeed&g_campaign=tiles

As your professional organization, NHSNA's vision is:

New Hampshire School Nurses Association (NHSNA) provides leadership and education to support New Hampshire school nurse standards of practice, care coordination, leadership, quality improvement, and community public health. New Hampshire school nurses are committed to promoting the health of students and school communities through evidence based clinical practice, health promotion, and education. NH school nurses are integral members of the school leadership and education teams, and are committed to collaborating with professional organizations and health care teams. Through strength in membership and advocacy, NHSNA creates the infrastructure to promote excellence in school nurse practice across the state.

It is our responsibility to enhance our practice by attending continuing education seminars, by collaborating with other nurses and organizations, and by keeping up to date with unfolding legislative changes in our state.

There are a number of proposed bills on the table that you should be aware of. NHSNA is committed to giving you the resources to learn about these bills, and to be able to participate in the legislative process. We will accomplish this by:

- • Maintaining a legislative page on our website at: <https://nhsna.wildapricot.org/Legislative-Updates/>
- • Maintaining a school nurse forum, where you can post your views and read the views of others (be assured that the board does read them) at <https://nhsna.wildapricot.org/School-Nurse-Forum>
- • Open Board meetings: you are welcome to attend any of our board meetings to speak with us in person. Dates and registrations are listed at the bottom of our homepage: www.nhschoolnurses.org
- • You may email us anytime at nhschoolnurses@gmail.com

HB 285: is related to the repeal of school nurse certification

NHDOE certification is currently required in the state of New Hampshire. NHSNA advocates for certification to assure a minimal standard of preparation for nurses working in an independent role in schools, caring for the increasingly complex health needs of our students and families. Adding to the school nurse role is the care of our students affected by the opioid crisis, by food insecurity, and for those with behavioral/mental health needs. The [Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice by NASN](#) describes the professional role of the school nurse. By being certified, we demonstrate professionalism, and are in a better negotiating position to ask for salary levels equal to our professional partners in schools. NHSNA appreciates all New Hampshire school

nurses and we encourage you to support school nurse certification in your district. Please ask your representative to vote "No" on HB275.

HB 131 - Establishing a commission on mental health education programs.

This bill establishes a commission to develop and promote mental health programs in kindergarten through grade 12. This bill names who should be on the commission, and School Nurses and Guidance Counselors were not included.

A hearing was held 1/16/19. Laurie Fleming from NHSNA attended and provided testimony why it would be a good idea to include a school nurse on the commission. Joan Widmer, Nurse Executive Director of the New Hampshire Nurses' Association (affiliate of the national ANA) also testified to the value of a school nurse. The legislative education committee was very receptive and had some good questions for Laurie to answer.

LSR0490: As I mentioned in my last letter, there is an LSR (not yet a bill) proposed to establish the position of school nurse coordinator in the department of education. No hearing has been scheduled yet. It has not been assigned a bill number yet. NHSNA strongly supports this bill.

For detailed information on all bills being supported or opposed by nurses in New Hampshire, please attend the NHNA Legislative Town Hall Forum on Tuesday January 29 at 5:00. You may attend in person at various live-streamed sites, or by webinar. There are already over 175 nurses across the state registered, and many of them are School Nurses. I promise you will find the session interesting and informative. For more information and to register, go to [NHNA Legislative Town Hall Forum](#)

We have a number of organizations supporting school nurses in the legislature, including New Futures, The Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative, The Merrimack Retired Educators Association, the Kent Street Coalition and the New Hampshire Nurses Association.

Sincerely,

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