



National
Association of
School Nurses

1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 925
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
866-627-6767 (phone)
301-585-1791 (fax)
nasn@nasn.org (email)
www.nasn.org

August 1, 2016

John B. King, Jr.
Secretary
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary King:

The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). NASN represents more than 16,000 school nurses who enable student academic success of students by making sure they are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Today, children and youth face chronic and complex health and mental health conditions like never before. School nurses coordinate care for health conditions and serve as liaisons to school communities, including parents, healthcare providers, and community-based resources. In addition, school nurses promote wellness and improve health outcomes for our nation's children.

Needs Assessment – NASN urges the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to emphasize that meaningful consultation take place with parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and **Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) which includes school nurses**, school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and school language pathologists with SEAs and LEAs. LEAs will benefit from ED guidance on nationally available needs assessment tools, such as the CDC [School Health Index](#) and the ASCD [School Improvement Tool](#). States and LEAs will need advice and assistance on best practices to design these assessments.

NASN further urges ED to stress the inclusion of non-academic indicators for school quality indicators when LEAs are selecting elements for their Report Cards. Non-Academic indicators such as chronic absenteeism and school discipline, in addition to school health, are important gauges in addressing the “whole child.”

Technical Assistance -- NASN encourages ED to provide guidance and technical assistance about how to include student (academic and nonacademic), family, and school factors to improve student outcomes. We urge guidance and technical assistance to schools in developing comprehensive plans for parents, teachers, and members of the community.

NASN appreciates that ESSA looks at the “whole child.” We applaud ED for putting the child at the forefront of our nation's education. We urge you to continue to look at ways to comprehensively support children, including their health and emotional supports, which can be implicated in academic challenges.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the conversation and give input on this landmark law. We stand ready to offer additional assistance.

Sincerely,

Beth Matthey

Beth Matthey
President