How Is School Nursing Funded in the United States?

School nurses are licensed nurses who work in public, private, and charter schools. School nurses use evidence-based practice to promote individual and population-based student health, coordinate and advocate for quality student-centered care, and advance students’ academic success. School nurses are also integral members of the larger healthcare system, keeping individuals out of the hospital and building healthy communities.

School Nurse Funding (Public Schools)

- Local Education Dollars (76.7%)
- State (17.2%)
- Health Dept. (11.4%)
- Foundation (1.7%)
- Federal (12.0%)
- Hospital (1.9%)

Education dollars have traditionally funded school nursing. Other major funding sources include health departments and hospital systems.

Medicaid Reimbursement in Public Schools

Schools may bill Medicaid for certain services performed by school nurses for Medicaid-eligible students. Rules differ by state. Schools receive only 1% of the overall Medicaid budget. The monies generated by Medicaid reimbursement can be used to help fund school nursing services.

The percentage of schools that bill for Medicaid reimbursements differ by urbanicity, type of school, and region of the country as shown below:

- Urban: 52.6%
- Rural: 32.0%
- Elementary: 47.8%
- Secondary: 51.5%
- Mixed: 81.0%

OVERALL: 51.1% of public schools bill for Medicaid.