

Bridging the Data Divide: *Connecting Tennessee School Nursing Trends, Tools, & Opportunities*

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Objectives

- Interpret current Tennessee school nursing data to identify statewide trends and implications for practice.
- Summarize recent updates in school nursing at both the state and national levels.
- Apply newly released resources to support school health services and student well-being.
- Integrate data insights and tools into daily practice to bridge gaps in care and services.





Activity is full.
Responses are not accepted at this time.

Out of the 5.3 million health office visits, what percentage of students do you think returned to class?

75



1



0



90



Health Office Visits

- **89 percent** of local education agency (LEA) students, **88 percent** of public charter school and **90 percent** of non-public school students **returned to class**.
- **89.8 percent** is the national percentage of students who returned to class.



Practice Connection

School nurses help maximize instructional time by returning students to class.



Resources



Everyone Plays a Role: Improving School Attendance Best Practice Guide

The optional Everyone Plays a Role: Improving Attendance Best Practice Guide is designed to empower schools and districts in proactively identifying at-risk students, understanding root causes, and implementing responsive interventions to combat chronic absenteeism. The guide emphasizes the strategic use of attendance data, early outreach, and a coordinated system of support to break the cycle of missed learning time. This is not intended to replace any federal or state laws, regulations, or requirements. Districts should consult with their local board attorney when developing local policies, protocols, and procedures.

Attendance and Chronic Absence – Why does it matter?

Regular school attendance and engagement are fundamental to academic success and overall student development. Consistent attendance fosters a sense of belonging, routine, and accountability, while engagement ensures students actively participate in their learning journey. When students are present and engaged, they are more likely to build strong relationships with peers and educators, develop critical life skills, and stay on track for academic achievement.

Tennessee's Chronically Out of School Indicator

In the 2017-18 academic year, Tennessee adopted chronic absenteeism, known as the chronically out of school indicator, as part of federal accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to serve as an early warning sign for students, families, and schools. The chronically out of school indicator recognized excessive absences as lost instructional opportunities and a data point that is actionable throughout the school year. Districts and schools should note:

- only looking at average daily attendance rates tends to mask attendance issues, both within subgroups and at schools across districts;
- effects of poor attendance are cumulative and may be disguised if absences do not occur consecutively; and
- districts and schools have access to rich attendance data that can be monitored through the school year, serving as an invaluable early indicator of changes in the student's relationship with school.

By prioritizing attendance and engagement, schools, families, and communities collectively invest in the future, empowering students to reach their full potential.



Actionable Strategies for Reducing Health-Related Chronic Absenteeism

Universal Strategies

- Assign a full-time school nurse to every school.
- Implement Electronic Health Records and illness-related attendance codes.
- Conduct routine health screenings. Refer to the School Health Screening Guidelines available [here](#).
- Promote infection control (e.g., handwashing schedules, vaccination clinics, and clean facilities).
- Implement high-quality Coordinated School Health programs and initiatives.
- Consider providing on-site medical care or telehealth, reducing the need for students to leave school for healthcare visits.
- Ensure attendance policies are supportive, allowing excused absences for medical reasons while maintaining academic engagement.

Prioritize School Nurse Involvement

- Ensure school nurses are active members of attendance teams and meetings.
- Include school nurses in data reviews, attendance planning, and communication with families.
- Refer students to the school nurse when they approach the 10 percent absence threshold to rule out health-related reasons for absences.
- Provide school nurses with timely access to attendance and health data, and medical absence excuse notes.
- Analyze data points to measure school nursing impact (e.g., return-to-class rates).

School Nurse Specific Tasks

- Develop and update Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) and emergency plans for students with chronic conditions to support in-school management of their condition.
- Follow up with students sent home and those with multiple absences.
- Document all parent communication and referrals in Student Information Systems (SIS)/Electronic Health Record systems.
- Share community health resources with families.
- Provide ongoing health education to staff, students, and families.

Collaboration Success Stories

- **Coffee County Schools:** School nurse and school counselor jointly track absences notes — chronic absence declined 5.3 percent.
- **Athens City Schools:** School Nurse reviews daily attendance reports, calls families, and tracks unnecessary send-homes by non-nurse staff.
- **Hamilton County Schools:** On-site nurse practitioner cut absenteeism by 3.2 percent.
- **Milan Special School District:** Attendance clerks and school nurses collaborate daily. School nurses attend truancy meetings.



Activity is full.
Responses are not accepted at this time.

What is the most common chronic health condition in Tennessee Schools?

40

5%



Diabetes

40%



Asthma

55%



ADHD

0%



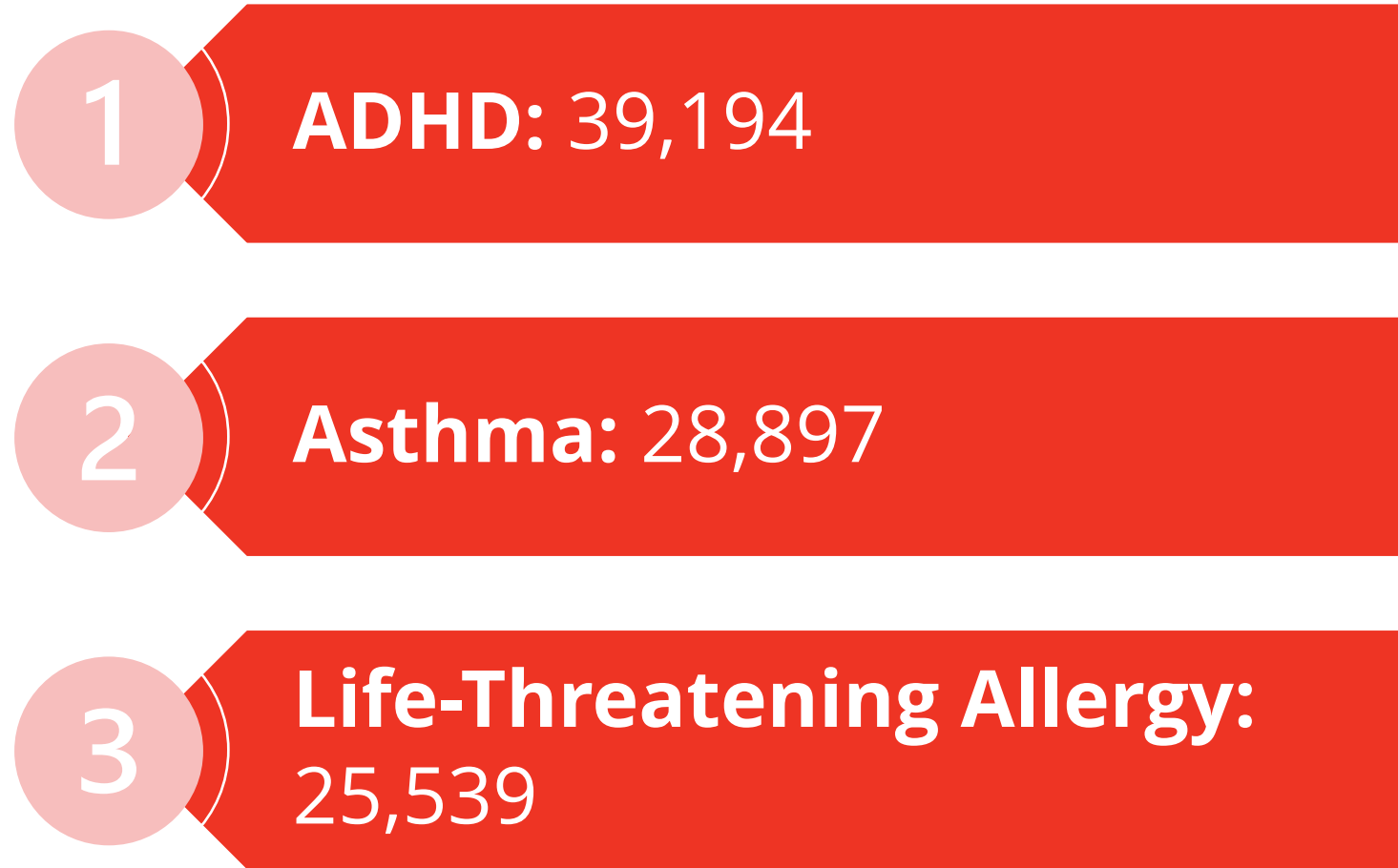
Seizure Disorders

0%



Life-Threatening Allergies

Chronic Health Conditions



Practice Connection

Increase of chronic health conditions shows need for comprehensive chronic disease management.



Resources



External Resources



[Managing Chronic Health Conditions in Schools](#)



[TennCare School-Based Services](#)

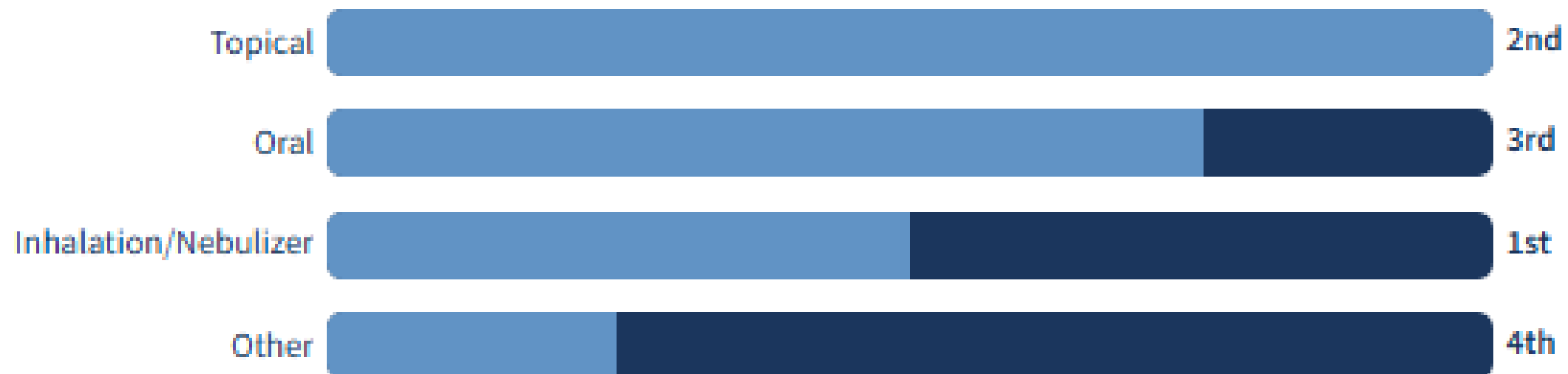




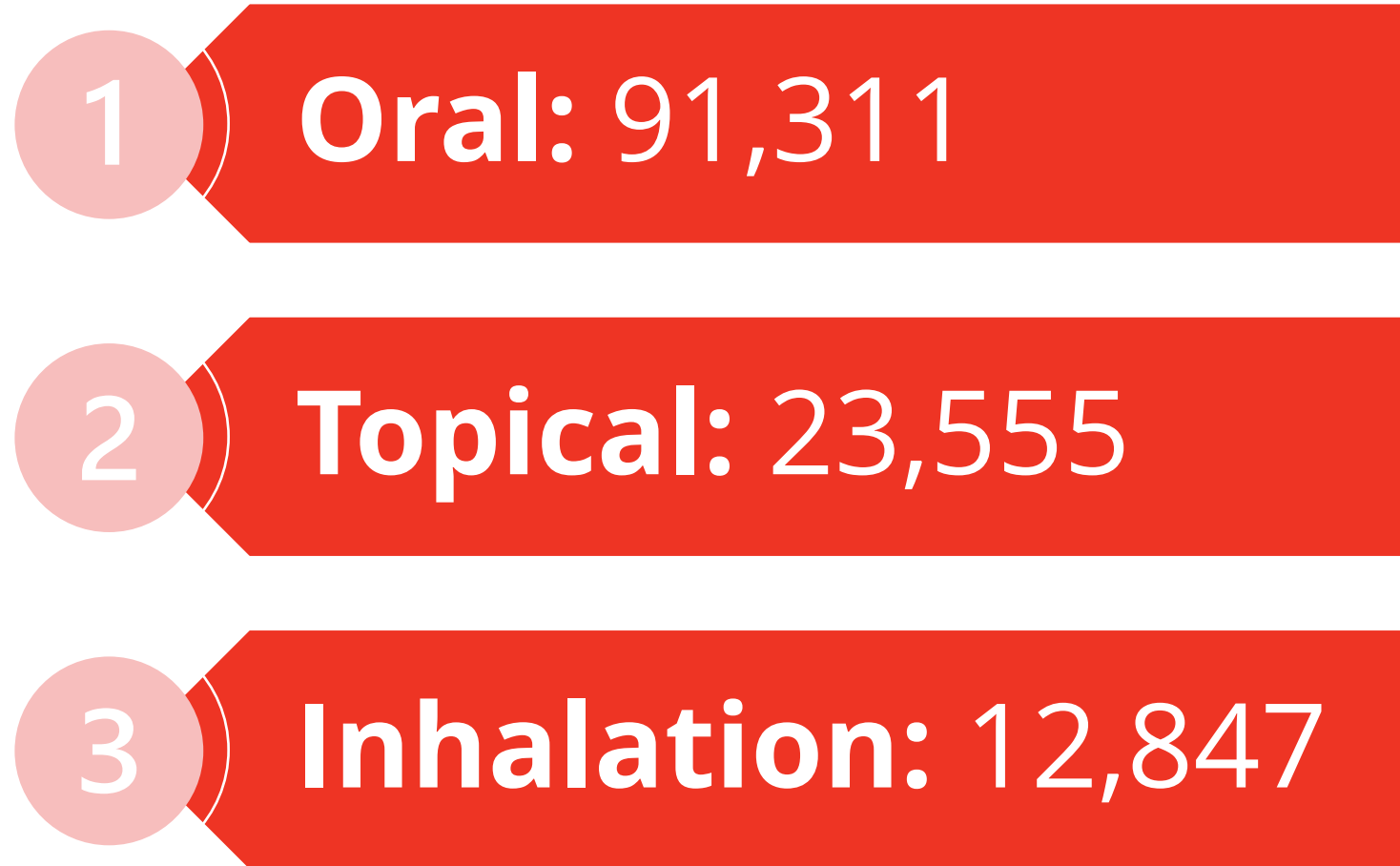
Join by Web PollEv.com/amandajohnson768



What route of medication do you think is most commonly administered at school?



Students that Received Medication by Route



Practice Connection

- Medication safety
- Delegation protocols



Resources



External Resources



[Rules of the Tennessee Board of Nursing](#)



[Chronic Health Condition Management - National Association of School Nurses](#)





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Have emergency treatments for students been increasing or decreasing?

Increasing



0%

Decreasing



0%

Emergency Treatment

1

Albuterol: 27,860

2

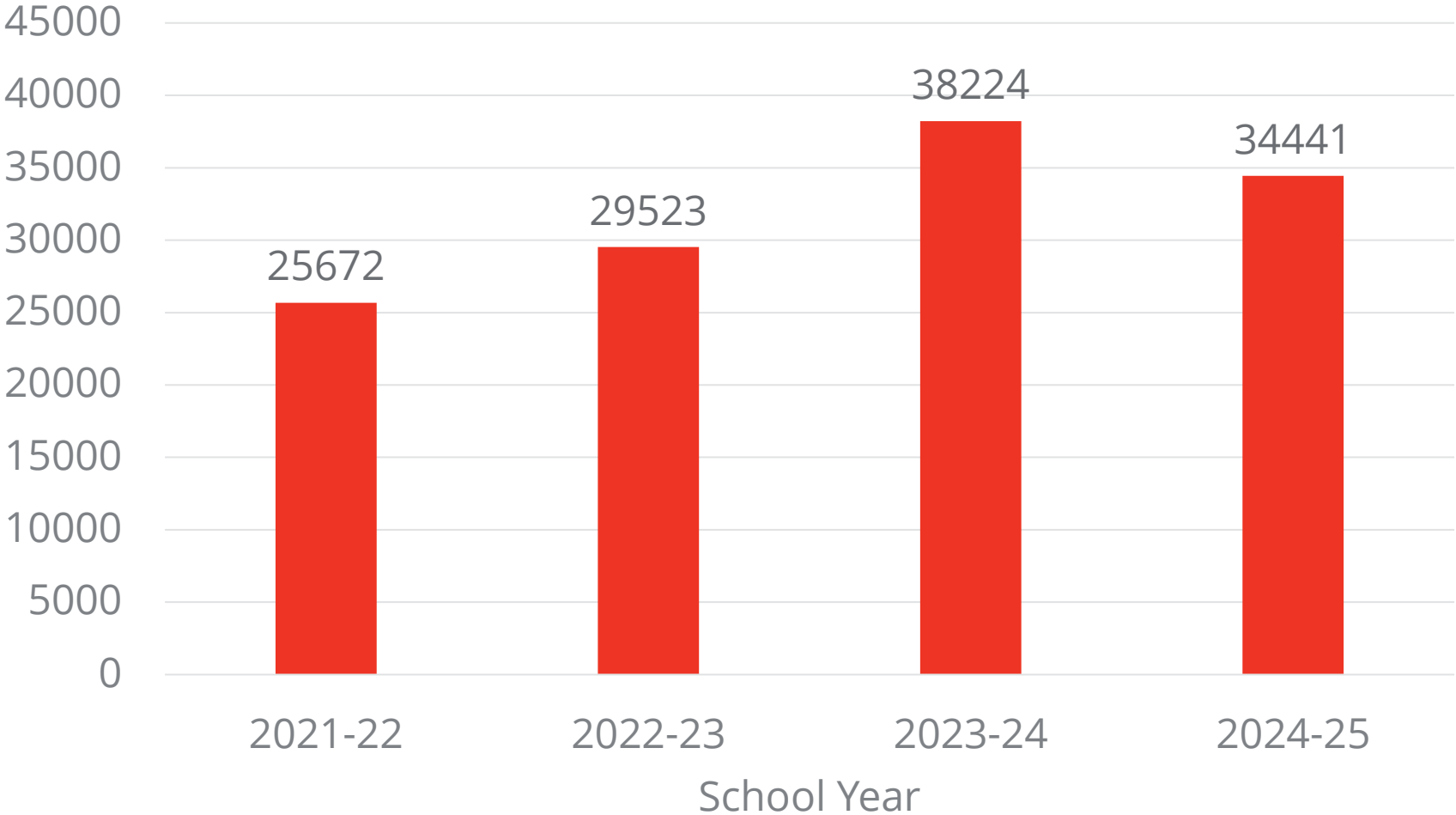
Epinephrine: 374

3

Antiseizure Med: 279



Emergency Treatments Over Time

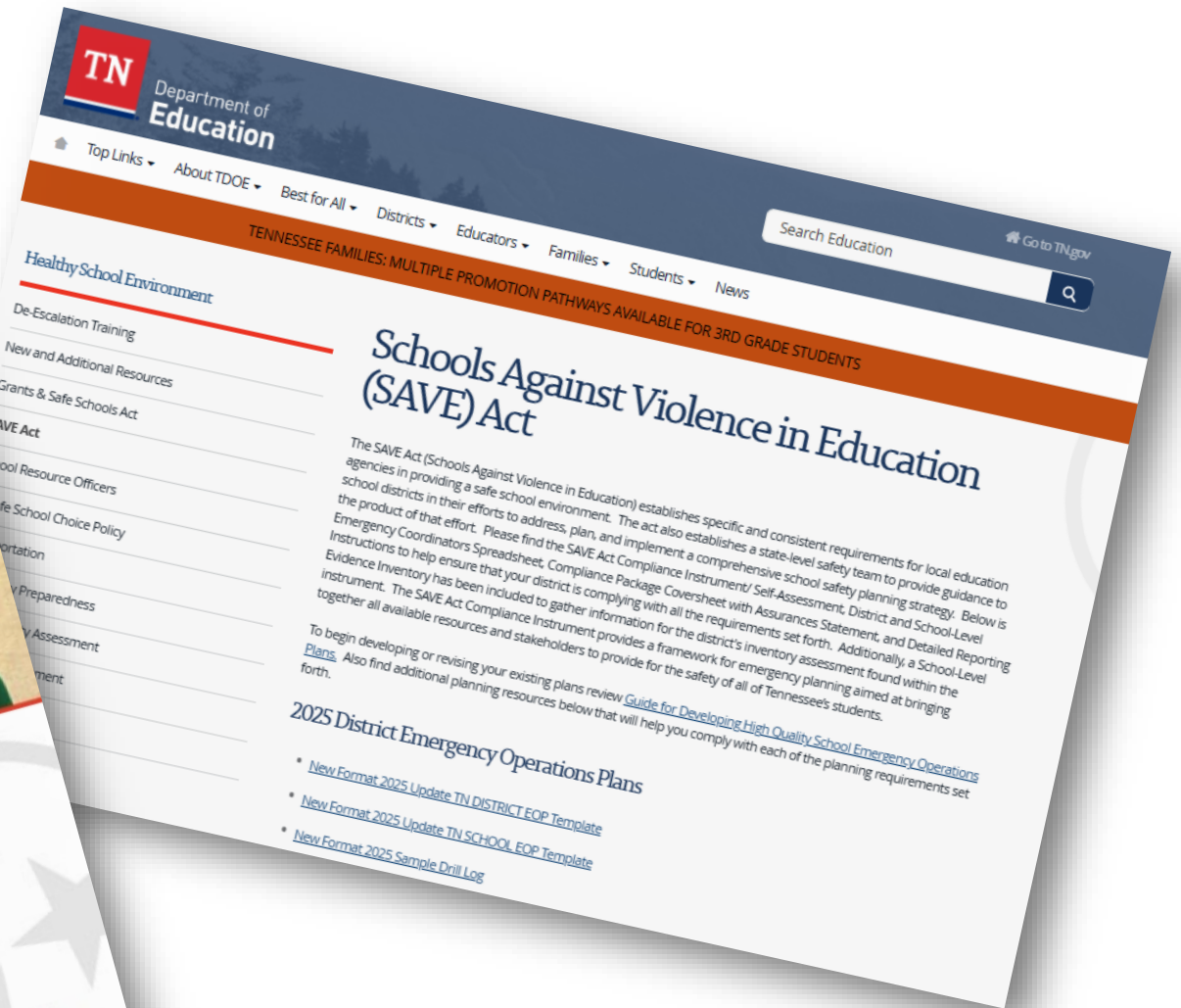


Practice Connection

- Growing emergency interventions highlight the importance of preparedness and training.
 - Preparedness saves lives.
- Rising anaphylaxis emergencies reinforce the importance of stock epinephrine policies
- Stock epinephrine laws
- CPR/AED training



Resources



External Resources



[Disasters and Children](#)



[Emergency Resources for Schools](#)





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How many Tennessee schools do you think lack a full-time school nurse?



School Nurse Workforce

331 public schools, and 32 public charter schools and 207 non-public schools, do not have full-time nurses.



School Nurse Staffing: Headcount vs. Full-Time Work

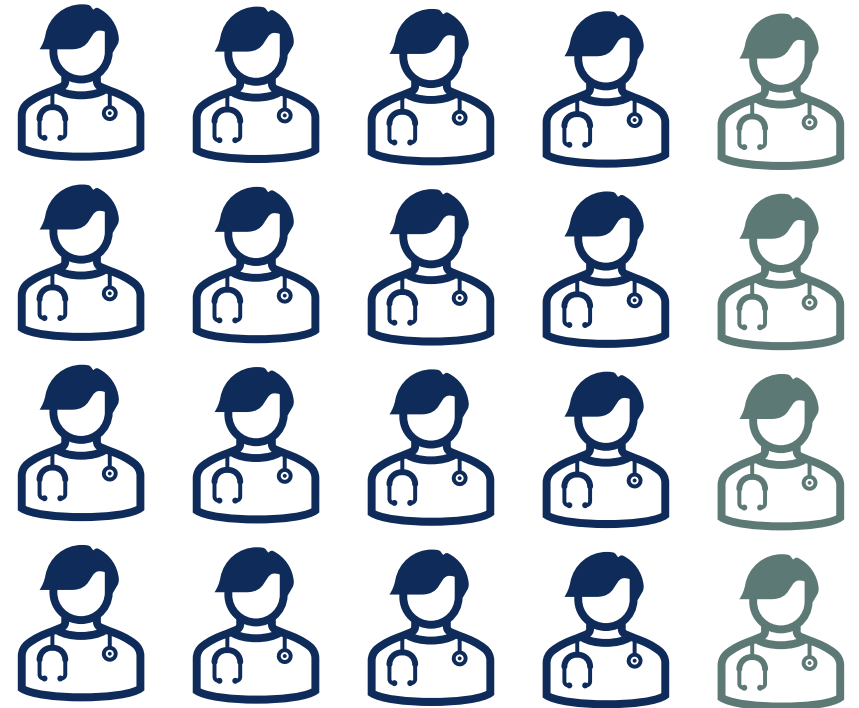
1,768 Nurses
(Headcount)



Counts every nurse, whether full-time or part time



1,706.42 FTE



Represents total work as if all nurses were full-time



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The number of school nurse full-time equivalents (FTEs) has increased over the past 3 years

0%



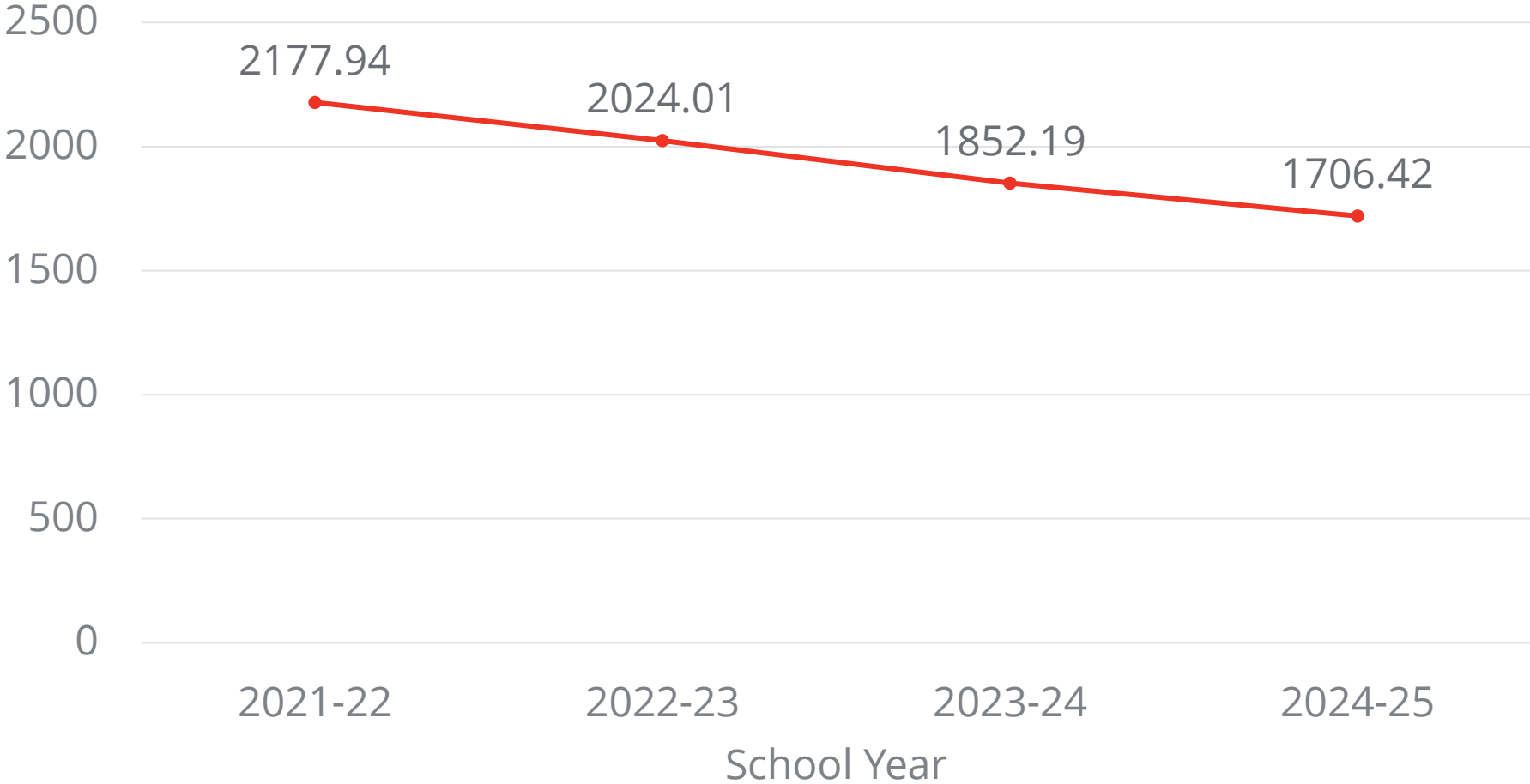
True

0%



False

School Nurse FTEs Over Time



.....

The Problem

- Many school districts do not have enough positions to assign a nurse to every school.
 - **37 percent** of LEAs have at least one school nurse assigned to multiple schools, and **one-third** of LEAs do not have a full-time nurse in every school.
- Deciding how to assign available positions is a challenge.
- Algorithms for staffing that have been developed for acute care may not apply to school nursing.
- There is no specific model related to school nurse workload.



School Nurse Workload: Staffing for Safe Care

- The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) recommends that students have access to a school nurse at all times.
- In order to achieve adequate school nurse staffing, NASN recommends a multifactorial approach that analyzes complex factors, including the number of students, social determinants, acuity levels, other responsibilities, barriers to care, current use of technology, and health care to adequately meet the health and safety needs of the children whose care is entrusted to schools.
- NASN recommends ongoing research to develop evidence-based health assessment and other tools that consider multiple factors for the development of staffing and workload models.

National Association of School Nurses (NASN) Position Statement, 2020

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What is School Acuity?

- A measure of how complex the health needs of a school's student population are.
- Schools with higher acuity scores need more nursing support.



Overview of a School Acuity Tool

- Schools are scored based on enrollment, chronic health conditions, and other factors.
- Identifies schools with high nursing demands
- Supports staffing/resource allocation and funding decisions
- Improves student health outcomes



School Nurse Goals, Shared Outcomes

- Ensure the health and safety of students in the school district
- Maximize the potential for success for all children by promoting health, wellness, and educational success

Factors Affecting School Nurse Staffing

- Student Acuity/Conditions
 - Chronic Health Conditions
 - Medications
 - Procedures
- Social Determinants
 - Poverty
 - Language Barriers
 - Access to Care

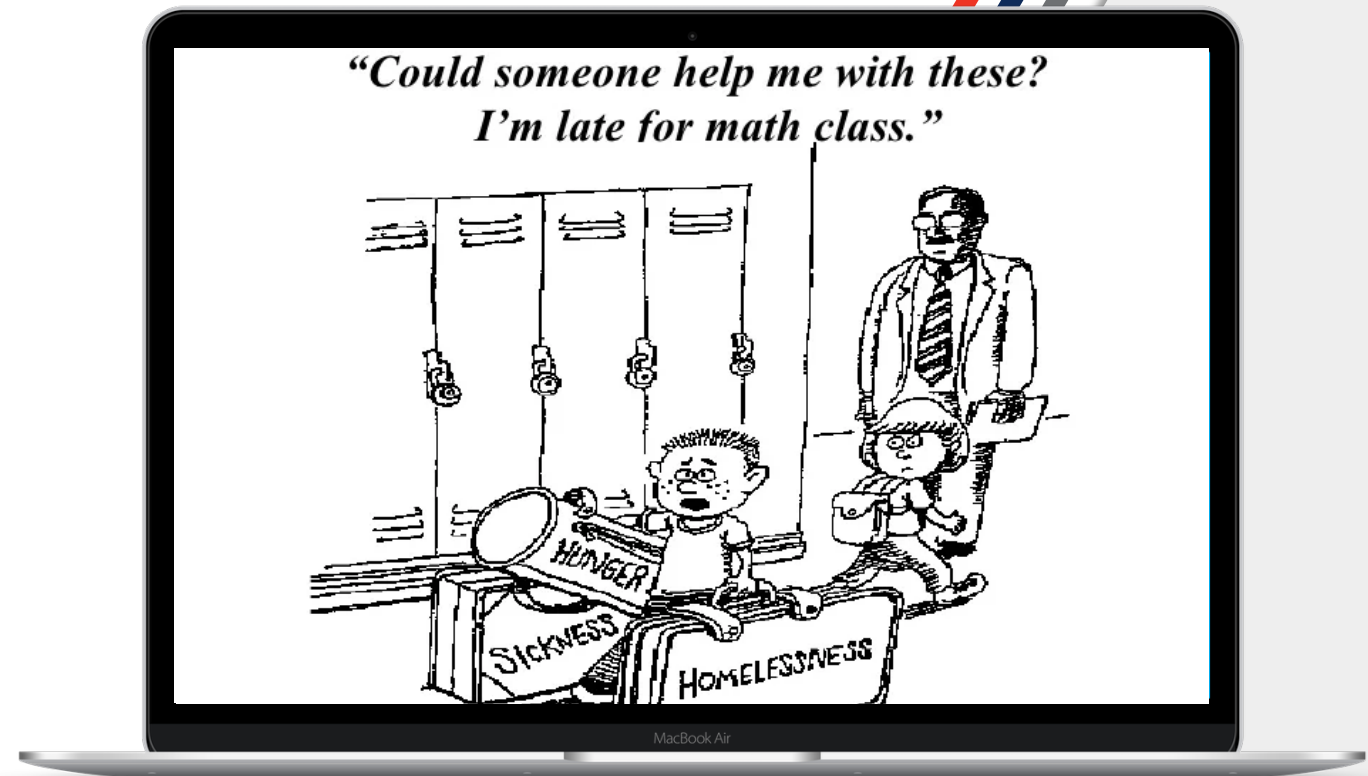


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Practice Connection

- Declining school nurse workforce impacts student access.
- Gaps in nurse staffing affect the quality of care and access.
- National Recommendation
- NASN Workforce Study



Resources



**School Nurse Staffing
Assignments for Safe Care**

Tennessee Department of Education | March 2025

TN Department of Education

Cover image courtesy of Millington Municipal Schools © Tennessee Department of Education



	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
	Percent F&R	F&R Score	Identified Health Condition	Percent Identified Health Condition	Identified Health Condition Score	Procedures	Percent Procedures	Procedures Score	Medications	Percent Medications	Medications Score	TDOE Report Card Grade	Percent TDOE Report Card	TDOE Report Card Score	LEP	Percent LEP
	5%	Weight	15%		Weight	55%		Weight	15%		Weight	5%		Weight	5%	
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External Resources

- [National Association of School Nurses \(NASN\) Position Statement: School Nurse Workload—Essential Staffing for Safe and Equitable Student Care - , National Association of School Nurses, National Association of School Nurses, 2025](#)





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What is the top health screening performed in schools?



Health Screenings

1

Vision

2

Hearing

3

BMI

1,026,238 health screenings were conducted.

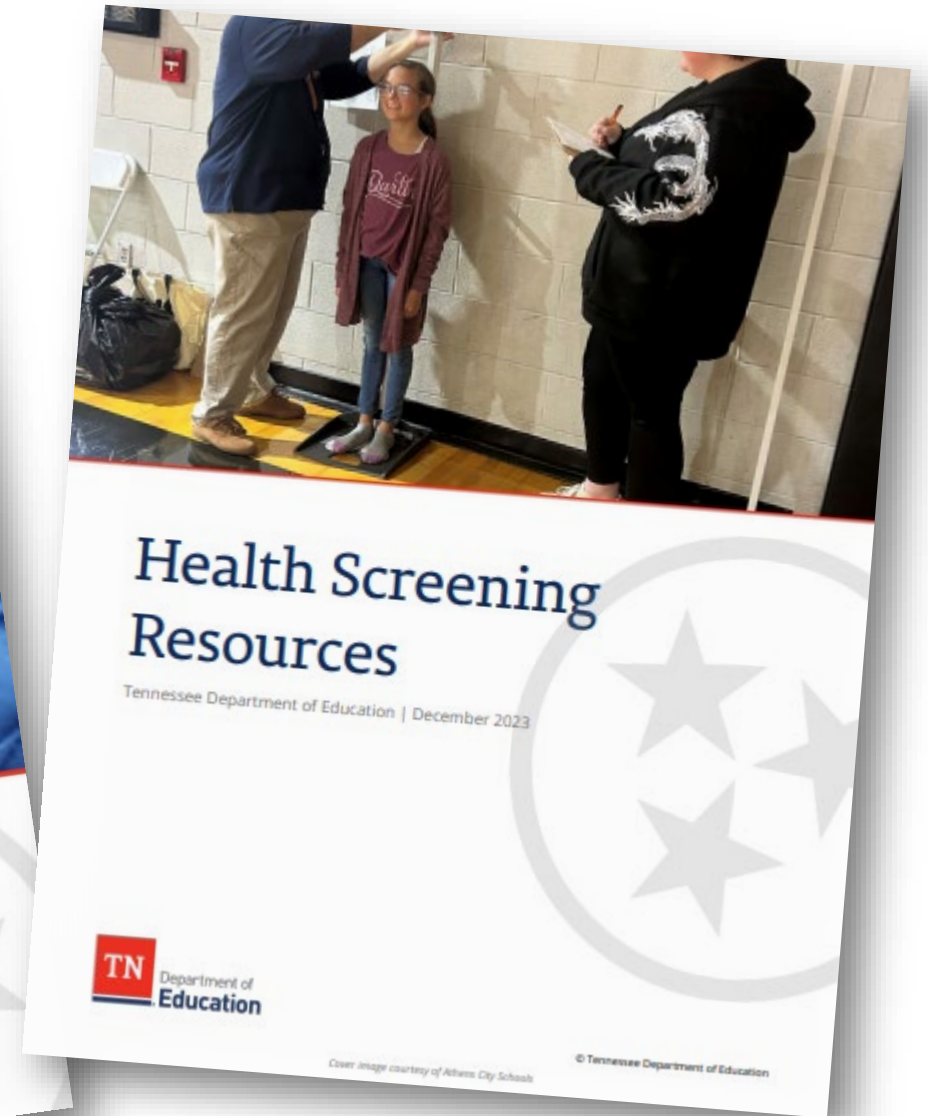
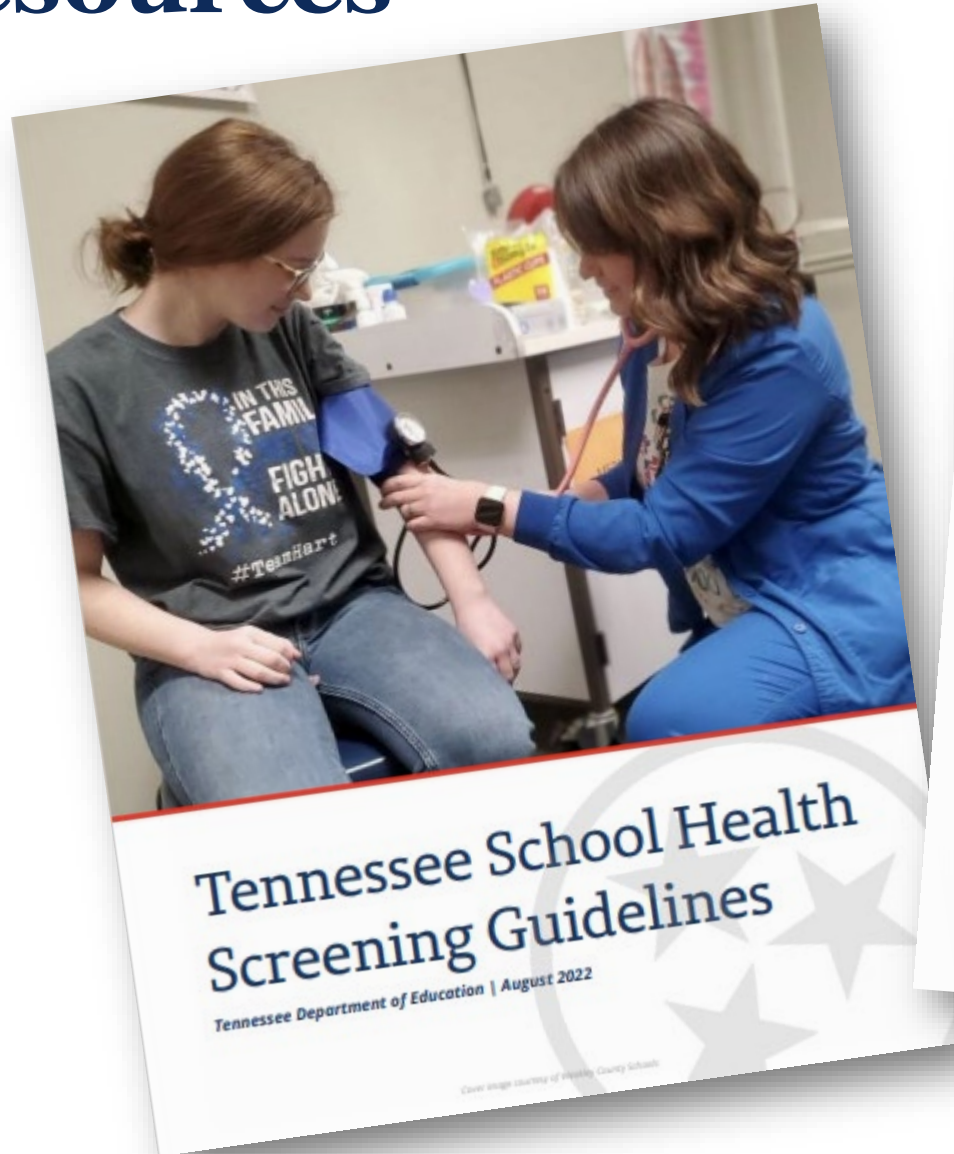


Practice Connection

- Screening identifies barriers to learning early.
- Vision and hearing screenings are tied to academic success.
- [Bright Futures Guidelines](#)



Resources





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Have emergency treatments for students been increasing or decreasing?

Increasing



0%

Decreasing



0%

Health Education Connection

- **Seventy-two (72) percent** of districts do not have a system in place to ensure that the health education standards are covered
- **Fifty-one (51) percent** of districts offered health education to grades K-5
- **Sixty-two (62) percent** of districts offered health education to grades 6-8

the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) that school nurses are a valuable resource to parents and students' health and development for all students. Classroom/Group health education is a component under the Health Education Framework and it is defined as "planned learning to advance a population's evidence-based health behaviors." One-on-one health education falls under the Care Coordination principle and includes health education under the implementation step of the nursing process, reinforcement of health education.

Formal health education is the everyday teaching school nurses do while caring for students. Examples of formal health education are bulletin boards, newsletters, and school health office webpages. Formal health education, as defined by the Health Education Standards, is guided by a well-designed lesson plan, and includes assessment and evaluation.

Instructions

The Health Education/Health Services Crosswalk Tool is intended to be used and/or modified to meet the district's individual needs. **It is not the intention of this crosswalk to imply that school nurses are responsible for teaching health education standards, rather, it recognizes that there are natural opportunities where this is already occurring and can be thoughtfully captured and documented.*

h Tab: Use the search tab to filter Tennessee health education standards by keyword. Search results can be copied into nursing notes.

ab: K-5 Health Education Standards

ib: 6-8 Health Education Standards

b: Lifetime Wellness Standards/High School Health Education Standards

ing Log Tab: Track monthly health education provided to individuals and groups by standard

h K-5 6-8 HS Calendar Tracking Log +

New and Emerging Treatment

[PRESS RELEASE]

Aquestive Therapeutics Announces FDA Acceptance of New Drug Application and PDUFA Date for Anaphylm™ for the Treatment of Severe Allergic Reactions



- FDA assigns PDUFA target action date of January 31, 2026


WARREN, N.J., June 16, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Aquestive Therapeutics, Inc. (NASDAQ: AQST) ("Aquestive" or the "Company"), a pharmaceutical company advancing medicines to bring meaningful improvement to patients' lives through innovative science and delivery technologies, today announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has accepted the Company's New Drug Application (NDA) for Anaphylm™ in the treatment of Type 1 allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, and has assigned a Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) target action date of January 31, 2026. The FDA reiterated that it may decide to conduct an Advisory Committee meeting for the approval of Anaphylm. If approved by the FDA, Anaphylm would be the first and only orally delivered epinephrine option for the treatment of severe allergic reactions in the United States.


"Anaphylm represents a breakthrough in anaphylaxis treatment, if approved by FDA, being the first and only device-free, orally delivered epinephrine medicine," said Dan Barber, President and Chief Executive Officer of Aquestive. "We designed Anaphylm to fit seamlessly into the patient's daily life. It's thinner than a credit card and requires no special storage, so patients can keep it in their phone case, wallet, or pocket – Anaphylm can go everywhere you go, without the bulk of even the smallest FDA-approved device for this patient population."

With a single sensor, the Eversense 365 system provides one year of continuous glucose monitoring with chart tools, CGM's for minimal life disruption.

New School Nurse Orientation Course









TeachALL Introduction to Tennessee School Nursing Practice

[Continue](#) [Already enrolled!](#)



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Why Bridging the Gap Matters

- Instructional Time
- Chronic Conditions
- Medication Safety
- Emergency Preparedness
- Staffing
- Screenings



Closing Activity

What strategies do you use to support students in returning to class instead of being sent home?



Health Services Website

Health Services



Health Services

ENSURING access to healthcare services that support student health and academic success



Health Services strengthens the educational process by promoting, improving, and maintaining health and wellness for students. Health services enable students to attend school in a safe learning environment, reducing health-related barriers to learning. Health services intervene with actual and potential health problems, including providing first aid, emergency care, and assessment and planning for the management of chronic conditions (such as asthma or diabetes). Health services, provided and/or supervised by school nurses, connect school staff, students, families, community, and

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(615) 767-6016

- All Tennessee Department of Education Health Services resources referenced today can be found on the Coordinated School Health, Health Services webpage.
- [Health Services](#)



Additional Resources

- www.nasn.org
- www.cdc.gov/healthyschools
- www.aap.org/brightfutures



Please complete the evaluation.

*Select "School Nursing Grand Round" for
the professional learning opportunity.*





Thank You!

Amanda Johnson, Amanda.Johnson@tn.gov

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