



HealthMatters

LEVEL UP YouR SCHOOL YEAR WITH A STRONG SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES TEAM

BY JOAN HLINOMAZ, MS, BSN, RN, LSN, NCSN

School nurses are valuable members of your school building team, assisting with the management of students' mental, physical, and behavioral health needs. Early identification, assessment, interventions, and referral of students by school nurses lead to improved school attendance and classroom seat times.

A study of school health services found that a school nurse saved principals approximately an hour a day, leading to the cost per school savings of \$133,174.89 per year.¹ Another study found that for every dollar spent for school nursing services, \$2.20 was saved in the cost of parents' time off work, teachers' time, and the cost of treatment.²

How do you build a health services team in your school that will reap the rewards of a successful school year for you, staff, teachers, students, and families? An understanding of the roles of different types of licensures and education of nurses who may work in the school setting in Ohio is a good place to start. By understanding these basics about nursing licensure and education in Ohio, you can build a strong school nursing and health services team for your school.

The Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN) licenses and regulates registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) in the state of Ohio.³ This is similar to the role of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), Office of Educator Licensure for administrators, teachers, and other staff that work in schools.

Ohio law specifies the practice of nursing in Ohio via the Ohio Nurse Practice Act⁴ rules in Chapters 4723-1 through 4723-27 of the Ohio Administrative Code.⁵ A summary of the roles of these licensed nurses in all settings, including schools, are:

- An RN who provides students and groups of students with nursing care that requires specialized knowledge, judgement,

and skills derived from a state-approved registered nursing education preparation program. The knowledge and skills include:

- » Identifying health problems.
- » Assessing health status.
- » Providing health counseling and teaching.
- » Administering medically ordered medications and treatments.
- » Supervising.
- » Delegating.
- » Evaluating nursing care.

- An LPN who provides nursing care to students that require the basic nursing knowledge from a state approved practical nursing education program, at the direction of an RN. Such nursing care includes:

- » Observation.
- » Contributing to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of nursing care established by an RN.
- » Administering medically ordered medications and treatments.
- » Delegating and teaching of nursing tasks as directed by an RN.

The ODE Pupil Services License for School Nurses (five-year and temporary) and ODE Pupil Services Registered Nurse Registration are additional credentials that an OBN RN, who works in a school setting, may acquire through the ODE. In Ohio, the title "licensed school nurse (LSN)" has been reserved for registered nurses with the ODE School Nurse License. LSNs have met similar requirements for licensure as do "highly qualified teachers (HQT)" in Ohio schools.⁶ They have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in nursing or a related field or an OBN RN license; are enrolled in or have completed an Ohio Department of Higher Education approved school licensure program; and have completed an ODE

background check.⁷ The additional education received by the LSN emphasizes the independent practice of the RN with a focus on their role in the school setting. It ensures they have the knowledge and skills to write Individualized Healthcare Plans (IHP) and contribute to Individual Assessment Teams (IAT), 504 Plans, Evaluation Team Reports (ETR), Multi-factored Evaluations (MFE), and Individual Education Plans (IEP).⁸ These skills and knowledge qualify the LSN to serve in leadership roles on the school health services team.

Many schools find it useful to also have ODE-registered RNs, OBN LPNs, and health aides as part of the school health team. Each of these roles provides additional supports to students with health needs at school. ODE-registered RNs and OBN LPNs can assist the LSN with providing nursing care identified on the nursing IHP and in the IEP, such as tracheostomy care with suctioning, diabetic care, urinary catheterizations, and gastrostomy tube care. Additionally, health aides may supplement the nurses with the designated duty of medication administration or delegated nursing care at the direction of the LSN or RN.

In conclusion, start your school year with a school health services team that will ensure your students will meet their academic and attendance goals. A strong team of LSNs, RNs, and LPNs will help you achieve these goals. Understanding the specific knowledge and skills that these nurses bring to your school team will help you level up your school health services to successfully meet the needs of your students and staff.

References

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²Wang, L.Y., Vernon-Smile, M., Gapinski, M.A., Desisto, M., Maughan, E., & Sheetz, A. (2014). Cost-benefit study of school nursing services. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 168 (7), 642.

³Ohio Board of Nursing. (2022). About Us. <https://nursing.ohio.gov/about-us>

⁴Chapter 4723 - Ohio Revised Code | Ohio Laws. (n.d.). [Codes.ohio.gov. https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/chapter-4723](https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/chapter-4723)

⁵4723 - Ohio Administrative Code | Ohio Laws. (n.d.). [Codes.ohio.gov. https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/4723](https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/4723)

⁶Highly Qualified Teacher Toolkit Including Every Student Succeeds Act "State Certification and Licensure Requirements." (2017). <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Equity/Highly-Qualified-Teacher-HQT-Toolkit/2017-18-HQT-toolkit.pdf.aspx>

⁷Pupil Services Licensure and Registration | Ohio Department of Education. (2023). [Ohio.gov. https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Renew-License/Pupil-Services-Licenses](https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Renew-License/Pupil-Services-Licenses)

⁸Ohio Association of School Nurses. (2019). Health Care Roles in Schools. Retrieved June 15, 2023, from https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/52dbb813-b7ce-4ff0-a99b-3ca1898e0881/UploadedImages/OASN_Roles_2019.pdf

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