



*National
Association of
School Nurses*

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The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of [56.6 million](#) pre-kindergarten, elementary and high school students in the United States and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), we ask that any proposal crafted in the upcoming weeks to help re-open the United State's economy and schools include an expansion of school nurses. School re-entry is crucial for parents to go back to work, and having children at home and out of the classroom has caused undue economic and mental stress for families. Adding additional school nurses to schools across the country provides a key solution to help parents and the economy reopen. There will be multiple challenges for students as they resume in person classes in school year 2020-2021. For schools to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, school nurses need to be in place when schools reopen.

School nurses are frontline healthcare providers who provide disease prevention surveillance and care for students. The presence of school nurses in schools keeps students, health, safe, and available for learning. We know that keeping students in school will have tremendous implications for the economy, workforce, and families.

School nurses serve as the bridge between health care and education systems. Whether they are hired by school districts, health departments, or hospitals, school nurses look after the physical and mental health of students in school. As the current financial recession deepens, there will be less funds for schools to be able to retain a school nurse. Currently, only 39 percent of public schools have a school nurse all day, every day, while another 35 percent of schools have a school nurse who works part time in one or more schools. This leaves 25 percent of schools without a fulltime school nurse. This fall, it is imperative schools have a full-time nurse to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students, especially due to the presence of COVID-19 and the upcoming flu season.

School nurses, as public health sentinels, engage school communities, parents, and healthcare providers to promote wellness and improve health outcomes for children. For many children living in or near poverty, the school nurse may be the only healthcare professional they access regularly. School nurses are essential in infectious disease surveillance, identification and intervention for student physical and mental health concerns, health screenings, school located vaccinations, and immunization compliance efforts.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, school nurses continue working to check in on students with chronic conditions, either by phone or through telehealth; others provide home visits. Some school nurses collaborate with school staff to ensure that children receive needed meals. Other school nurses serve at COVID-19 testing centers and as contact tracers to support local and state public health departments.

As you and your administration consider re-opening the economy, please consider school nurses as a key part of ensuring parents can go back to work, and students can be safe at school. Thank you for your consideration to address the health, safety, and readiness of our nation's children by increasing school nurse positions in U.S. schools.

Sincerely,

Laurie Combe

Laurie Combe, MN, RN, NCSN
President