

Michigan Association of School Nurses MASN

Testimony - March 11, 2009

Presented by

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March 10, 2009

Presented by Stephanie Painter RN, MSN,
President of the Michigan Association of School Nurses (MASN)

My name is Stephanie Painter and I am the current president of the Michigan Association of School Nurses (MASN). On behalf of the MASN, thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns regarding the need for children to receive safe care in the school setting in Michigan.

Children and adolescents deserve safe care in school.

- Students today exhibit an increased number of complex health needs, such as asthma, severe food allergies, diabetes, seizure disorders, sickle cell, cancer and many others. *The attached photos demonstrate the number and variety of types of medications in drawers and cabinets in schools today.*
- New and ever changing technology creates challenges to care for the children at school. *The attached photos illustrate some of the technology that is currently utilized in children.* A few procedures that we could mention would include injections; blood or urine testing; oral, topical, otic, ophthalmic, inhaled and rectal medications; peak flow measurement; nebulizers; catheterizations; tube feedings; ventilators and colostomy care.
- Skills are needed by school personnel to sort the “fakers” from those with actual emergencies and respond appropriately. Children don’t often recognize the warning signs of serious illness or communicate them to adults.
- The current economic challenges impede access to health care for many children and families.

School districts within the State of Michigan address the health and safety needs of children differently.

- Current Michigan laws address the “disease of the month” with the requirement that children “self administer” medications and also release districts from liability.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 creates vague unfunded mandates and lacks accountability for implementation.
- The public health code which is designed to protect the public through the nursing regulations has not been applied to the school setting. A school secretary was even fired for refusing to give Insulin.
- Michigan does not have policies, procedures or minimal standards of care for students with health issues and is ranked 49th in the nation for the school nurse to student ratio.
- Michigan is only one of eight states without a State School Nurse Consultant.
- The current health care provided in many schools is not safe for students.

A first step to address these concerns is to establish a State School Nurse Consultant position within the Michigan Department of Education.

The State School Nurse Consultant's primary role is to:

- Collect and analyze a variety of education and school health data that can ultimately provide a picture of school health in the state. The data includes prevalence of health conditions, health indicators, risk behaviors, emerging trends, as well as patterns of service delivery and effectiveness.
- Provide leadership to develop a plan for state policy, legislation, guidelines, standards, resource management and quality assurance measures to assure that children receive safe care while attending school.
- Develop mechanisms for funding school nurse services.

The State School Nurse Consultants in other states have created revenue for school health services:

- Massachusetts – State School Nurse Consultant collected data through school nurses resulting in \$45,000,000 of Medicaid dollars reimbursed to the cities and towns from the federal government.
- Connecticut – State School Nurse Consultant secured 1 million for the last two consecutive years for school based outreach programs, \$200,000 from HUD to implement lead poisoning training program, \$800,000 from the tobacco dollars to develop K-8 prevention programs and \$50,000 for Safe and Drug Free Schools.
- California – State School Nurse Consultant secured a Coordinated School Health and HIV grant from the CDC.
- Missouri – State School Nurse Consultant secured numerous grants to address health issues impacting learning such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, sickle cell anemia and mental health.
- Maryland – State School Nurse Consultant secured grants for violence prevention, mental health, HIV prevention, nutrition and wellness. The State School Nurse Consultant avoided the need for legislation which would have required additional state funds by developing and implementing guidelines on diabetes management through school nursing programs.

MASN strongly supports safe and appropriate health care for ALL children in the educational setting. We are requesting that language be added to the Department of Education budget establishing the State School Nurse Consultant position.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

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Medications in Schools - 2008



One School



