

School Nurse Year-End Report 2024-25

Highlights, Achievements, and Recommendations

Introduction

Good evening, members of the school board, faculty, and community stakeholders. Thank you for the opportunity to present the annual year-end report on our school nursing program. As we reflect on the 2024–2025 academic year, I am pleased to share our accomplishments, challenges, and goals for the future.

The school nurse plays a vital role in ensuring students' health, safety, and well-being, all of which directly support academic success. This year, our program has worked diligently to meet the complexities of student health in an ever-evolving environment, identifying effective strategies while recognizing areas for improvement.

Overview of School Nurse Responsibilities

School nurses serve as frontline healthcare providers within the school setting. Key responsibilities include:

- Managing chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and allergies
- Administering first aid and emergency care
- Promoting health education and preventive programs
- Ensuring compliance with immunization and state health requirements
- Supporting medication administration, both assisted and independent
- Collaborating with physicians, hospitals, and other providers to maintain continuity of care
- Implementing evidence-based procedures and best practices
- Providing staff training on individualized student Emergency Action Plans
- Establishing communication with parents at the start of the year to secure health care consent and distribute written agreements to appropriate schools
- Educating parents on the role of the school nurse and compliance standards, navigating discussions where long-standing practices may need adjustment

Through these efforts, school health services have gone above and beyond to address the evolving needs of students. Dr. Garner has been a particularly valuable colleague, offering insightful legal expertise and steadfast support in advancing our mission.

Key Highlights from the Year

1. Health Office visits and Health Screenings

With the support of the Preston Lions Club and Brad Wall—both longstanding contributors to student wellness—our schools successfully conducted vision screenings. This initiative resulted in over 48 students being referred for follow-up care, reinforcing our commitment to early detection and intervention.

Health office visits include hundreds of encounters throughout this year. Including non-emergent and emergent needs. These also included parent contacts and follow-ups. My goal was always to keep the kids in school if possible. I may end up with the name “Dream Killer” because back to class many have had to go.

2. Chronic Disease Management

The management of chronic conditions remained a priority, with approximately 35 students supported through individualized care plans, including medication monitoring and emergency interventions. Our diabetes management program directly assisted 10 students with Type 1 diabetes, ensuring they could fully engage in school activities with daily oversight and disease management support.

3. Mental Health Initiatives

Understanding the growing impact of mental health on student success, I collaborated with Sheena Jones and school counselors to address stress, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and other emotional challenges. Together, we identified and responded to several critical mental health needs across the district.

4. Health Education Campaigns

This year, I focused on proactive health education, particularly among elementary students. Hygiene workshops covering handwashing, showering, foot care, oral hygiene, germs, and sleep hygiene reached all students at Pioneer Elementary.

To reinforce these lessons, I challenged students to brush their teeth consistently for one week, offering a reward for participation. Over 175 students completed the challenge, demonstrating improved personal care habits.

Additional health education efforts included initiatives on **Stop the Bleed, Vaping Cessation, Concussion Management, Nephth in Schools, and Narcan Awareness**. I also launched the **Monthly Mindfulness Minute** for all district staff, addressing topics such as resilience, stress management, self-care, mental health, and fostering meaningful relationships.

Challenges Faced

Despite significant progress, certain challenges posed obstacles:

- **Staffing Shortages:** Operating at a **1:2,500 nurse-to-student ratio**, far exceeding the national recommendation of **1:750**, presents limitations in care delivery. Expanding resources is critical.
- **Budgetary Constraints:** Limited funding restricted the ability to enhance services, procure modern health equipment, and hire additional personnel.
- **Standardization Across Schools:** Each school approaches health management differently. Efforts to unify procedures require ongoing collaboration and adaptation.

Recommendations for Improvement

1. Address Staffing Needs

Increasing budget allocations to recruit additional school nurses or health paras would significantly improve care delivery, allowing for better student support and reducing strain on services.

2. Strengthen Community and State Partnerships

Continued collaboration with local clinics, hospitals, and mental health organizations will expand available resources. Engagement with the Idaho Department of Education and Katie Watkins has already contributed valuable funding insights, particularly regarding grant accessibility.

3. Invest in Technological Tools

Modernizing health tracking and communication systems will improve efficiency. I am currently developing the **health component within PowerSchool**, though additional **PowerSchool training** would optimize this effort. Expanding telehealth services could further streamline documentation and enhance communication between families, school personnel, and healthcare providers.

4. Enhance Emergency Preparedness

With an increasing prevalence of emergent health conditions, **staff training in chronic condition management and emergency response** must be prioritized. Topics such as **diabetes care, seizure protocols, anaphylaxis management, CPR, AED training, and allergy response** should be integral to our ongoing professional development efforts.

5. Increasing funding through billable nursing services.

Conclusion

This year, the school nursing program has had a transformative impact on student health and wellness. Despite challenges, our efforts have reinforced the importance of resilience, adaptability, and continuous improvement in health education.

With targeted investments in staffing, partnerships, technology, and training, we can build a stronger foundation for student success—ensuring every child has access to a safe, healthy learning environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions or discussion regarding this report and look forward to continuing our work in student health and wellness.