

# School Health Services

## Introduction

Students who are physically and emotionally healthy are more engaged learners and show higher achievement (grades, test scores, attendance, and graduation). (The Colorado Education Initiative, 2015) The combination of School Nursing and School Based Health Center (SBHC) services increase access to education and healthcare, and improve the education and health outcomes of students. (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation [RWJF], 2010; Bavin, 2012; Bonaiuto, 2007; Van Cura, 2010) School Nurses work within classrooms to manage the daily health needs of students to keep them in school and learning. SBHC, which operate as a separate medical clinic, complements the work of the school nurse, as an onsite referral resource for a variety of clinic medical services. This document outlines the unique roles and services School Nurses and SBHC's provide to schools.

## School Nurses

School Nurses are registered nurses who work within the framework of both education and nursing to provide health services to all students with in public schools. Health services and programing provided by school nurses increase access to education, decreases out of school time for clinic services, and improves academic outcomes for youth. School nurses serve the entire school population through health promotion and disease prevention, and provide case management for chronic and acute student health conditions; provide health education and teaching; coordinate mandated screening including vision and hearing; train teachers and other school personnel; delegate specific nursing tasks to other school personnel; promote school and student safety; provide mental health crisis intervention and resource referral; and advocate for the inclusion of all students in educational programming according to their ability to participate. School nurses are the primary link between educators, families, and primary healthcare providers to improve student health and academic success.

## School-Based Health Centers

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) are public health primary care clinics that are located in a school building or on school campus. They diagnose and treat acute and chronic illnesses and injuries. Other services include: prescriptions, immunizations, well-child checks and sports physicals, as well as health screenings, age appropriate reproductive health services, and promotion of healthy behaviors. SBHCs are staffed by licensed health care providers, which may include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, mental health professionals, and health assistants. SBHCs collaborate with parents, youth advisory councils, local providers and community partners to provide health services that benefit students and the school community. Students and their parents appreciate missing less class time for health care needs. SBHCs bring youth-centered medical care to the school so school nurses and staff can refer students quickly for the care they need, regardless of their ability to pay. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon Health Authority, *School Health Services Flyer*, 2015

	<b>School Nurses</b>	<b>School Based Health Centers<sup>2</sup></b>
<p><b>What School Health Services and Activities are provided? (*=unique to school nurses)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are members of school district educational staff. *</li> <li>• School nurses link educators, families, and health care providers to improve health and promote academic success. *</li> <li>• Provide health and medical services to all students. *</li> <li>• Provides health services and IEP and 504 plan consultations for students with disabilities, who are medically fragile, or medically complex children. (Required per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which ensures students with disabilities receive Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE). IDEA Sec. 300.34(c)(13) *)</li> <li>• Are included in IEP and 504 plan development for individual students. An Individualized Health Plan may be required as part of a student’s IEP or 504 plan. *</li> <li>• Interpret and advise school on health aspects of Federal and State educational rules and laws. *</li> <li>• Decrease school liability by adherence to the Oregon Nurse Practice Act and other community health standards. *</li> <li>• Have access to student education records and are able to interface with school staff regarding student health needs. *</li> <li>• Develop health plans for student care based on the nursing process, which includes assessment, interventions, and identification of outcomes and evaluation of care; *</li> <li>• Provide case management and care coordination during school hours for students with chronic and/or severe health needs such as diabetes, seizures, asthma, allergies, mental health disorders, feeding tube and ventilator dependent children in the school setting. *</li> <li>• Manage school immunization programs. *</li> <li>• Conduct population based health screenings (hearing and vision). *</li> <li>• Provide health consultation, instruction, and promotion for individual students and/or classrooms. *</li> <li>• Advocate for inclusion of all students in school activities according student’s ability to participate. (Field trips, plays, arts, music, extra-curricular) *</li> <li>• Delegates specific nursing tasks to school staff, as delineated by the Oregon Nurse Practice Act. (ORS 851-047-0000) *</li> <li>• Provide training and oversight for school staff who administer student medication, and provide first aid to students. *</li> <li>• Provide health and safety trainings required by law for all school staff. *</li> <li>• Collaborate with partners to bring health insurance, dental care and mental health care to students</li> <li>• Work with occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy (for feeding and swallowing) services as determined by a student’s Individualized Health Plan. *</li> <li>• Advise and coordinate school response to health concerns or outbreaks (lice, scabies, etc.). *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are stand-alone medical clinics/centers within a school setting (often housed in a school or on a school campus).</li> <li>• School board determines restrictions on what health services may not be provided (i.e. sexual health services).</li> <li>• Medical services provided upon parental permission (14 and younger).</li> <li>• Parental permission not required for sexual health services and/or referrals provided.</li> <li>• Perform routine physical exams, sports physicals,</li> <li>• Provide age appropriate reproductive health services and well child care.</li> <li>• Diagnose and treat acute and chronic illness.</li> <li>• Treat minor injuries.</li> <li>• Provide screenings for vision, dental, hearing, blood pressure and body mass index.</li> <li>• Prescribe medications and administer immunizations.</li> <li>• Coordinate referrals to additional providers.</li> <li>• Conduct age appropriate assessments and provide health education, wellness promotion and anticipatory guidance.</li> <li>• Provide mental health assessments and services.</li> <li>• Present to classroom on relevant student health topics.</li> <li>• Coordinate with other primary and specialty care providers to ensure student centered care.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Health Authority, *School Health Services Flyer*, 2015

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in school health committees and efforts (wellness, nutrition, emergency response, etc.).</li> </ul>	
<b>What types of providers furnish these services?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nurses or Nurse Practitioner.</li> <li>School Nurses are registered in Oregon and function within the Oregon Nurse Practice Act Scope of Practice</li> <li>Physician (child's primary care provider) driven services for fragile and complex medical needs students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies from center to center. Under the oversight of a physician, services may be provided by a nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, nurse, and/or qualified mental health professional.</li> </ul>
<b>How much does it cost the school?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of nurse's salary (often determined by teacher salary scale: avg. \$50,000/year plus benefits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost for SBHC vary and can include facilities, staffing and equipment. (Avg. startup cost \$128,250. Avg. annual operation cost \$90,750-152,750)</li> </ul>
<b>How much do services cost for students?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School districts provide school nurse services without charge to students, as part of the student's 'free and appropriate public education'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All services are available to students regardless of their insurance coverage or ability to pay. SBHCs often seek reimbursement from a variety of insurance providers including Medicaid.</li> </ul>
<b>What are the relevant Oregon laws and Rule?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ORS 336.201 includes recommended and required (medically complex and fragile students) ratio of students to school nurse.</li> <li>OAR 581-022 School districts shall maintain a prevention oriented health services program for all students. . .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBHCs are defined in ORS 413.225. Certified School-Based Health Centers meet standards for evidence-based best practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oregon School Fund</li> <li>Complex funding system mandated by federal law (IDEA and 504) in place for special education and students with complex medical needs. Medical services are billable under Medicaid</li> <li>Community driven funding including grants, donations, and in-kind support from hospitals and medical clinics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State funding formula (\$60,000/SBHC)</li> <li>Local funding include: School District, County, community health providers, grants, local fundraising.</li> <li>Reimbursement from a variety of insurance providers including Medicaid.</li> </ul>
<b>Medicaid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the purpose of IDEA, Medicaid is first payer for all covered services under state agency MOU.</li> <li>For medically fragile children and children with complex medical needs nursing services are billed to Medicaid and reimbursed back to district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical services are reimbursable under Medicaid.</li> <li>Payer of last resort for Medicaid</li> </ul>
<b>Privacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Nurses primarily work under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) privacy requirements.</li> <li>Under FERPA, as members of school staff, school nurse can access student records, advise and coordinate aspects of student IEP and 504 plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBHC works exclusively under Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) privacy requirements.</li> <li>SBHC as other community based health clinics and their staff are not allowed to access student educational records or share medical or health record information with school personnel.</li> </ul>

## Referenced Journals

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