



**Ohio Association of School Nurses**  
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#### OASN Position Statement HB 64

- The Ohio Association of School Nurses (OASN) has a mission to promote optimal wellness among Ohio's school children and their communities to support their educational success.
- According to Section 3372.721 (A) lines 23959-64, HB 64 allows schools to contract with hospitals for health care services. This is already occurring in contracts of school districts with Akron Children's Hospital. Akron Children's Hospital has not only employed Licensed School Nurses (LSN) to provide and supervise care, but has encouraged nurses working in schools to obtain that license.
- However Section 3313.721 (B) negates the advanced education and skills of a school nurse as well the Nurse Practice Act by allowing contracted hospitals to ignore the law defining the school nurse and the school nurse wellness coordinator and allowing a "credential equivalent to being licensed as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse". This infringes on the scope of the Ohio Board of Nursing and the Nurse Practice Act ORC 4723. There is no "equivalent credentialing" to practice nursing other than actually being a nurse.
- Licensed School Nurses (LSNs) are registered nurses (RNs), with a baccalaureate degree in nursing or a related field and a license from the Ohio Department of Education. This license is granted after completion of a post baccalaureate school nurse licensure program in school nursing which includes health counseling, drug and alcohol counseling, epidemiology, health teaching, school law and school health services.
- The LSN is an independent practitioner not requiring direction by another health professional. Licensed School Nurses can simultaneously provide independent health care, public health surveillance, contributions to Individual Health Plans, Intervention Assistance Teams for at risk students, Individualized Education Plans, care for illness and injury; administer medication and a myriad of other nursing tasks resulting in better educational outcomes. When school districts contract nursing services with outside agencies for school nurse services they should make sure they are getting the most value for their expenditure by requiring the nurses are Licensed School Nurses. Only in this way can they best meet the health needs of the students and promote academic success.
- Licensed Practical Nurses should never practice in a school without direct supervision of an RN. Ohio Revised Code 4723.01 states that a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) must practice nursing at the direction of a licensed physician, dentist, podiatrist, optometrist, chiropractor, or registered nurse (RN). LPNs have limited education and training in the health care of children, sometimes as little as six hours of clinical experience. Licensed Practical Nurses cannot practice

independently, cannot assess health status and cannot create or change a plan of health care and therefore must be working under the supervision of a doctor or RN in the school setting. Unlicensed assistive personnel have no required education or training in the health care of students and cannot provide health care without supervision by an RN. Allowing a LPN to practice without supervision and in violation of the law can open districts up to liability.

- Recently, there have been some school districts hiring RNs that are not licensed by ODE, LPNs or unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) as “school nurses”. “*School Nurse*” is a title that can only be used by a registered nurse who holds a school nurse license from the ODE. According to the Nurse Practice Act, ORC 4723.03, “No person shall engage in the practice of nursing as a registered nurse, represent the person as being a registered nurse, or use the title “registered nurse,” the initials “R.N.,” for a fee, salary, or other consideration, or as a volunteer, without holding a current, valid license as a registered nurse under this chapter”. Therefore, having UAPs working as a “School Nurse” is practicing nursing without a license. This can also leave districts open to liability.
- There may be confusion between contracting with services for a School Based Health Center as opposed to School Health Services. School based health centers can provide primary care to students but do not replace the need for a school nurse. Health care in schools should be provided by a Licensed School Nurse.
- Exempting hospitals or other health care providers from requirements of nurses to obtain a school nurse license or school nurse wellness coordinator license, as in Section 3313.721 of this bill, sets up a false sense of safety and appropriate health care to parents and the community as to the credentials of the person providing health care at school. Under this provision a person may represent themselves as a school nurse with all the knowledge and skills that entails but actually be a health aide with a HS equivalent and 6 hours of CPR and First Aid training if that.

Schools are the only place where we allow health care for one of our most vulnerable populations, our children, to be provided by anyone, even if they do not have the education or credentials to provide that care. The Ohio Association of School Nurses wants every student in Ohio schools to receive the health care he or she and deserves to be able to learn and succeed in the educational setting.

Amending section 3313.721 (B) to state, “If the board enters into a contract with a hospital or health care provider under division (A) of this section, the requirement to obtain a school nurse license or school nurse wellness coordinator license under section 3319.221 of the Revised Code, or any rules related to this requirement, shall apply to an employee of the hospital or health care provider who is providing the services of a school nurse under that contract. At a minimum, the employee shall hold an RN license and meet the requirements to obtain a School Nurse License from the Ohio Department of Education.”, would allow schools and school districts greater options to provide that care without compromising the health and safety of our future, our children.