



New York State Association of School Nurses

www.nysasn.org

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A Message from your new NYSASN President- Rita Molloy, R. N.

NYSASN is a strong and dynamic force. School Nurses are essential to ensuring that the changing needs of our student populations are recognized and addressed. At times, obstacles present themselves. We are unique professionals in the school environment. While providing health services in an educational setting, our goal to be recognized as the key educational professionals that we are can fall short at times. When our school district's are faced with budget cuts, school nurses are often looked at as a service that can be "reduced" due to the lack of a clear mandate in New York State. NYSASN is working to change this misdirected perception. Our services are mandated and assured to every student who requires skilled nursing services on their IEP's or 504 plans.

NYSASN has made strides in getting out our message, to achieve a clear mandate that would provide for sufficient staffing of school nurses to meet the health and safety needs of our students. I had the opportunity last October to speak to the members of the New York State Council of Educational Associations about the important role that school nurses play in the educational outcomes of our students. The impact of school nurses in the prevention of absenteeism and promotion of wellness was presented to educational experts from all fields throughout NYS. We need to continue to create and give thought provoking presentations. We will continue to seek networking opportunities with educational and political stakeholders, to garner their support. It is important to open the eyes and minds of these audiences, and continue to move forward in achieving our goals.

Perseverance pays off. We are making significant inroads that can pave the way to a statewide mandate for school nurses. The American Academy of Pediatrics had approached NYSASN for input while working on creating a resolution that speaks about school nursing. The AAP has now passed a resolution that states:

" Resolved, that the Academy recommend that every public and private school have a registered professional nurse with a ratio consistent with the National School Nurses Association recommendation."

This is progress, and it may go even further with our continued encouragement to them for their support. This resolution may even be adopted as a policy!



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The Department of Health of the State of New York has contacted NYSASN to nominate a representative of the New York State Association of School Nurses to serve on a statewide Emergency Medical Services for Children Advisory Committee. In their letter of request it is stated that this is being done to satisfy a legislative requirement that they "must appoint a school nurse, an appropriate representative of the New York State Association of School Nurses, to serve on the EMSCAC as outlined by the legislation". We have been named in legislation as a partner in this effort! We are getting there, slowly but surely.

An additional alliance that we have formed is our status as unified member of NASN. This transitional period has had some difficulties, especially in regard to our membership database. Our overtures to NASN to correct these inconsistencies have been responded to with reassurances that they are working diligently to rectify these problems. We will continue to dialogue with NASN about the needs of NYSASN. We remain a separate and distinct organization, and seek to serve our membership and our mission "to advance the practice of school nursing and to enhance the educational success of students by promoting quality health services".

There is more work to be done to realize our goals. We need to continue to network, teach, and demonstrate why our mission is so important. Our mission is about the future of our children, and our children are indeed the future of our nation.

Perseverance is essential to change. Join us in our efforts to work toward changes in school health that can make a world of difference. You make that difference by supporting your professional organizations! Thank you for being a member of NYSASN.