



National Board for Certification of School Nurses

Newsletter

Fall 2010

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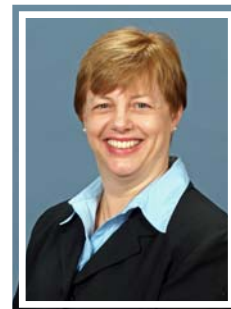
NASN Representative

- ◆ Tia Campbell

REIMINDER

Log onto the Member's section of the NBCSN website. Here you can make changes to your address/email as well as see past editions of the newsletter.

President's Message Promoting the Value of Certification...



Welcome back to school! The fall is considered back to school time for our students, but should also serve as a reminder that we, as nationally certified school nurses, need to return to school for our own continuing education too. A commitment to continuing professional development is only one of the values demonstrated by a Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN) and assures those we serve of our dedication to a high standard of preparation, knowledge, and practice as a school nurse. The credentialing process for national certification as a school nursing (see Table 1: The Credentialing Process for the National Board of Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN)) has been proven to be a comparable structure to the certification process of other professionals employed in the school setting. The credential of the NCSN should be promoted, recognized and supported by all those who benefit from the expertise of a certified school nurse.

In 2006 a study was completed by American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), of which the National Board for Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN) is a member, "to validate nurses' perceptions, values and behaviors related to certification" (ABNS, 2006). The ABNS Value of Certification Survey results are a valuable examination of nursing certification issues from the perspectives of over 11,000 nurse respondents, across 20 specialty nursing certification organizations, representing 36 different certification credentials. This study took an important step in furthering our understanding of nursing certification and the implications for health care organizations, nursing certification boards, and certified and non-certified nurses (ABNS).

The results of this study have important implications for NCSNs:

- Results documented a high level of agreement among certified nurses, non-certified nurses and nurse leaders that certification is greatly valued among nurses. Yet, school nurses continue to face challenges and barriers to obtain and maintain certification. Schools and school districts need to support school nurses by implementing strategies to overcome barriers to certification and offering appropriate incentives and rewards (including financial compensation) for certification. Hiring managers (whether they be non-nursing or school nurse leaders) must support the value of certification and should take responsibility within their

President's Message Continued

schools to encourage certification among school nurses employed by their schools. Support of certification is one component of a multifaceted approach designed to retain a satisfied school nurse workforce.

- This study also demonstrated that national certification as a school nurse persists as a valuable method for nurses to differentiate themselves in the school work setting. NCSNs are recognized as leaders in their schools among other school nurses. These results further indicate that schools need to continue to offer certification incentives to attract and retain professional, certified school nurses to assume leadership responsibilities in their schools and districts. This study also noted that lack of adequate recognition is a prime reason that nurses are not certified.
- The results of this survey validate the meaningful personal reward of professional achievement that can be derived from certification as a school nurse. Being recognized for your commitment to a high national standard of preparation, knowledge, and practice as a school nurse adds to the sense of professional accomplishment in the work we do.

NCSNs need to articulate the value they add to the school nursing services they provide to children and families. NCSNs need to ask their school leaders to promote and recognize certification, including reimbursement for examination and recertification fees and continuing education programs required for national certification; leave time to attend professional conferences and programs for continuing education; displaying certification credentials on nametag and/or business cards; and providing recognition of this achievement among colleagues and other school and community stakeholders.

Challenges and barriers to certification and recertification in the work setting need to be removed. For those school nurses who have never been certified, the highest barriers to obtaining certification are often the cost of the exams, the lack of institutional rewards, and the lack of institutional support. School nurse leaders need to seek to have these rewards implemented and the barriers removed to encourage other school nurses to obtain recognition for upholding the high standards of nursing practice indicated by national certification. NCSNs should receive the same support and recognition that other professionals in their schools receive for national certification in their field. Additionally, NCSNs must seek out and demand that continuing professional development programs for school nurses be of the high quality necessary to meet the requirements to maintain recertification.

NBCSN supports the recognition of NCSNs in a variety of ways. Notification of the certification of a school nurse can be sent to leaders in the community that the NCSN identifies by NBCSN. Materials are available from NBCSN for state liaisons to use to provide recognition of NCSNs at state school nurse conferences and other school nurse activities in their communities. Special recognition awards are given by NBCSN to NCSNs who have promoted certification among school nurses as well as enhanced professional practice in school nursing. An annual NBCSN Liaison award is also given to a state liaison who works to improve the recognition of NCSNs at the state level. Other means to promoting NCSNs among the school community are also available from NBCSN such as shirts, notepads and patches for school nurses that recognize the NCSN in the school setting. (Contact any NBCSN member for more information on these services).



Certification, as defined by the ABNS, is the formal recognition of the specialized knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by the achievement of standards identified by a nursing specialty to promote optimal health outcomes. NCSNs need to increase awareness of the value of school nurse certification to the health care we provide. Stakeholders of school nursing services, including school administrators, school nurse leaders, parents, students and other community members need to be provided with the information that illustrates the value of a NCSN. Schools and school districts where school nurses are employed, as well as state and national school nursing associations which include NCSNs among its members, should provide recognition, incentives and rewards for national certification by offering scholarships and/or reimbursement for both certification and recertification fees. As this new school year

President's Message Continued

begins, we encourage all NCSNs to continue to demonstrate the value of their national certification and to promote its value among all stakeholders.

Written by: Mary Ann Gapinski, NBCSN President

References:

American Board of Nursing Specialties (2006) Issues Findings from the Value of Specialty Nursing Certification Study, Ohio; Retrieved from http://www.nursingcertification.org/pdf/executive_summary.pdf

Table 1. The Credentialing Process for the National Board of Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN)

CATEGORY	National Board for Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN)
Eligible Candidates	Candidates must be licensed as an RN in the state in which they practice, have a bachelors degree in nursing or a health-related specialty. It is recommended that the nurse have three years experience as a school nurse or in a pediatric-related practice.
Certification Areas	Single examination. Candidates are tested in five separate content areas in both public health and primary case management of health issues: Health Appraisal; Health Problems and Nursing Management; Health Promotion, Education and Disease Prevention; Special Health Issue; Professional Nursing Issues. The test includes content for across the span of growth and development among children from Pre-K – 12 grade.
Requirements for Certification	Passage of the certification examination. Passing rate is determined annually based upon psychometric methods. No portfolio required for initial certification; evidence of licensure and employment required.
Timeframe	A different examination is offered twice a year in testing centers across the county. Results are provided following review by psychometricians to establish validity and reliability of all examination questions.
Pass Rates	Approximately 70% of the candidates pass on the first attempt. On average candidates who did not pass retake the examination an additional three times.
Recertification Process	Every five years, the Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN) must develop a portfolio that demonstrates the growth of their professional practice. It must show 75 hrs of continuing professional development which may include continuing education programs approved by the American Nurses Credentialing Center or other recognized providers, other professional development activities such as service on state or national boards, juried journal articles or other publications, presentations given at state or national conferences, and preceptorship of baccalaureate prepared student nurses in a clinical setting.
Role of the Board	The eight members of the NBCSN, along with three expert panels, assist in the development of the test items. Test items are individually reviewed and scored to be sure that they are able to demonstrate competency of school nurses at the “competent” level. The test is also reviewed so that it is carefully aligned to the content areas in each of the five core content areas (e.g., Health Appraisal). Board members take both tests every year as part of this review process. Professional Testing Corporation of New York as the vendor is responsible for management services, test administration and psychometric standards for the examination.
Purpose of examination and recertification criteria	Examination of body of knowledge and critical thinking skills in the area of competent school nursing practice; maintenance of these competencies through continuing professional development.
Fees	\$325.00 for certification by examination \$225.00 for recertification by demonstration of continuing professional development

NBCSN - a sponsor for ABNS Project

The American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) has recognized NBCSN as a project sponsor of its groundbreaking study that seeks to examine the impact of nursing certification on nursing processes and nursing outcomes. NBCSN will receive regular reports on the progress of this research project and will include these reports in future newsletters to our constituency. NBCSN continues to support the nursing specialty research agenda as established by ABNS to demonstrate the value of national certification to our stakeholders.

A Wonderful Article from *The Dispatch*

Here is an article about a wonderful certified school nurse from Mississippi. **Read it** - you will really enjoy the answers she gives to questions asked by her local newspaper. <http://www.cdispatch.com/news/article.asp?aid=7521>

Liaison's Still Needed!

Liaisons are needed in the following states :

Arizona	Arkansas	District of Columbia	Hawaii	Kansas
Indiana	Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine	Missouri
Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	Oregon
Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Dakota	Tennessee	Washington
		Wyoming		

NBCSN Item Review May 1, 2010 New Haven, Connecticut

NBCSN's annual Item Review session was held in New Haven Connecticut in early May. Nurses from the New England states plus a few NBCSN members participated in this day and a half program. Sallyann Henry, Professional Testing Corporation psychometrician, lead everyone in a very intense critical assessment of questions that had been submitted for use in the certification exam. Questions and answers were looked at closely and during the process were kept, rewritten, or eliminated. Everyone attending says that it is a rewarding experience and definitely worth the time and effort to participate.



Back row: left to right - Katie Vozeolas (MA), Ann Bannister (VT), Kary Towne (VT), Beth Ziemba (MA), Karen Jarvis-Vance (MA). Front row: left to right - Carol Costante (MD NBCSN), Mary Ann Gapinski (MA NBCSN), Sallyann Henry (PTC NY), Judy Styer (MA), Nancy Crutchfield (NC NBCSN)

NBCSN Board Meeting Highlights

- The President, Mary Ann Gapinski, reported that NBCSN would continue to hold one Item Review Meeting once a year in the spring, choosing a site that reflects our membership base and represents varied locations throughout the United States.

- The Secretary/Treasurer, Mary Gelfman, gave a very comprehensive financial report explaining fund balances and how they are maintained. Currently NBCSN is financially sound.

- The Vice-President, Nadine Schwab, reported on the up coming Liaison Leadership Summit and steps she is taking to provide liaisons with materials and recruitment tools.

- The newsletter editor, Nancy Crutchfield, reported that the new e-mail format has been successful. E-mail blasts (short messages sent out when needed) have been used to give members important information prior to the NASN conference.

- Nadine Schwab attended the ABNS Spring meeting and was very enthusiastic about the content of the meeting. She considered our attendance very beneficial. This meeting focused on the re-certification process which we will be undergoing in 2013.

- Mary Ann reviewed the new brochure to be used for the certification exam and recertification procedures.

- The new on-line practice test was discussed. Many school nurses have already used the new tool to give them experience in on-line test taking and to give them exposure to the types of questions they might encounter on the exam.

- Recertification issues were discussed; namely those programs attended by NCSNs that do not meet approval for recertification as well as other professional activities such as precepting nursing students (only BSN level or higher are

acceptable for credits toward recertification).

- There has never been an annual report generated by NBCSN. Mary Gelfman offered to write a draft for an annual report that the board can review at the next meeting.

NASN representatives met with the board to discuss issues relating to both organizations' goals and commitments to their individual memberships. Both groups will be cooperatively working toward efforts to enhance membership benefits.

Left to Right, back row: Susan Praeger (OH), Sue Nokleby (MN), Nadine Schwab (CT), Mary Ann Gapinski (MA), and Carol Costante (MD)

Left to Right, front row: Nancy Crutchfield (NC), Mary Gelfman (Public Member), and Joyce Ells (WA)



NASN Connections



(LEFT) Mary Ann Gapinski, President of NBCSN, introduced the members of her board to the assembled members of NASN's board at their board meeting in Chicago. This has been a tradition for many years. It presents new board members to NASN and it enables the president to give an overview of the NBCSN accomplishments during the past year.

(RIGHT) NASN President and President-Elect visited our board meeting to discuss issues that affect both of our memberships. NASN's Vice-President always serves on the NBCSN to bridge our agencies connection.

Sue Marley has been NASN's representative for the past 2 years. Tia Campbell, NASN's new Vice-President will replace Sue at NBCSN's winter board meeting.



lt. to rt. - Linda Davis-Alldritt, NASN President-Elect; Sandi Delack, NASN President; Sue Marley, NASN representative to NBCSN

NBCSN Reception



NBCSN Recognition Award

The *NCSN Recognition Award* is presented to a NCSN who 1) has been nominated by a peer for enhancing competency in school nursing and 2) who has been instrumental in promoting national school nurse certification at the national, state and/or local levels. Nominees must be NCSNs in good standing and currently employed in school health related services. This Award is presented to individuals during the NCSN Reception during the annual NASN Conference.

This year's recipient of the *NCSN Recognition Award* was Pat Krin, MSN, APRN, BC, FNP, NCSN of Thomaston, Connecticut. Pat is a Senior Nurse Administrator in the Newington Public Schools. Pat was nominated by her colleague, Donna Kosiorowski RN MS NCSN, Supervisor of School Health Services in West Haven School District in Connecticut. In her nomination of Pat, Donna states that Pat also works as a member of the Connecticut Cadre of School Nurse Trainers through the Connecticut State Department of Education. Pat serves as a member of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics School Health Committee and serves on the planning committee for the Annual Critical Issues in School Health Conference, sponsored jointly by the Academy and the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut. Pat was twice the recipient of the Academy's School Health Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to the School Health Committee and all the school children of Connecticut. Pat always introduces herself as a nationally certified school nurse and proudly demonstrates what this standard of school nursing practice symbolizes. Throughout her work across the state of Connecticut and nationwide, Pat enthusiastically encourages other school nurses to become nationally certified. Pat characterizes the best of what the NCSN represents. Congratulations to Pat Krin!



Arlene & Carol from Nevada



What has certification meant to you?

Arlene—It has given me self confidence in my practice.

Carol—It has given me professional recognition in my practice.

How many years have you been certified?

Arlene— Two Years.

Carol— Five Years.

Would you recommend certification to other school nurses? Why?

Arlene— Yes. I think it gives you validation of what you know about the practice of school nursing .

Carol— Yes, It lets everyone know that you “know your stuff”. It gives you confidence in your knowledge of your school nursing practice.

Marie & Patty from Massachusetts

What has certification meant to you?

Marie—It has given me a sense of achievement .

Patty—It has given me professional validation and it is important to the parents of the students you serve .

How many years have you been certified?

Marie— Three Years.

Patty— Ten Years.



Would you recommend certification to other school nurses? Why?

Marie— Yes. I think that just the process of preparing for the exam is very beneficial. Also requiring CEU’s from accredited agencies results in a higher quality of continuing education.

Patty— Yes, It gives you added distinction. It is “just important” and gives you the confidence that you have achieved something.

Kristina & Karen from Ohio



What has certification meant to you?

Kristina— The school recognized me because I had a respected credential.

Karen—I am interested in being certified. I think it shows that you have a dedication to the practice of school nursing.

How many years have you been certified?

Kristina— Eight Years.

Karen — Zero Years.

Would you recommend certification to other school nurses? Why?

Kristina— Yes. It forces you to focus on your profession and how you can improve your position in the education environment.

Karen— I would. It shows a higher level of expertise to those you work with.

Talking Points for NBCSN State Liaisons on the Cost of Certification and Recertification

Several state liaisons have brought to the attention of the **National Board for Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN)** concerns from nurses in their state regarding the fees for initial and ongoing certification as a **Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN)**. In order to help state liaisons respond to constituent concerns, we have provided the following talking points:

1. The certification and recertification fees are established by the actual costs of doing business as the NBCSN.
2. NBCSN costs of doing business are associated with:
 - Membership fees in the **American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS)** which is focused on improving patient outcomes and consumer protection by promoting specialty nursing certification.
 - Accreditation fees and ongoing review process through the **Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC)** which is our national credentialing body.
 - Testing services at **Professional Testing Corporation (PTC)**, including test item and examination construction, psychometric analysis, application of psychometric standards, orientation of Board members to test item and examination development, leadership of NBCSN meetings related to item and examination development, and test site coordination.
 - Recertification services, including processing, maintenance and storage of applications for recertification and distribution of them to Board members for review.
 - Management services including notification of applicants regarding examination or recertification application review results, processing member certificates, maintaining the NBCSN website, maintaining NBCSN records related to certification, recertification, examination, Board meetings/business/budget, responding to applicant and NCSN questions, coordination and communication with the Board, and distribution of newsletters and email blasts.
3. NBCSN is a volunteer Board. Board members contribute significant hours (sometimes several days) each month to carry out the professional aspects of the certification and recertification processes. For example:
 - Members of NBCSN establish, clarify, monitor and revise professional standards for certification specific to school nursing;
 - respond to member concerns;
 - review applications for recertification and communicate with applicants as needed;
 - communicate with NCSNs via the web site, periodic newsletters, and email blasts;
 - collaborate with our PTC, ABSNC and ABNS partners to ensure certification and recertification standards in keeping with other professional nursing organizations;
 - participate in test and item development and review; develop guidance, policy and procedures to ensure consistency in NBCSN operations;
 - support efforts within states and organizations to obtain remuneration for school nurses who become NCSNs;
 - support research initiatives to look at student outcomes and the potential difference certified school nurses can make in influencing those outcomes.

The latter list reflects only some of the responsibilities of NBCSN members, all of which are carried out on a volunteer basis. In order to maintain the credentials of both the Board and NCSNs, these activities that the Board engages in are essential. Since Board members are not paid for their time, the fees and costs associated with

(Continued on page 9)

Talking Points for NBCSN State Liaisons on the Cost of Certification and Recertification (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

certification and recertification reflect the costs of conducting the business of the Board. These fees and costs (those that must be paid by NBCSN) will be increased in the coming year (2011) due to an increase in management fees.

4. National certification as a school nurse remains a good buy for nurses. In general, fees for certification and recertification as a NCSN are lower than for other national nursing certification groups.
5. School nurses can pursue remuneration for the cost of recertification through their local employer. Many school districts reimburse for these costs, provide a salary increase or stipend for national certification, or both.
6. Many state and national unions that represent school nurses are adding to their contracts a salary increase for national certification.
7. State Boards of Nursing throughout the country are allowing nationally certified nurses in certain nursing specialties to be re-licensed as a registered nurse without additional continuing education requirements.
8. Some states require the NCSN credential for continued employment as a school nurse and/or licensure as a school nurse within their state.
9. Achievement of national certification demonstrates professional competence in the specialty practice of school nursing. It is a personal and professional accomplishment of which NCSNs can be proud, and is well worth both the cost and

Liaison of the Year Award

The *Liaison of the year Award* is presented to an NBCSN state liaison who, based on submission of annual reports and completion of liaison responsibilities, effectively promotes certification on the state level.

This year's recipient of the *Liaison of the Year Award* was Gerri Harvey, RN, MEd, NCSN. Gerri is the State Liaison for New Hampshire. Among many activities through which she has promoted certification in New Hampshire (NH) and surrounding



states, Gerri initiated a day-long, pre-conference review session to help school nurses prepare for the NBCSN certification exam as part of the annual St. Anselm College Summer Institute. It has been filled to capacity for three years in a row. She also presented to 100 school nurses at the NH School Nurse Association's annual spring conference on the value of becoming nationally certified, and highlighted NCSN certification on the NH website, including a section "Quick Facts about Certification," a link to the NBCSN webpage, and information on how to contact their Liaison. As Gerri was unable to attend the NASN conference and NCSN reception this year, Pam Murphy, the NH representative to the NASN Board accepted the award on her behalf.

Congratulations to Gerri Harvey!

Check out this article from a South Carolina town that informs locals of their new and current NCSNs:

<http://www2.scnow.com/news/2010/sep/02/two-horry-county-nurses-earn-national-school-nurse-ar-780918/>

Liaison Corner

Question & Answer Session

NBCSN decided to hold a Question and Answer session to provide NASN conference attendees with information from the board about certification and the recertification process. It was very well attended (55+). We divided everyone into 2 groups. One group was interested in being certified (about 25) and the other group was interested in the recertification process (about 30). The response was so very good that the Q & A session may also be repeated in the future.



Liaison Meeting



Several State Liaisons attended the Liaison Annual Meeting which is hosted before the NCSN reception each year at the NASN conference. The President of NBCSN, Mary Ann Gapinski, and Vice President, Nadine Schwab, briefly addressed the liaisons, emphasizing the critical role that liaisons can play in promoting national certification in their states. Liaisons contributed ideas, shared experiences, and networked with NBCSN members and each other. The need for more communication with and among liaisons and the possibility of a liaison list-serve were discussed.

Liaison Leadership Summit

NBCSN hosted its first Liaison Leadership Summit that was geared to existing and new NBCSN liaisons. There were 14 liaisons attending representing CA, MI (2), NC, MN (2), OH(2), WV, IA, AK, FL, NJ, and ID. In all, with the NBCSN members, we had 20 participate in this first Liaison Summit. Both presentations were highly rated by attendees. Hopefully, this can be repeated in the future.

Donna Mazyck (top right), past NASN President, was one of the speakers at our first Liaison Leadership Summit. She described her experience deciding to become certified and the challenges she experienced in the process. She outlined many strategies to use in a leadership position.



Denise Wagner (bottom right) Associate Director of Board Services at PTC, was also a speaker for our Liaison Leadership Summit. She gave a very informative overview of what marketing means today. She then outlined what it means to be a liaison and ways to market certification at home. Ms. Wagner's PowerPoint presentation on marketing includes specific strategies that liaisons can use in their states to promote certification and is accessible on the website at <http://www.nbcsn.org/liasons.htm>.



Please contact Denise Wagner at

Attendees: Jane Borr (MI), Julia Lechtenberg (MI), Sharon Yearous (IA), Clementine Buford (NC), Sharon Richardson (WV), Lindsay Minchella (IN), Mary Norton (OH), Arlene Heitt (NV), Candace Hilvers (CA), Jeanne Sedgwick (MN), Cindy Hiltz (MN), Vicki Crump (AR), Diane Mennitt (FL), Amy Billera (NJ)

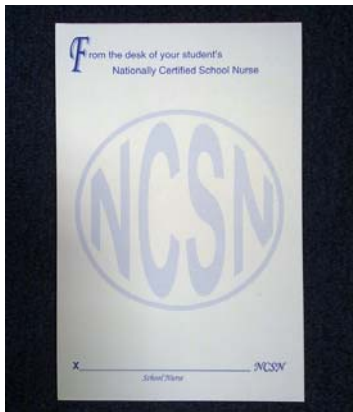
dwagner@ptcny.com for "how to" questions and assistance in obtaining materials for state conferences.

Please contact Nadine Schwab at nschwab@westport.k12.ct.us for general questions about the role of NBCSN state liaisons and related information.

Wear Your Achievement of National Certification with Pride!

SHIRTS:

- Collared, three button, short sleeve shirts
- Available in white or blue
- Embroidered with NCSN Official Trademark Logo
- Fabric is 65% Polyester & 35% Cotton
- Ladies sizes: S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), XL (18-20), XXL (20-22)
- Cost: \$30—includes shipping and handling in the U.S.



NOTEPADS:

- Communicate with parents and other professionals using Notepads displaying your Achievement of National Certification
- "From the desk of your students nationally certified school nurse"
- Cost: 3 notepads (50 sheets each) for \$12—includes shipping and handling in the U.S.

PATCHES:

- 3 10/16 inch square
- Embroidered with NCSN Official Trademark Logo
- Iron On
- Cost: \$5 each or 3 for \$10—includes shipping and handling in U.S.



ORDER FORM

Item	Size/Color	Quantity	Cost	Total
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

GRAND TOTAL \$

Make checks payable to NBCSN

Mail your order form and check to:

NBCSN
Attn: Denise Wagner, MBA
1350 Broadway, 17th Floor
New York NY 10018

Name _____

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City, State, Zip _____