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RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION FOR SCHOOL NURSES AND OTHER SCHOOL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

WHEREAS, the National Board for the Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN) was formed in 1986 as an independently incorporated organization established for the purpose of developing and implementing the voluntary certification of school nurses, called Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN); and

WHEREAS, the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), a nationally recognized accrediting body, granted endorsement to NBCSN in 2008, and ABNS is the standard setting body for specialty nursing certification programs and offers a very stringent and comprehensive accreditation process that meets or exceeds the standards of the certification industry; and

WHEREAS, NBCSN works in close collaboration with the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), the professional association for school nurses; and

WHEREAS, the professional scope and standards of practice for school nurses includes the following comprehensive domains:

Assessment: The school nurse collects comprehensive data pertinent to the child's health or situation.

Diagnosis: The school nurse analyzes the assessment data to determine the diagnosis and issues.

Outcomes Identification: The school nurse identifies expected outcomes for a plan individualized to the client or situation.

Planning: The school nurse develops a plan that prescribes strategies and alternatives to attain expected outcomes.

Implementation: The school nurse implements and documents the identified plan using evidence-based interventions and standard language or recognized terminology.

1. Coordination of care
2. Health teaching and health promotion
3. Consultation

Evaluation: The school nurse evaluates progress towards attainment of outcomes.

Quality of Practice: The school nurse systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of nursing practice.

4. Demonstrates quality by documenting the application of the nursing process in a responsible, accountable and ethical manner.
5. Incorporates new knowledge into practice.
6. Participates in quality improvement practices.
7. Obtains and maintains professional certification.

Education: The school nurse attains knowledge and competency that reflects current nursing practice.

8. Participates in educational activities regularly.
9. Provides continuing education.
10. Seeks experiences that reflect current practice.
11. Uses knowledge and skills appropriate to practice or situation.

Professional Practice Evaluation: The school nurse evaluates one's own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules and regulations.

12. Practice reflects application of current knowledge.

13. Provides care that is age appropriate in a culturally and sensitive manner.
14. Engages in self evaluation on a regular basis.
15. Participates in formal or informal evaluation process or peer review.
Collegiality: The school nurse interacts with and contributes to the professional development of peers and school personnel as colleagues.
16. Shares knowledge and skills and provides feedback with peers and colleagues.
17. Contributes to a supportive and healthy work environment.
18. Participates in appropriate local, state and national professional associations in a membership or leadership capacity.
Collaboration: The school nurse collaborates with the client, the family, school staff and others in the conduct of school nursing practice.
19. Communicates the school nurse's role regarding client care and the delivery of that care.
20. Collaborates in creating documented healthcare plan that is focused on outcomes and decisions related to care and delivery of services.
21. Partners with others to effect positive outcomes or change.
22. Documents referrals, including provisions for continuity of care.
Ethics: The school nurse integrates provisions in all areas of practice
23. Maintains client confidentiality.
24. Serves as a client advocate assisting clients in developing skills for self-advocacy.
25. Seeks available resources to formulate ethical decisions.
26. Practices self-care, managing stress and connecting to self and others.
Research: The school nurse integrates research findings into practice.
27. Utilizes the best available evidence, including research findings to guide practice decisions.
28. Actively participates in research activities:
 - a. Identifies clinical problems specific to research.
 - b. Participates in a formal committee or program.
 - c. Participates or conducts research.
 - d. Contributes to school nursing literature.Resource Utilization: The school nurse considers factors related to safety, effectiveness, cost and impact on practice in the planning and delivery of school nursing services.
29. Evaluates factors such as safety, effectiveness, availability of cost and benefits and impact on practice.
30. Assists the client and family in identifying and securing appropriate

and available services.

31. Delegation of appropriate tasks and assignments.

32. Assists client and school community in becoming informed consumers.

Leadership: The school nurse provides leadership in the professional practice and the profession.

33. Works to create and maintain healthy work environments.

34. Teaches others to proceed by mentoring and other strategies.

35. Willingness to create a culture in which risk taking is not only safe but expected.

36. Serves in key roles in the school and work settings by participating in committees, councils and administrative teams.

Program Management: The school nurse manages school health services.

37. Conducts school health needs assessments to identify current health problems and identify the need for new programs.

38. Develops and implements needed health programs using a program planning process.

39. Develops and implements health policies and procedures.

40. Participates in environmental and health activities; and

WHEREAS, this NCSN certification further validates the school nurse's ability to demonstrate competency at the mastery level and advanced skills that include the ability to:

practice safely, independently and proactively in an isolated, non-healthcare environment;

apply and integrate broad areas of nursing and scientific knowledge, public health principles and legal parameters to school populations;

work with school and community stakeholders to assess, plan and evaluate community interventions for the health problems of school populations, including emergency preparations;

advocate in the school setting for the health and educational needs of all students, including those with physical and mental disabilities;

participate in research, revise and initiate policies that reflect best practices;

utilize resources to become knowledgeable about national standards of practice and emerging issues of concern for the health and welfare of students and staff in the educational arena; and

WHEREAS, the NCSN not only delivers health services to students, but also participates in teaching around a range of issues such as infection control, the health implications of drug, alcohol and tobacco use, sexually transmitted diseases and other topics based on the individual or population-based needs of the students and staff; and

WHEREAS, there are other professionals, such as social workers, advanced practice nurses, counselors, therapists, etc., providing health services in the school setting, who also become certified (or have certification) within their own discipline to increase their professional expertise in child health issues and who have their own unique professional practice standards; and

WHEREAS, like other certified professionals in schools, such as teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, speech and language therapists certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, school psychologists certified by the National Association of School Psychologists, school counselors certified by the National Board for Certified Counselors, and others; school nurses certified by the NBCSN, or with advanced practice certification, are determined to be highly competent by their professional association and should be recognized, rewarded and compensated in the same way for their ability to demonstrate competence at the mastery level of practice; and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers affirm its support of NBCSN certification, as well as other appropriate certifications, as a means of defining, promoting and recognizing high professional standards for school nurses and all school health professionals as a major development in the professionalization of their practice; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and its affiliates encourage and support all school nurses and school health professionals who seek NBCSN certification or other appropriate certifications; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and its affiliates, through legislative action and collective bargaining, work to make the costs of attaining appropriate certifications affordable through reimbursing fees; and

RESOLVED that the AFT and its affiliates support the concept of

negotiating salary differentials for school health professionals who attain advanced levels of education or additional certifications in their field of practice, including school nurses who become NBCSN certified, and that AFT devise and share information on productive collective bargaining and other strategies for doing so; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and its affiliates work to encourage federal and state funding, school finance, and other incentive policies, to enable each school district to have the same means to develop, attract and reward all certified providers of school health services, so that all students and schools benefit from that expertise.

(2010)

Please note that a newer resolution, or portion of a resolution, may have superseded an earlier resolution on the same subject. As a result, with the exception of resolutions adopted at our most recent AFT convention, resolutions do not necessarily reflect current AFT policies.

ABOUT US

[Mission \(/about/mission\)](#)

[AFT Leadership \(/about/leadership\)](#)

[Resolutions \(/about/resolutions\)](#)

[State of the Union \(/about/sotu\)](#)

[Financial Statements \(/about/financial\)](#)

[State and Local Websites \(/about/state-and-local-websites\)](#)

[History \(/about/history\)](#)

[Contact \(/contact\)](#)