



**NBCSN**<sup>TM</sup>

National Board for Certification  
of School Nurses

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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- **MISSION, VISION, AND PURPOSE**

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**NBCSN's mission** is to advance the health and learning of students and wellness of the school community, through a rigorous national certification process for school nurses.

**NBCSN's vision** is that a nationally certified school nurse will safeguard the health of every student so as to optimize learning and promoting healthy communities.

**NBCSN's purposes** are to

1. develop, administer, and evaluate a national certification process for school nurses:
  - a. provide recognition to those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of NBCSN and pass the National Certification Examination for School Nurses by awarding the credential of National Certified School Nurse (NCSN®);
  - b. establish and measure the level of knowledge required for certification in school nursing; and
  - c. provide a standard of requisite knowledge required for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the health profession in the assessment of school nurses;
2. develop and evaluate additional mechanisms for professional competency assessment in school nursing;
3. promote continued professional growth in the practice of school nursing;
4. assist in the enhancement and communication of knowledge concerning professional testing and competency assessment of school nurses; and
5. perform such other functions as may be deemed consistent with the foregoing.

NBCSN is an independent organization; however, NBCSN works in collaboration with the National Association of School Nurses, Inc. (NASN), and communication between the two organizations shall remain a priority.

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- **NCSN SCHOOL NURSE CREDENTIAL**

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NBCSN endorses the concept of voluntary national certification by examination for all school nurses. Professional certification in school nursing provides an ongoing, quality credentialing process for eligible school nurses to earn the NCSN credential. Certification represents a national standard of preparation, knowledge, and practice. To assist with this recognition, NBCSN provides the opportunity for school nurses to set the standards for their specialty area through voluntary professional national certification for the NCSN credential.

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- **ACCREDITATION PROCESS**

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In pursuing the goal of a rigorous application and credentialing process, the NCSN certification program was first granted accreditation by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) in May 2008. In 2009 ABNS created a separate and autonomous accreditation board, ABSNC Accreditation. ABSNC Accreditation status is granted for a period of five (5) years.

The board shall put aside up to \$5,000 in the budget, in years in which the finances allow, to be placed in a board designated fund to be used for board approved activities including, but not limited to reaccreditation.

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- **NON-DISCRIMINATION and ANTI-HATE**

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The National Board for Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN) recognizes diversity as a foundation of strength for our organization and certificants. It is the policy of NBCSN that the Board and any agency with whom it contracts will promote equity, foster inclusion, and value diversity in all forms. We will not discriminate in employment or in application of our certification program based on candidate, stakeholder, or associate culture, race and ethnicity, political views, religious or spiritual beliefs, gender (which NBCSN recognizes as both a spectrum and subjective experience), sexual orientation, abilities, age, social or economic class, veteran status, marital status, parenting status, or language and geographic characteristics. NBCSN will support public and health policies that are in the best interest of students and school communities, and conversely will oppose policies, legislation, and events that do not align with NBCSN values of respect, equity, and inclusion.

NBCSN has a duty to support the health of students, school communities, and school nurses. To that end, NBCSN may alert certificants via email and webpage announcements of the Board's positions on social and political proceedings as well as introduction and/or enactment of legislation that do not align with our values or commitment to non-discrimination and anti-hate.

NBCSN welcomes and honors support and engagement from certificants and stakeholders on how we may grow as an organization to be more aware and accountable professionally and ethically to high standards in the specialty practice of school nursing.

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- **GOVERNANCE**

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A Board consisting of eight (8) voting members and two (2) non-voting members shall manage the affairs of NBCSN. Seven (7) voting members of the Board shall be active NCSNs who are employed in school health services upon their initiation to the Board. One individual shall be appointed to serve as a voting member of the Board of Directors, representing the public as a consumer of school health services. The public member shall be an individual who is not or has never been a (1) nurse or other healthcare professional; (2) a current or past employee of the certifying organization; (3) a non-nursing professional who works or worked closely with nurses in the nursing specialty environment; and (4) an employee of a testing vendor. Designees of organizations that the board has identified as strategically important to NBCSN shall, if approved the Board, serve as non-voting members of the Board. All travel related expenses shall be the responsibility of the designee or their organization. An Executive Director appointed at the sole discretion of the Board shall be a non-voting ex officio member of the Board.

All terms of voting members of the Board shall commence on January 1 following appointment to the Board for a term of three (3) years. A Board member shall be eligible for one additional term of three (3) years.

The President of NBCSN or President's designee shall serve as a liaison to the NASN Board of Directors.

## **BOARD AUTHORITY**

The Board shall have sole authority to establish goals, objectives, programs, and certification procedures to accomplish the mission of NBCSN.

The Board shall

1. monitor and evaluate the programs and certification procedures implemented to establish the goals and objectives;
2. review applications and make recommendations for certification/recertification;
3. ensure that the resources necessary for achievement of goals and responsibilities are available and used efficiently; and
4. establish and maintain current policies and procedures for NBCSN.

NBCSN shall be the sole and exclusive owner of all right, title, and interests related to the creation and/or development of certification materials, test development materials, all items, and forms of the exam, including program materials, data, statistics, and any other materials or work product owned, prepared, or provided to and for NBCSN in its administration of the NCSN exam. NBCSN shall retain ownership over all candidate, certificant, and subject matter expert data. NBCSN shall be responsible for the development, administration, and evaluation of the examination. The Board shall be responsible for the investigation/management of testing irregularities and contingency plans. Eligibility requirements for certification and recertification shall be determined by the Board. NBCSN will work with the testing company in the process of setting passing scores. The Board shall oversee all aspects of the appeals process. The Board shall demonstrate fiscal responsibility and oversee all aspects of budget preparation, approval, and management. Fees shall be set by the Board and reviewed as needed.

### ***Contracts and Agreements***

All NBCSN contracts, agreements, determining contract renewals and/or fees will be evaluated to ensure the best interest of NBCSN in all matters and to discourage individuals from making autonomous decisions on behalf of NBCSN without approval. All employed management staff, Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, Committee members, and/or NBCSN vendors must abide by this policy.

1. The NBCSN Executive Director, President, Secretary-Treasurer and Account Executive will be responsible to receive, evaluate, and negotiate contracts and agreements on behalf of the Board of Directors.
2. If the President, Executive Director, and/or Account Executive believe the contract/agreement is in the best interest of NBCSN, the drafted document will be presented to the Board of Directors via email, conference call, or in-person meeting.
3. The Board of Directors, or voting quorum, will approve the drafted contract/agreement and associated legal fees outlined in step 4. When necessary, an email vote on drafted contract/agreement is acceptable only when all Board members respond to email with recorded vote.
4. The Executive Director will forward the drafted contract/agreement to an NBCSN specified lawyer for review.
5. The Executive Director will be responsible for facilitating edits to the contract/agreement between the lawyer and responsible party.
6. After legal review and acceptance from both responsible parties the final contract/agreement will be co-signed by Executive Director and President. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect may sign. Agreements are required to have both signatures to be considered valid.
7. The Executive Director will be responsible for securing signatures and for filing final copies of all contracts/agreements. Copies of all contracts/agreements will be included as an addendum to the annual budget and available upon request.
8. Final contracts/agreements will be circulated to the Board and housed in an accessible location for future reference.

**Criteria** The following contracts/agreements will fall into the above policy:

- New and/or existing vendor contracts/agreements above **\$5000**

- New and/or existing sponsorship contracts/agreements above \$5000 In cases where there is royalty income involved and/or sliding scale on income the policy will be applied.

The above policy will *not* apply to the following:

- New and/or existing vendor contracts/agreements under \$5000 that have been approved by the Board of Directors as part of a proposal or annual budget.
- New and/or existing sponsorship contracts/agreements above \$5,000 unless otherwise listed below that have been approved by the Board of Directors as part of a proposal or annual budget.
- Hotel/property contracts will be signed by the NBCSN Account Executive only after the Board approves the location and budget of the event.
- Meeting related vendors providing services to include audio visual, decoration, hotel services, and/or non-hotel venues will be signed by the NBCSN Account Executive only after the Board approves the budget of the event.
- NBCSN's Management Company contract will be negotiated by the NBCSN President and President-Elect, and/or Past-President and will determine the need for legal review. The Executive Director will not sign management fee agreement. President will sign the Management Company contract.

## APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS

NBCSN will engage in active succession planning through its state liaison and committee programs, marketing, and other activities to identify, mentor, recruit, nominate, and appoint qualified candidates who have the requisite leadership skills to serve on the Board.

### *Qualifications*

1. Applicants who hold NCSN must be
  - NCSN certified on appointment and throughout tenure and
  - actively employed in school health services (e.g., clinician, practitioner, educator, administrator).
2. All Board members must demonstrate
  - leadership, collaboration, and management skills;
  - commitment to the school-nursing specialty and to professional certification as a means to promote desired student outcomes;
  - understanding of issues related to certification from a global perspective;
  - effective experience serving as a volunteer leader at a national, regional, or local level of any organization; and
  - ability to actively contribute to the work of the Board.
3. Additional required and desired qualifications for Public Member are as follows:
  - views specialty nursing certification as a means for public protection,
  - may have previously served as a public member of other boards,
  - has knowledge of schools (desired), and
  - may not be or ever have been
    - a nurse or other health care professional or
    - a current or past employee of the certifying organization, the related specialty membership organization, or a testing vendor.
4. Competencies that all Board members are required to have and demonstrate are
  - conceptual thinking,
  - customer service orientation
  - flexibility,



- information seeking,
- initiative,
- integrity,
- interpersonal understanding,
- organizational commitment,
- relationship building, and
- teamwork and cooperation.

### ***Board Member Application Requirements***

*(see also: Appointments Process, Step One, below)*

1. A brief one-page letter from the candidate explaining why s/he would like to serve on the NBCSN Board and highlighting any unique skills s/he would bring to the organization
2. Curriculum vitae (resume) with description of activities relevant to leadership, management, certification, test development, service on a board of a non-profit organization, and other accomplishments
3. One letter of recommendation from a colleague or supervisor who has served with the candidate in a leadership capacity, such as a state school nurse organization or another not-for-profit organization, or in the course of the candidate's employment
4. Completed application form

### ***Board Member Appointment Process***

1. A Succession Committee of the Board, appointed by the President, reviews all candidate applications, rates each candidate on a *Candidate Rating Form*, and makes an initial selection of potential candidates based on the ratings. The initial selection of candidates is based on:
  - a. Professional credentials, including NCSN (except that the Public Member may not be a nurse)
  - b. Current employment in school health services (except Public Member)
  - c. Demonstrated leadership, collaboration, and management skills
  - d. Effective leadership as a volunteer on a community or professional board
  - e. Diversity
  - f. Expertise and specific skill set(s) identified as priority needs by the Board at the time of appointment, in such areas as:
    - examination development and psychometrics
    - fiscal accountability, finance, and budgets
    - public relations and marketing, including social networking
    - legal issues, contracts
  - g. Other skills/expertise
  - h. Desirable for Public Member: knowledge of school settings, and pupil support services or special education
2. The Committee interviews the selected candidate(s) by telephone conference call or in person and may recommend one or more of the candidates for review.
  - a. The Committee interviewers use a standard interview format and the same set of questions for each candidate.
  - b. The interviewers rate the candidates with the *Candidate Interview Form*.
3. For those candidates qualifying for consideration, the Executive Director obtains telephone references from the candidates' employer(s) and a written reference from the current president of a local, state, or national volunteer board on which the candidate was an officer or other leader

(e.g., the candidate's state organization of school nurses) or other appropriate person. The Executive Director (or other Board member appointed by the President) completes the telephone interview for each candidate.

4. Candidates who appear eligible for Board membership following review are considered by the full Board and voted on for appointment or nomination to the Board.
  - a. Nomination to the Board means that, by majority vote of the Board, the candidate is determined as eligible for appointment to the Board for up to one year after nomination, subject to a brief review. Nomination to the Board is based on the skill set and competencies of the candidate and ensures that the candidate will be given priority consideration for appointment to the Board should a vacancy occur within a year following nomination.
  - b. Appointment to the Board means that, by majority vote of the Board, the candidate is offered a position on the Board to be filled within six months of the vote of the Board. Appointments to the Board shall be based on the fit between the current needs of the Board and the skill set and competencies of the candidate(s). No appointments shall be made for positions that will not be vacant within six months of the vote to appoint.
5. For nominated candidates: When a vacancy on the Board occurs or will occur in the next six months, the Board will conduct an abbreviated review of any previously nominated candidate(s). An abbreviated review may include:
  - a. a brief re-interview to ascertain any changes in the candidate's availability or interest, employer's support, change in employer, skill set, and competencies;
  - b. an additional telephone reference, if requested by the Committee; and
  - c. other relevant information that has come to the attention of the Board since nomination of the candidate.

### ***Board Meetings***

The Board shall meet in person at least once each year and may hold additional meetings. All notification of meetings shall be issued to members of the Board thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting unless such notice is waived by a quorum. Monthly tele-meetings shall be scheduled on an annual basis by the President.

Minutes from each Board meeting shall be distributed within one month. Approval of minutes will occur within one month of distribution based on a call to meeting by the NBCSN President.

### ***Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members***

1. Attend and participate in Board meetings and complete assigned activities in a timely manner.
2. Establish goals, objectives, programs, and certification/recertification procedures to accomplish the mission of NBCSN.
3. Monitor and evaluate the programs and certification procedures designed to advance the established goals and objectives.
4. Provide oversight of the initial application and recertification process.
5. Approve the annual budget and supervise other financial affairs as necessary.
6. Review and revise the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures as needed, at least every three (3) years to ensure they reflect current practice.
7. Hire and evaluate annually the Executive Director. Perform annual review of the management company.
8. Participate in the development and maintenance of the certification process, which may include item writing, Item review, form review of proposed versions of the exam, and problem item notification (PIN) unless that board member is involved in test preparation activities.
9. Establish exam cut scores based on Exam Committee recommendations.
10. Promote the value of NCSN certification.

## ***Duties and Responsibilities of Public (Consumer) Members of the Board***

1. Perform all the duties and responsibilities of the Board members as described above, with the exception of participation test development activities.
2. Be eligible to hold any office of the Board, with the exception of President or President-elect.

## **OFFICERS**

There shall be three officers of the corporation who are elected from among the members of the Board: President, President-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer. The President and President-Elect shall each serve a one-year term. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve a two-year term. The Secretary-Treasurer is eligible for re-election to one additional two-year term, provided his/her Board eligibility on NBCSN has not expired.

## ***Duties and Responsibilities of Officers***

### **PRESIDENT**

The President shall

1. Schedule and convene meetings each year to conduct the business of the organization;
2. Ensure development of and approve an agenda for each meeting of the board;
3. Preside at all meetings of the Board and call such other meetings as necessary according to NBCSN Bylaws;
4. Mentor the President-Elect and delegate duties to the extent possible;
5. Appoint committee chairs, special committees, and task forces as necessary, subject to approval of the Board of Directors;
6. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees and task forces;
7. Represent the NBCSN at all official functions or meetings of other groups, including NASN, or designate the President-Elect, Executive Director, or other member of the Board;
8. Initiate and participate in communications and meetings with Board members and appropriate representatives of the management and testing companies involving policy and strategic decision-making;
9. Accept appeals submitted in writing to the President for denial of certification or recertification and forward such appeals to the Appeals Committee
10. Designate a recipient of the President's Appreciation Award and approve recommendations for the NCSN of the Year and Liaison of the Year awards;
11. Designate Board members to serve on the Succession Committee;
12. Prepare the annual budget with the Secretary-Treasurer for review at the annual meeting and approval by Board meeting in December; and
13. Perform such other duties as may be requested or directed by the Board.

### **PRESIDENT-ELECT**

The President-elect shall

1. Expect to assume the position of President when it is indicated;
2. Work collaboratively with the President to help govern the Board;
3. Assume the duties of the President in the President's absence;
4. Complete the term of the President in the event the President is unable to complete his/her term;
5. Monitor for consistent progress of strategic goals;
6. Serve as the chair of the Succession Committee
7. Respond to requests for assistance from the ED and staff, provide direction regarding questions related to eligibility, required documentation, a candidate's credentials, or other related questions, and communicate a decision to the ED, staff member, or candidate as indicated by the issue and circumstances;

8. Review applications for the NCSN of the Year award and recommend to the President a recipient of the award;
9. Perform such other duties as may be requested or directed by the Board.

## **SECRETARY-TREASURER**

The Secretary-Treasurer shall

1. Record, maintain, and distribute to Board members for approval minutes of NBCSN's meetings;
2. Assume other responsibilities as assigned by the President;
3. Monitor the general financial affairs, including investments;
4. Collaborate with management company staff to prepare an annual budget for Board review and approval at the annual meeting in December;
5. Facilitate an audit of all financial accounts every five (5) years and at other times when requested by the Board;
6. Review monthly financial reports from the management company;
7. Approve the management company's monthly invoice for payment;
8. approve non contractual expenditures over \$5,000;
9. Chair the Finance Committee; and
10. Assume other responsibilities as assigned by the President.

## ***Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Director***

The Executive Director takes direction from the President of the Board and is responsible for providing leadership, planning, and management services as follows:

1. Participate with the Board of Directors in developing a vision and strategic plan to guide the organization.
2. Identify, assess, and inform the Board of Directors of internal and external issues that affect the organization and resources that may assist it in accomplishing its strategic plan.
3. Act as a professional advisor to the Board of Directors in relation to the business and activities of the organization.
4. Foster effective teamwork between the Board, the management company, and the Executive Director.
5. Act as a spokesperson for the organization as appropriate.
6. Conduct official correspondence on behalf of the Board as appropriate.
7. Respond to the ever-changing needs of the organization and assume responsibilities that come with these changes.
8. Develop, in collaboration with the President and other members of the Board, an annual operational plan that directs the activities of the Board, management company, and Executive Director toward achievement of its the strategic plan.
9. Collaborate and coordinate activities with the management company and the Board to ensure that the operation of the organization meets the expectation of its stakeholders.
10. Serve as the primary communication link between the Board and the management company.
11. Review an annual audit report of the examination audit process from the management company.
12. Draft policies for the approval of the Board and prepare procedures to implement the organizational policies; assist the Board in reviewing its Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Manual at a minimum of every three (3) years; and recommend changes to the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Manual as appropriate.
13. Finalize changes to the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Manual when approved by the Board and maintain current copies in Dropbox.

14. Inform the management company regarding all changes to the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Manual, ensuring that changes are reflected in contents of the website and in staff handling of NBCSN business.
15. Organize, maintain, and update the contents of Dropbox and work with the management company to ensure a system for archiving NBCSN records, including minutes and written communications.
16. Ensure an annual review of website content in collaboration with Board members and the management company.
17. Provide support to the officers of the Board to assist them in carrying out the responsibilities of their jobs.
18. Provide support to the committee chairs to assist them in carrying out the responsibilities of their jobs.
19. Provide support to all Board members as needed and appropriate.
20. Serve as contact with accreditation agency for all required communications and reports, including the reaccreditation application.
21. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
22. Prepare the annual budget with the Secretary-Treasurer for review at the annual meeting and approval by Board meeting in December.

A performance evaluation for the Executive Director shall be administered by the Board on an annual basis, as provided in this policy, the responsibilities of which shall include the following:

1. Management of issues related to performance assessment
2. Determination of compensation based on available evaluation and comparability data.
3. Development and negotiation of the Executive Director's contract.
4. Disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest in connection with all decisions regarding the Executive Director's evaluation and compensation.

In conjunction with the annual performance assessment, the Executive Director and the Executive Committee or Board Officers will agree on measurable performance objectives. Objectives will be presented and discussed during the evaluation process, and finalized within one (1) month following the evaluation. If time is required to formalize the objectives further (i.e., they are based on preceding plans that have not yet taken place), the objectives will be clarified and expressed in measurable terms no later than the second official Board of Directors meeting. Performance objectives will be consistent with the mission and the strategic objectives outlined by NBCSN.

NBCSN will collaborate to develop a written evaluation of the Executive Director's annual performance according to the following guidelines:

1. The performance assessment will be based on (1) the Executive Director's performance of responsibilities listed in the Executive Director's job description, and (2) the performance objectives agreed upon at the beginning of the evaluation year by the Executive Director and NBCSN.
2. The performance assessment process will allow all members of NBCSN the opportunity to provide feedback on the Executive Director's performance of responsibilities and achievement of objectives. A standardized tool for collecting this input will be determined at the beginning of each evaluation year (60 days prior to evaluation discussion).
3. The NBCSN evaluation team (President, President-Elect, and one senior board member) will meet with the Executive Director annually to present and discuss the evaluation and develop objectives for the upcoming year.

4. NBCSN may meet with the Executive Director mid-year to review the progression of objectives and goals.

NBCSN is authorized to renew the Executive Director's employment contract in a manner consistent with the long-term goals of the organization. A decision to either terminate or not renew the employment contract of the Executive Director must be approved by a majority vote of the entire Board of Directors.

All Executive Director compensation determinations shall include and be consistent with comparability data, shall be voted on by NCSN at an executive session meeting or conference call, and shall be reported and substantiated in the minutes of such meeting.

All records pertaining to the Executive Director Performance Assessment will be stored in the confidential files of the person responsible for performing Human Resources functions at the management company. HR Department will provide copies of documents as requested by the President. Records include the following items:

1. Signed copy of the final Executive Director Performance Assessment
2. Signed compensation document
3. Minutes from compensation discussions of the Board of Directors.

A timeline for conducting the evaluation will be prepared jointly by the Executive Director and the President, allocating adequate time for the following:

1. Directors to respond to request for input into the Executive Director's performance
2. Executive Director to complete a self-evaluation
3. NCSN to discuss, complete, and review the final evaluation documents
4. Meeting of the Board of Directors to make determinations with respect to the performance and compensation.

## STANDING COMMITTEES, SPECIAL COMMITTEES, AND TASK FORCES

### *Standing Committees*

NBCSN shall have eight(8) Standing Committees: Finance Committee, Examination Committee, Outreach Committee, Recertification Committee, Succession Committee, Quality Assurance, Eligibility Audit Committee and Appeals Committee.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

1. *Composition and Term:*
  - a. There shall be an NCSN Finance Committee, which shall be composed of the Secretary-Treasurer, one (1) additional Board member, and two (2) qualified non-Board members appointed by the President.
  - b. Finance Committee members shall serve a two-year (2) term.
  - c. The Finance Committee shall be chaired by the Secretary-Treasurer.
2. *The **Finance Committee** responsibilities are:*
  - a. Review current budget performance as needed;
  - b. Review monthly financial statements;

- c. Review the annual budget (drafted and proposed by the Secretary-Treasurer) for the upcoming fiscal year and make revisions (as needed) before presenting it to the Board for approval at the Fall Board meeting;
  - d. Interface electronically, via conference call(s), and/or face to face before the annual meeting to finalize the proposed budget and investment recommendations; and
  - e. Present the recommended annual budget to voting Board members for approval each year during the annual meeting.
3. *The **Finance Committee Chair (Secretary-Treasurer)** responsibilities are:*
- a. Preside at all Finance Committee meetings;
  - b. Prepare and forward written reports of all meetings and communications to Board members;
  - c. Work with the NBCSN President, Executive Director, and management company on strategic investment strategies as needed;
  - d. Consult with the President and Executive Director on and monitor all major expenditures for NBCSN throughout the year;
  - e. Consult annually with the President, Executive Director, and investment counselor regarding investments;
  - f. Throughout the calendar year, review the budget with the President and Executive Director and share this information with voting members of the Board.

## EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

1. *Composition and Term:*
- a. There shall be an NBCSN Examination Committee, which shall be composed of a current Board member and non-Board member NCSNs appointed by the President.
  - c. Examination Committee members shall serve a two-year (2) term coinciding with the board member's term on the Board. The President shall appoint the Chair of the Examination Committee.
2. *The **Examination Committee** responsibilities are:*
- a. Review exam form performance as needed;
  - b. Oversee subject matter experts (SMEs) volunteer selection process and procedures with the aim that SMEs ensure representation of NCSNs with diversity in experience years, certification years, service to NCSN, geographic area, race/ethnicity, position in school health, and school population served
  - c. Select and present SMEs for all volunteer exam activities (item writing, item review, form review, and problem item analysis) to the Board for review and approval;
  - d. Oversee process and procedure for SME evaluation; and
  - e. In consultation with the President, Executive Director, and management company, present recommended examination activities, and testing window dates to the board for approval.
3. *The **Examination Committee Chair** responsibilities are:*
- a. Preside at all Examination Committee meetings; may or may not include Standard Setting, Item Writing, Item Analysis, and Pin Calls
  - b. Prepare and forward written reports of all meetings and communications to Board members; and;
  - c. Throughout the calendar year, review strategic exam activities with the President and Executive Director and share this information with voting members of the Board.

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### 1. *Composition and Term:*

- a. There shall be an NBCSN Outreach Committee, which shall be composed of two current Board members and non-Board member NCSNs appointed by the President.
- b. Outreach Committee members shall serve a two-year (2) term.
- c. The President shall appoint the Chair of the Outreach Committee.

### 2. *The Outreach Committee responsibilities are:*

- a. Assist the chair in overseeing the Liaison program
- b. Assist the chair in determining the Liaison of the Year.
- c. Assist the chairs in monitoring the Liaison listserve.

### 3. *The **Outreach Committee Chair** responsibilities are:*

- a. Coordinate the liaison program;
  - i. Serve as NBCSN state liaison coordinator;
  - ii. Solicit liaisons to represent NBCSN in all geographic areas
  - iii. Chair the Liaison of the Year Committee;
  - iv. Review candidates for the Liaison of the Year award and make recommendations to the President;
  - v. Collaborate with the Executive Director and management company administrative staff to maintain a current state liaison list;
  - vi. Maintain communication with state liaisons to support and promote certification efforts within their states;
  - vii. Send to the liaisons names and contact information of new NCSNs in their states after testing periods;
  - viii. Ensure that the annual liaison report is distributed, summarizing key points;
  - ix. Submit liaison activity summary report to the Board;
  - x. Coordinate the annual meeting of liaisons;
  - xi. Coordinate the liaison listserv;
  - xii. Assume such other duties as designated by the President or the Board;
- b. Collaborate with the ED to coordinate the marketing program to;
  - i. Submit periodic news blasts;
  - ii. Support and direct Board in implementing its strategic communications plan; and
  - iii. Provide other support and services as needed.

## RECERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

### 1. *Composition and Term:*

- a. There shall be an NBCSN Recertification Committee, which shall be composed of a current Board member and non-Board member NCSNs appointed by the President.
- b. Recertification Committee members shall serve a two-year (2) term. (These members may be auditors.)
- c. The President shall appoint the Chair of the Recertification Committee.

### 2. *The **Recertification Committee** responsibilities are:*

- a. Perform audits as assigned
- b. Periodically prepare written reports for the BOD on activities

### 3. *The **Recertification Chair** responsibilities are:*

- a. Oversee general recertification issues



- b. Assign certificant audits to audit committee members;
- c. Maintain excel audit assignment record;
- d. Perform secondary audits as needed
- e. Follow up with management staff and audit committee members in regard to current audits;
- f. Review current approved courses annually; and
- g. Review website content annually.

## SUCCESSION COMMITTEE

### 1. *Composition and Term:*

- a. There shall be an NBCSN Succession Committee, which shall be composed of current board and non-board NCSNs appointed by the President.
- b. Succession Committee members shall serve a two year term.
- c. The President-Elect shall be the chair of the Succession Committee

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3.

### 4. *The **Succession Committee** responsibilities are:*

- a. The committee will engage in active succession planning through its state liaison and committee programs, marketing, and other activities to identify, mentor, recruit, nominate and appoint qualified candidates who have the requisite leadership skills to serve on the Board.
- b. The committee will focus on priority needs as identified by the board to determine expertise and specific skill set(s) of candidates.
- c. The committee reviews all candidate applications, rates each candidate on a Candidate Rating Form, and makes an initial selection of potential candidates based on the ratings.
- d. The committee interviews the selected candidate(s) by telephone conference call or in-person and may recommend one or more of the candidates for further consideration.
- e. These candidates are considered by the full Board and voted on for appointment or nomination to the Board.
- f. When a vacancy on the Board occurs or will occur in the next three months, the Board will conduct an abbreviated review of any previously nominated candidate(s).
- g. The committee keeps additional candidate names and information for future consideration.
- h. The committee reviews and recommends to the board an appropriate welcome and orientation process for new board members.

### The **Succession Committee Chair** responsibilities are:

- a. Preside at all succession committee meetings.
- b. Prepare and forward written reports of all meetings and communications to board members.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

### 1. *Composition and Term:*

- a. There shall be an NBCSN Quality Assurance Committee, which shall be composed of a current Board member and non-Board member NCSNs appointed by the President.
- b. Quality Assurance Committee members shall serve a two-year (2) term.
- c. The President shall appoint the Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee.

### 2. *The **Quality Assurance Committee** responsibilities are:*

- a. Development and maintenance of a policy tracker
  - b. Perform periodic review of NBCSN Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, and website
  - c. Assure compliance with ABSNC Standards
  - d. Advise board of directors on possible improvement initiatives
3. *The **Quality Assurance Committee Chair** responsibilities are:*
- a. Provide leadership for and oversight of Quality Assurance activities
  - b. Form a committee to complete a general review of the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures at a minimum of every three years, and make recommendations for revisions to the Board for approval

## ELIGIBILITY AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. *Composition and Term:*
- a. There shall be an NBCSN Eligibility Audit Committee, which shall be composed of the Executive Director and management company staff
  - b. The term shall be the duration of employment
  - c. The Eligibility Audit shall be chaired by the Executive Director.
2. *The **Eligibility Audit Committee** responsibilities are:*
- a. Review exam application audits as indicated by the applications software or other applications which may come into question
  - b. Contact applicants whose applications do not meet required eligibility guidelines for additional information
  - c. Review provided additional information and determine eligibility to sit for the exam based on current eligibility requirements
  - d. Complete the audit and notify the applicant using the application software.
3. *The **Eligibility Audit Committee Chair** responsibilities are:*
- a. Review applications as needed
  - b. Confer with other staff to answer questions as needed

## APPEALS COMMITTEE

1. *Composition and Term:*
- a. There shall be an NBCSN Appeals Committee, which shall be composed of the President, President-Elect, and additional senior board member, appointed by the President.
  - b. Appeals Committee members shall serve a one-year (1) term.
  - c. The Appeals Committee shall be chaired by the President
  - d. The Executive Director and Account Manager are non-voting members and will provide background information related to specific appeals, as needed
2. *The **Appeals Committee** responsibilities are:*
- a. Review written eligibility, recertification, credential revocation and other appeals as presented
  - b. Determine a decision regarding the appeal
  - c. All decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.
3. *The **Appeals Committee Chair** responsibilities are:*

- a. Preside at all Appeals Committee meetings
- b. Prepare and forward written reports of all meetings and communications to the Board
- c. Notify the appellant of the committee decision in writing within 30 days

### ***Other Committees, Special Committees, and Task Forces***

From time to time, the NBCSN President may appoint individuals, including Board members, state liaisons, and other NCSNs, to serve on committees or task forces. The purpose, time frame, and expected outcomes of a committee or task force shall be spelled out at the time it is established. Members to serve on the committee or task force are selected in accordance with their credentials and expertise specific to the work of the committee or task force.

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- **STATE LIAISON PROGRAM**

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The purpose of NBCSN's state liaison program is to promote certification at the affiliate level. The role of a state liaison is to serve as a resource for information on certification, promote the value of the credential, and maintain communication between state school nurses and NBCSN.

### **STATE LIAISON QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Be an active NCSN working in the state.
2. Demonstrate interest in promoting certification.
3. Commit to fulfill the responsibilities of a liaison.
4. Submit an application to the Outreach Committee Chair.

### **STATE LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Respond to all communication from NBCSN in a timely manner.
2. Develop and implement activities to promote certification.
3. Promote and distribute information about certification at state and regional school nurse meetings.
4. Submit annual report of activities to the NBCSN Outreach Committee Chair by April 15.
5. Complete online liaison training.

### **STATE LIAISON APPLICATION**

1. NCSNs wishing to become a liaison must submit an application to the Outreach Committee Chair of NBCSN. The Outreach Committee Chair, in consultation with the President, shall approve all liaison appointments.
2. Appointments are for a term of two (2) years, with re-appointment. No more than two (2) liaisons shall be appointed for each state. The Outreach Committee Chair may remove liaisons who fail to fulfill the responsibilities of the position from the liaison position.

### **GUIDELINES FOR LIAISON SUPPORT TO PROMOTE CERTIFICATION**

1. Attendance at State School Nurse Conference:

- a. NBCSN will provide display and items such as NCSN ribbons and print materials for distribution for promotional purposes at state and regional meetings.
  - b. NBCSN will provide up to \$150 per conference for non-profit vendor/exhibit space.
    - i. Exhibit space costing more than \$150 must be approved in advance by the Outreach Committee Chair.
    - ii. All requests for the vendor/exhibit fee must be received at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting.
    - iii. Vendor/exhibit fees will be paid directly to the Conference Treasurer by the NBCSN Administrative Assistant.
    - iv. Request forms must be completed and sent to the NBCSN Administrative Assistant at the management company.
  - c. NBCSN will award an honorarium of \$100 for providing and attending the NBCSN booth during scheduled vendor/exhibit times.
    - i. All NBCSN materials, including the tabletop display and unused promotional items, must be returned in a timely manner before payment of the honorarium will be made.
    - ii. Before the honorarium will be sent, liaisons are required to submit documentation related to vendor's fees and exhibit attendance, including a sign-in sheet for visitors to the booth, to NBCSN no later than 45 days after the date of the school nurse event.
    - iii. Late requests (beyond 60 days) for honorariums must be submitted to the NBCSN Outreach Committee Chair for determination of payment.
    - iv. No other expenses, such as travel, lodging, meals, conference registration, and supplies, will be reimbursed.
2. Provision of an electronic liaison tool kit to be given to the liaison upon appointment as State Liaison. Included in the tool kit:
- a. Presentation/welcome letter
  - b. Policy & Procedure
  - c. Liaison contact sheet
  - d. State listing of NCSNs
  - e. Other items as determined

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- **CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION**

The Certification Examination for School Nurses is prepared by NBCSN in consultation with a professional testing organization using industry methods and standards to develop a valid and reliable measure of school nursing knowledge. NCSN Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in school nursing develop test items. A different group of SMEs will validate the examination questions. A psychometrician ensures that each form of the examination is comparable to others in terms of content and level of difficulty. Test data and exam content are reviewed and analyzed annually. The examination covers the following content areas:

1. Health Appraisal
2. Health Problems and Nursing Management
3. Health Promotion/Disease Prevention
4. Special Health Issues
5. Professional Issues

The NBCSN test vendor uses an industry-leading detection system, with both network-based and host-based monitors, on networks to monitor for suspicious activity. The system is professionally monitored 24x7x365 and provides the capability to identify and automatically block potentially malicious activity.

## ROLE DELINEATION

NBCSN shall conduct a role delineation study of school nurses no less than every 5 years. The role delineation will be used to set the weighting of the exam content areas and to ensure that the examinations are current and representative of the skills, professional attitudes, and knowledge needed to function as a school nurse.

## EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

NBCSN determines the content of each certification examination through an ongoing process of evaluation. The Board relies on numerous SMEs for test development and validation. The SME must be currently practicing as a school nurse and hold the NCSN credential. Additionally, SMEs will be selected keeping in mind the various components of the test content outline in order to ensure that a broad representation of the profession is maintained with regard to number of years as an NCSN, geographic diversity, length of time in the profession, and school setting diversity. US Census Bureau categories for race and ethnicity will be used for expert panel applications. SMEs continually provide updated items for the item bank based on current practices in the field of school nursing and assist in the review and editing of submitted items. Generally, once a year, the Board schedules a formal item review of all newly submitted exam questions and a committee of SMEs is convened to perform the review. The Chair of the Exam Committee or designee and one additional member of the Board participate in item review sessions.

All SMEs who participate in item writing and item review activities sign an ethics statement similar to the one that Board members sign to ensure confidentiality and integrity of the examination. SMEs who participate in any portion of item writing and/or item review activities may not take the NBCSN examination nor recertify by exam for a period of three (3) years following the last date in their role as SME for NBCSN.

The Board works with a testing firm for its examination development to ensure accuracy, relevancy, and validity. A specialist from the testing firm, relying on the test content outline and weighting methods, assembles a draft of each form of the examination, taking into consideration the history of each item's use, past statistics, equivalency to past forms of the examination, and the comments of previous candidates to specific items.

No form of an examination may remain in active use for more than one (1) test period. Three (3) separate versions of the exam are approved each year by the Board after review of content, individual test items, test item aggregated data, and demographic data obtained from previous year's tests. The passing score will be established after each exam is administered and results are reviewed. Each version of the exam is administered only once unless the Board grants approval for an additional administration based on extenuating circumstances.

## QUESTION FORMAT

All 200 questions on the examination are presented in a multiple-choice format, with four (4) answers presented. Only one (1) answer is correct or considered the best. Sample questions can be found in the [Handbook for Candidates](#). One hundred seventy-five (175) questions are items that have already been tested and contribute to the candidate's score on the exam; 25 new items are included to test them for reliability and do not contribute to the candidate's score.

## EXAMINATION FORMAT

The examination is administered in a computer-based format at hundreds of testing centers throughout the United States. A candidate may schedule an appointment to take the examination during a two- (2) or three-week (3) window, established three (3) times per year: first during the early spring, second in the summer, and third in the fall. This method of delivery provides candidates the flexibility to schedule their appointment in keeping with their schedules. Candidates may also reschedule their testing appointment within the two- or three-week window, as needed.

## ITEM SELECTION AND EXAMINATION VALIDITY

NBCSN is committed to maintaining the services of psychometricians to continuously monitor the testing program to ensure it is based on the highest quality of security and test development procedures. NBCSN shall maintain a list of the qualifications, identities, and demographic data of those persons who participate in item development, examination development, setting the passing score, and the statistical analyses of the test items and of the full examination.

NBCSN shall ensure that all content of the examination is assessed in a reliable manner and that the validity of the examination is maintained. NBCSN shall maintain evidence of equivalence among examination forms.

## CONTENT VALIDITY BIAS AND ADHERENCE TO EXTERNAL MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

NBCSN strives to ensure that issues of bias and sensitivity related to characteristics that have no bearing on the competencies being measured, such as ethnic background, race, religion, gender, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, economic status, and any other concerns unrelated to ability, are addressed in its exams and recertification procedures. This policy shall be published on the NBCSN website and in its examination and recertification brochures.

The Board accomplishes this by

1. selecting SMEs who conduct item reviews to represent a broad spectrum of the profession and holding item review workshops in various geographic locations around the country or remotely;
2. using content experts to review new examination questions to ensure that each question is clear, succinct, appropriate, and free from bias;
3. selecting SMEs who review each new examination to represent a broad spectrum of the profession and various geographic locations to ensure that the questions and overall examination are reviewed with sensitivity and are free from bias;
4. reviewing statistics from every examination no less than once a year, including the responses to questions on gender, ethnicity, and geographic location, to ensure that the overall examination is free from bias;
5. reviewing client feedback and complaints from each examination related to examination procedures, testing environment, and examination questions no less than once a year;
6. reviewing the management company's biannual report on applications for recertification for potential issues related to sensitivity or bias; and
7. considering sensitivity and potential bias in developing and revising NBCSN's published materials.

If a concern is identified, it becomes an action item to be addressed by the Board at that time, or a task force is assigned to address the issue or problem.

NBCSN, through the testing company, shall administer its certification program in accordance with standards established by the National Council on Measurement Education, the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and with full consideration of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. NBCSN shall revise its examinations as needed to be in compliance with changes in the *Standards for Education and Psychological Testing*, standards of *Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification*, and federal requirements.

## ELIGIBILITY

Certification represents a national standard of preparation, knowledge, and practice. School nursing is an independent practice requiring acute assessment skills. Therefore, NBCSN certifies only registered nurse (RN) candidates. NBCSN believes that educational preparation at the bachelors or higher degree provides the necessary foundation for a school nurse to achieve and maintain competence as an NCSN. Clinical experience in the field of school nursing assists in preparing candidates to develop the knowledge and skills required to meet the standard of the NCSN credential.

School nurses are eligible to take the certification examination if they

1. Submit a copy of **current** license as a registered nurse (RN) in one of the United States;
2. Submit one of the following:

- a. an academic transcript demonstrating attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher in nursing or the equivalent in other countries or a copy of a diploma stating **Bachelor of Science in Nursing**

**OR**

- b. current certification by NBCSN as an NCSN;
3. Meet the clinical practice requirements of a minimum of 1,000 hours that have been worked within the three (3) years prior to taking the test. One thousand (1,000) hours, roughly equivalent to the hours worked by a full-time school nurse who works at least six (6) hours/day for a school year of 180 days, must be documented by a note on letterhead from your supervisor or district official (see below for more information about clinical practice requirements);
4. Complete the online application to take the certification examination for school nurses; and
5. Pay the required fee.

SMEs serving on exam development committees may **not** recertify by examination for a period of three (3) years after the conclusion of their committee service. SMEs who are granted the credential for participation in the development of a new credential may **only** recertify at the end of their initial certification period by successfully passing the certification exam.

### ***Additional Eligibility Requirements***

1. Baccalaureate degrees must be granted from programs that are accredited by national, regional, or state accrediting boards of higher education through the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or that are listed as an accredited program by the U.S. Department of Education.
2. Registered nurses enrolled in Master's Programs (RN-MSN) that do not confer bachelor's degrees may not apply to take the NCSN examination until completion of the graduate program.
3. Candidates with foreign educational degrees must submit validated transcripts with both general academic and professional licensure evaluation reports from an accredited foreign educational

credential evaluation service indicating the degree is equivalent to an accredited program in the United States, such as those with memberships in the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES).

### ***Clinical Practice Requirements for Certification***

**Eligible clinical practice** in school nursing means actively employed or contracted to provide a **direct** or **indirect** professional contribution to the health and education of students and their families in public or private school settings.

- **Direct clinical practice** in school nursing is defined as involvement in the nursing process in a school setting where the nursing actions and judgments are focused on a particular student, family, school community, or group of students or their families where there is continuing professional responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of these actions.
- **Indirect clinical practice** in school nursing is defined as involvement that
  - includes clinical supervision of school nurses, education, and baccalaureate/masters nursing students in school health; administration of school health services; research; consultation; or other engagement in the field of school nursing that contributes to the specialty's body of knowledge or enhances the quality of school nursing practice; and
  - entails continuing professional responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of the involvement.

**Ineligible clinical practice** in school nursing includes:

- one-to-one nursing as the nurse's sole responsibility within a school;
- employment in the direct sales, marketing, or distribution of school nursing–related products or services in pharmaceutical, technology, or other school health–related industries;
- community health screenings;
- work in a camp setting; and
- jobs unrelated to school nursing.

### ***Eligibility versus Readiness to Take the Exam***

Eligibility to take the exam and an individual's readiness to take the exam are not the same. Some school nurses may be prepared to take the exam after 1,000 hours of acceptable clinical practice (roughly equivalent to the hours worked by a full-time school nurse in a 180-day school year), while others may require many more hours of experience and preparation. Factors that may affect an individual's readiness include:

- level of education;
- formal coursework in school nursing and education systems;
- nursing experience prior to school nursing (e.g., child and adolescent primary care and public health versus adult inpatient nursing);
- exposure to child health in age ranges outside of school assignment;
- membership in professional associations;
- continuing education;
- supervision by a school nurse administrator;
- on the job reference materials;
- formal or informal mentoring; and
- professional development and professional leadership provided within the school district and state.



## REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY

All applications are completed through the online application system, in which the applicants identify their credentials eligibility and attest to meeting the eligibility requirements. The online system identifies the eligibility requirements established by the Board and is operated by the management company.

A random audit of a percentage of all online applications shall be performed by management company staff who have the knowledge and skill required, in accordance with written guidelines, to request and review essential documents and establish a candidate's credentials and eligibility to take the examination. Experience, education, and licensure are the major criteria used for review, along with a completed application.

The trained management company staff shall refer to the President-Elect or Executive Director the application of any candidate whose documents, credentials, or eligibility are unclear and request direction on how to proceed with the application.

The President-Elect or Executive Director reviews findings with the referring staff member, and with the Board, if appropriate.

The Executive Director monitors the subcontractor responsibilities in this process through communications with the staff and the appropriate supervisor, providing orientation, review of procedures when indicated, and a random audit of examination applications each year to determine adherence to the correct procedures. The Board will determine the number of applications audited annually.

## APPEALS OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants who are found ineligible to sit for the exam but believe that they do meet eligibility requirements may petition the NBCSN President by submitting a letter of appeal with supporting documentation related to the request.

Any documentation requested by NBCSN members or management company staff will be at the applicant's expense.

Appeals must include a transcript of the baccalaureate degree with all courses listed, a transcript of other courses taken, a current resume, and a description of activities related to school health services. No letters of reference shall be accepted.

Individuals will be notified by NBCSN regarding the status of their appeal within 30 days of receipt of all requested documentation.

The Appeals committee shall make all decisions on appeals regarding eligibility.

Determination made by the Appeals Committee is final.

## FEES

NBCSN shall annually review and set the fees for the examination and for recertification, in accordance with the annual budgeting process, and shall increase examination fees at a minimum every other year. Considerations in determining when and how much to increase fees include changes in the cost of doing

business and the relative percent of that cost incurred by producing the specific program (i.e., exam, reaccreditation).

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCOMMODATIONS

NBCSN shall permit administration of its examinations only at sites that are accessible in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and shall make any other reasonable accommodation to ensure that otherwise-eligible candidates are able to take the examination.

NBCSN will make every reasonable attempt to comply with federal regulations concerning the test administration for qualified persons who are temporarily or permanently disabled, or who request accommodations for religious reasons at the time of the scheduled exam, in accordance with the following policies:

1. The candidate must notify the management headquarters of a temporary disability. A temporary disability requires written documentation and validation. Individual arrangements for test administration will be made.
2. The candidate must notify the management company of a request for accommodations for religious reasons at the time of registration.
3. The content and validity of the exam shall not be compromised by these accommodations.

All reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate the needs of the disabled person. If a feasible solution cannot be reached, the applicant will be notified in writing and a refund (less applicable administrative fees) will be issued.

## RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

The NCSN examination is administered during 2 two-week periods and 1 three-week period annually. The candidate may select a date within those test windows to take the exam. These test windows provide options for the candidate to schedule around religious needs.

## BREASTFEEDING WHILE TESTING: POOLED BREAK

NCSN candidates who are also nursing mothers will be granted one (1) pooled break to express milk, if needed, while taking the NCSN exam at a testing facility. The candidate will need to notify NBCSN staff of their need either via phone call or email, preferably prior to scheduling their exam.

Prometric provides private spaces, however, the spaces are subject to availability, could require a candidate to travel to a nonpreferred test center, and are not guaranteed at every test center location.

## CLOSED-BOOK EXAMINATION

All NBCSN examinations are closed book. No reference material, programmable calculators, computers, cameras, or electronic devices are allowed in the examination room. A simple calculator may be used. Candidates should bring photo identification to the examination site. Any other materials must be left outside the examination room. Candidates are not allowed to take any written material from the examination room. Candidates who violate these rules may be asked to leave the site and may be disqualified from the examination as well as any future examinations.

## TESTING SITES

NBCSN partners with a testing company to provide a computerized testing service. These sites may be on-site or with industry standard safeguards, remote proctoring via NBCSN's testing partner. Individual on-site and remote testing sites may have additional security procedures in place beyond the restrictions listed above. Candidates must abide by the local procedures of these sites.

## TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS

NBCSN shall endeavor to resolve any technical and operational examination administration problems that occur during an examination. Test administrators and proctors shall be provided with materials addressing most commonplace situations and shall inform NBCSN of any issues encountered and what, if any, resolution was provided. Any adverse issue related to the exam procedure, proctors, or testing site which the candidate perceives as having influenced the testing environment and affected the exam outcome must be reported to the testing company within 30 days of receipt of exam results. The testing company will investigate all claims and issues and notify the NBCSN President of the candidate complaint and inquiry results. The NBCSN President will direct the testing company regarding the appropriate action or resolution based on the results of the investigation and status of the certification application process. The testing company will notify the candidate and take any other steps required to resolve future technical or operational problems of a similar nature.

### Remote Proctoring

NBCSN will monitor the contracted partner's remote proctoring program by reviewing incident reports as provided by the vendor, candidates' feedback to surveys issued by NBCSN, and other methods as appropriate. NBCSN will also monitor the pass rate and compare it to current and previous on-site exam administration to determine if there are any irregularities. Should it be determined that any irregularity is caused by the security for remote proctoring, the board may decide to rescind the remote proctoring test option for candidates.

If there is a possibility of a breach in security, NBCSN or its designated staff at the management company will complete a written statement and notify the testing agency immediately. NBCSN legal counsel, the NBCSN President, and the appropriate member of the Board or management company staff will be notified as soon as possible. Subsequent action shall be determined by NBCSN and legal counsel.

### ***Web Monitoring***

The NBCSN Executive Director is the administrator of the NBCSN Twitter, LinkedIn, and the discussion board on the NASN website for National Exam Candidates. The NBCSN Account Executive is the administrator for the NBCSN Facebook page and a member of an exam candidate study group on Facebook. All of these channels are monitored on a daily basis to ensure candidates do not share information regarding the testing forms.

### ***Data Monitoring – NBCSN***

NBCSN will review all reports, including, post-test candidate surveys, and the psychometric analysis of the live remote proctoring exams, as provided by the exam administration vendor. NBCSN will use these reports to monitor the performance of remote proctoring.

Any suspected security violations will be reported promptly for investigation and/or correction as needed. Test sites are required to immediately report any exam administration irregularities.

Security violations will be regularly reported to the Board of Directors for review and action as appropriate.

The NBCSN Board, in consultation with legal counsel and the testing agency staff, will direct any actions to be taken in the case of a security breach. Actions may include but are not limited to:

1. Temporary suspension of testing;
2. Substitution of items on the test form; and
3. Creation and re-deployment of a new test form.

After each exam period, the Executive Director will review reports received from the testing and management companies, as well as current testing company procedures, to ensure ongoing maintenance of standardized testing conditions and appropriate handling of test irregularities. Any concerns identified will be brought to the attention of the Board at the next Board business meeting for further review and action.

## PASSING SCORE

The examinations are Pass or Fail only. The method used to set the passing score for the examinations is in accordance with standard criterion-referenced passing score standards. The passing score is set using generally accepted psychometric principles and methods to determine what constitutes a competent school nurse. Each candidate is measured against a standard of knowledge, not against the performance of other individuals taking the examination.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

After each form of the examination is administered, a statistical analysis is conducted of the candidates, the examination content, and the items on that form of the examination. Summary statistics include, but are not limited to, frequency distributions by total scores, the number of first-time candidates and total candidates who attained each possible score, frequency distributions of the scores of all candidates on each content area of the examination, standard deviations, and a reliability coefficient. A breakdown by demographic variables is also analyzed.

## REPORTING OF RESULTS

Within eight (8) weeks after the examination period ends, candidates will be notified electronically of their examination results. The total scaled score and competency levels in each domain of the examination will be reported whether the candidate passes or fails. No scores will be reported over the telephone or by e-mail. Scores are not sent to any individual other than the candidate. Candidates will not be permitted to review the total or any part of the submitted exam, including any individual items missed.

## RETESTING

On occasion, situations may arise in which an examination administration is disrupted or rendered invalid. Should such circumstances arise through no fault of the candidate, NBCSN shall provide another opportunity for the candidate to take an alternate form of the examination, at no additional cost to the candidate.

Candidates who do not achieve a passing score on the examination will be permitted to retake the examination by submitting a new application, supporting documentation, and the examination fee. There is no limit to the number of times a candidate may take the examination, provided the candidate maintains eligibility under the current criteria.

## CREDENTIAL

Candidates who pass the Certification Examination for School Nurses are eligible to use the registered trademark (NCSN™) after their names and will receive certificates from NBCSN. Candidates are informed of the correct way to list their credentials in the letter notifying them that they have passed. Only those who pass the examination and maintain their credential through the current recertification process will be permitted to use the registered trademark. No “grandfathering” of the credential is permitted.

There is **no inactive status** for NCSNs. School nurses that no longer provide school health services or meet the current eligibility requirements for candidates will be required to cease using the NCSN credential at the end of their certification period.

School nurses who are retiring from professional practice in school nursing may apply for NCSN-Emeritus status in accordance with the policy and procedure below.

## NCSN-EMERITUS CREDENTIAL

### *Policy*

NBCSN offers Nationally Certified School Nurses (NCSNs) who are retiring from professional practice in school nursing the option to retain their credential in an emeritus capacity through the Nationally Certified School Nurse-Emeritus or NCSN-E credential.

### *Rationale*

The Emeritus credential

- recognizes candidates' achievement and maintenance of the NCSN credential during their tenure in school nursing;
- acknowledges candidates' years of service in school health; and
- allows NCSN-Es to be considered for appointment to a task force or committee of NBCSN, with the exception of committees involved in the development of the NCSN examination.

### *Eligibility Requirements*

The NCSN-E candidate must

- be formally retired or retiring from school nursing practice within six (6) months;
- be currently certified and active as an NCSN at the time of retirement; or lapsed no more than one year; and
- complete the online application by choosing “Emeritus” status (rather than NCSN recertification) and submit the fee.

## Procedure

- Applicants must complete the online application **PRIOR** to the date of recertification. The NCSN-E designation is **NOT** available once an NCSN's certification has lapsed more than one year.
- Applicants must pay the one-time required fee of \$95 with completion of the application.
- An Emeritus Status certificate will be mailed to the qualified candidate within 4–6 weeks after the application and fee have been processed.
- In recognition of their service to NBCSN, past Board members are eligible for the Emeritus credential at no cost.

## Re-Entry into School Nursing Practice

Should a NCSN-E re-enter the specialty practice of school nursing, he or she may no longer use the Emeritus designation.

The NCSN-E re-entering school nursing practice is no longer certified and may regain the NCSN credential by meeting the eligibility criteria in effect at that time, including payment of examination fees and achievement of a passing score on the NCSN examination.

## REVOCATION

Certificants are required to continue to meet all applicable legal, ethical, and policy requirements during the time that they hold the NCSN credential. Disciplinary action, including sanctions of public or private reprimand, censure, or suspensions or revocation of certification, may be taken by NCSN for failing to meet or otherwise violating these requirements. In addition, in the course of applying for certification or recertification, candidates and certificants are made aware of the basis for which certification can be revoked or for which other disciplinary actions may be taken.

### • DISCIPLINARY POLICY

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Certified school nurses, school nurses seeking certification, and school nurses with the school NCSN Emeritus designation may be subject to disciplinary action for matters stemming from irregular behavior; fraudulent credentials; legal, regulatory and credentialing actions; or violation of the National Board for Certification of School Nurses(NBCSN) ***Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying School Nurses and School Nurses with the School Nurse Emeritus Designation (the "Code of Conduct")***, as described below. NBCSN retains the right to impose discipline under this policy even if the school nurse's certification expires or the school nurse retires from practice, provided that the violation triggering the disciplinary proceeding occurred when the school nurse was certified, seeking certification, or applying for or holding the NCSN Emeritus designation.

## IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR

NBCSN may, at its discretion, deny, or revoke a school nurse's eligibility, certification, recertification, or school NCSN Emeritus designation permanently or for such time as may be determined by NBCSN; issue a letter of censure; issue a non-reportable letter of concern; and/or take such other actions as may be deemed appropriate, including taking legal action, if NBCSN determines that the school nurse engaged in "irregular behavior" as defined and described below. In general, any behavior that in the sole discretion of NBCSN, undermines or threatens the integrity or validity of the application,

assessment or certification processes of NBCSN, whether it occurs before, during or after an exam, shall constitute irregular behavior.

### ***In Connection With An Examination or Examination Questions***

The behavior of all school nurses taking an examination will be monitored by test center personnel. Test center personnel will notify NBCSN of any candidate who appears to give or receive assistance, or otherwise engages in, or assists another in engaging in, dishonest or other irregular behavior during the examination.

For purposes of this policy, “irregular behavior” in connection with an examination or examination questions shall include engaging in, or assisting another individual in engaging in:

- Cheating or other dishonest behavior.
- Compromising the security of an examination.
- Removal or attempted removal of testing materials from the test center, or stealing exam materials.
- Reproducing, distributing, displaying or otherwise misusing a test question or any part of a test question from an examination, including copying answers from someone else or allowing one’s answers to be copied, making notes during a computer-based exam administration other than on the white board provided by the test center, copying or memorizing and reproducing test items.
- Possessing unauthorized materials during a computer-based exam (e.g., including, but not limited to, recording devices, photographic materials, reference material, etc.).
- Having or seeking access to exam materials before the exam.
- Impersonating an examinee or engaging someone else to take the exam by proxy.
- Altering or misrepresenting scores.
- Other behavior which may cast doubt on the exam results of the individual or another person.
- In connection with serving as an item writer for an NBCSN examination, submitting to NBCSN items that are identical or substantially the same as items published by other sources.

### ***In Connection with Failure to Report***

- A negative response to one or more questions when an affirmative response should have been submitted.
- Failure to report to NBCSN any adverse regulatory or credentialing action within 30 days of revocation, suspension, surrender, lapse, loss or denial of or any restrictions imposed on a license, authorization, or credential to practice as a nurse (including authorization to practice as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure), whether such adverse action is by decision, consent order, stipulation, or agreement.
- Failure to report to NBCSN any adverse legal action within 30 days of conviction of (including a guilty plea or no contest plea) (i) any felony; (ii) any misdemeanor related to health care practice, violence, drug offenses, sex offenses, or fraud; or (iii) any other misdemeanor with a minimum penalty of more than 30 days in jail, except for traffic infractions, first-time DUI offenses, disorderly conduct, obscenity, tax violations, or trespassing.

### ***In Connection with Communications or Transactions with NBCSN or NBCSN’s Agents, Including Test Center Personnel***

- Making any fraudulent or knowingly false statement to NBCSN.
- Submitting fraudulent documents to NBCSN.
- Engaging in violent, threatening or abusive communications with NBCSN or NBCSN’s agents.

### ***In Connection with NCSN Emeritus Status***

- Failing to notify NBCSN within 30 days of returning to clinical practice.
- Using the school NCSN Emeritus designation in any clinical setting or in the context of any clinically-related interaction, including clinical volunteer service.

## **USE OF FRAUDULENT CREDENTIALS**

NBCSN may, at its discretion, deny, or revoke a school nurse's eligibility, certification, recertification, or NCSN Emeritus designation permanently or for such time as may be determined by NBCSN; issue a letter of censure; issue a non-reportable letter of concern, and/or take such other actions as may be deemed appropriate, including taking legal action, if NBCSN determines that the school nurse engaged in the use of a "fraudulent credential."

For purposes of this policy, use of "fraudulent credentials" shall include:

- Manufacturing, modifying, reproducing, distributing, using, or submitting to NBCSN a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized NBCSN certificate, NCSN Emeritus designation, CE document, or other NBCSN document or designation.
- Altering or falsifying NBCSN certification documents.
- Making the false representation that one is certified by NBCSN by using the legally protected marks, NCSN or NCSN-E.
- Otherwise falsely claiming to be certified by NBCSN.
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain eligibility, certification, recertification, or NCSN Emeritus designation by deceptive means, including but not limited to submitting or assisting another person to submit to NBCSN any document which contains a material misstatement of fact or omits to state a material fact.
- Assisting another individual to do any of the above.

## **LEGAL, REGULATORY, OR CREDENTIALING ACTION OR VIOLATION OF NBCSN'S CODE OF CONDUCT**

### ***Automatic Denial or Revocation***

NBCSN will automatically deny or revoke a school nurse's eligibility, certification, recertification, or NCSN Emeritus designation permanently or for such time as may be determined by NBCSN, if NBCSN determines that the school nurse is the subject of any of the following:

- Adjudication by a court, licensing board, or federal employer that the school nurse is mentally incompetent.
- Conviction of or pleading no contest to a felony that is related to nursing practice.
- Violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice that is related to nursing practice.
- Loss or denial, for a minimum period of six (6) months or longer, of the nurse's license or authorization to practice, including as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure, due to behavior that is related to nursing practice.



- Surrender or lapse, for a minimum period of six (6) months or longer, of the school nurse's license to practice in lieu of further administrative or disciplinary action that is related to nursing practice.
- Suspension of nursing license and/or abeyance of authorization to practice, including as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure, for a minimum period of six (6) months or longer, due to behavior that is related to nursing practice.
- Changing residence to avoid loss of a health care license, or disciplinary action by a state licensing agency for health care professions or to avoid prosecution that is related to nursing practice.
- Violation of a regulatory agency's order that is related to nursing practice.

### ***Discretionary Denial, Revocation, Censure, or Concern***

NBCSN may, at its discretion, deny, or revoke a school nurse's eligibility, certification, recertification, Certificate of Added Qualification, or NCSN-E (Emeritus) designation permanently or for such time as may be determined by NBCSN; issue a letter of censure; issue a non-reportable letter of concern, and/or take such other actions as may be deemed appropriate if NBCSN determines that the school nurse is the subject of any of the following:

- Conviction of or pleading no contest to a felony.
- Conviction of or pleading no contest to (i) any misdemeanor related to health care practice, violence, drug offenses, sex offenses, or fraud, or (ii) any other misdemeanor with a minimum penalty of more than 30 days in jail, except for traffic infractions, first time DUI offenses, disorderly conduct, obscenity, tax violations, or trespassing.
- Violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
- Loss or denial of the individual's license or authorization to practice as a health care provider, including as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure.
- Surrender or lapse of the nurse's license or authorization to practice in lieu of further administrative or disciplinary action.
- Suspension of the nurse's license and/or abeyance of authorization to practice, including as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure.
- Changing residence to avoid prosecution, loss of license, or disciplinary action by a state licensing agency.
- Violation of regulatory or credentialing agency's order.
- Documented evidence of gross incompetence, unprofessional conduct, or unethical conduct.
- Violation of the NBCSN *Code of Conduct*.
- Irregular behavior at any time.
- Use of fraudulent credentials.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

### ***Notification of Disciplinary Proceeding***

1. NBCSN shall issue a Notice of Disciplinary Proceeding to the school nurse describing the allegations of irregular behavior or fraudulent credentials against him or her, or the receipt of information relating to a legal, regulatory, or credentialing action, or violation of NBCSN's *Code of Conduct*.
2. The Notice of Disciplinary Proceeding shall inform the school nurse that disciplinary actions may be taken by NBCSN.

3. The Notice of Disciplinary Proceeding also shall inform the school nurse that he or she must submit a written response to the allegation within 30 calendar days.
4. NBCSN shall make a reasonable effort to determine the facts of the matter. Based on the available facts, including a statement from the school nurse if submitted, NBCSN shall determine what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted.

## ***Possible Actions and Notification of Decision***

### **POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

NBCSN may take a combination of any of the following actions or such other action that may be deemed appropriate if the board determines that allegations of irregular behavior or fraudulent credentials against the school nurse are true; that the school nurse is the subject of a legal, regulatory, or credentialing action; or that the school nurse has violated NBCSN's Code of Conduct.

- Deny or revoke the school nurse's eligibility, certification, recertification, Certificate of Added Qualification, or school NCSN Emeritus designation permanently or for such time as may be determined by NBCSN. If NBCSN staff determines that permanent revocation of eligibility or certification is warranted, the matter will be automatically referred to the NBCSN Appeals Committee for decision.
- Issue a reportable Letter of Censure to the NCSN's state regulatory body.
- Issue a non-reportable Letter of Concern.
- Issue a non-reportable Letter of Suspension for failure to respond to an NBCSN request for information.
- Require the school nurse to retake an examination at a time and place and in a format to be determined by NBCSN.
- Refuse to release the score of the school nurse and, thereby, deny his or her current application for certification, recertification.
- Require the school nurse to wait a specified period of time before reapplying to take any NBCSN examination.
- Assess a disciplinary fine.
- Recommend to NBCSN's Board of Directors that legal action be taken.

### **NOTIFICATION OF DECISION**

NBCSN communicates directly with school nurses regarding disciplinary investigations and outcome decisions. If NBCSN receives a request for information regarding a disciplinary investigation or outcome, communication is conducted as specified in NBCSN's *Information Disclosure Policy*.

- If NBCSN determines that **no action** should be taken, NBCSN shall issue a written Notice of Decision to the school nurse advising the school nurse that no action shall be taken and the matter shall be closed.
- When NBCSN determines that a **non-reportable disciplinary action**, such as the issuance of a Letter of Concern, should be taken, NBCSN shall issue a written Notice of Decision to the school nurse.
  - The Notice of Decision shall describe (a) the basis for and nature of the disciplinary action, and, if appropriate, (b) the applicable section of NBCSN's *Policy and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters*.

- The Notice of Decision also shall inform the school nurse that the decision is a nonreportable action is not subject to Review or Discretionary Appeal, and is the final decision of NBCSN.
- If NBCSN determines that a **reportable disciplinary action** should be taken, such as the issuance of a Letter of Censure, NBCSN shall issue a written Notice of Adverse Decision to the school nurse.
  - The Notice of Adverse Decision shall describe (a) the basis for disciplinary action (b) the applicable section of NBCSN's *Policy and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters* and (c) the reportable disciplinary action taken in the matter.
  - The Notice of Adverse Decision shall also inform the school nurse that he or she may accept the disciplinary action or submit a timely Request for Review in accordance with NBCSN's *Review and Appeal Policies and Procedures*. If the school nurse does not submit a written Request for Review in accordance with NBCSN's *Review and Appeal Policies and Procedures*, the decision of NBCSN shall be the final decision of NBCSN on the matter and shall not be subject to any subsequent Review or Discretionary Appeal absent extraordinary circumstances, as determined solely by NBCSN.
  - The Notice of Adverse Decision shall also inform the school nurse that after a final adverse disciplinary decision has been reached, NBCSN may, as deemed appropriate, report the disciplinary action and the underlying facts thereof to interested school parties. Such reporting may include providing a copy of the Final Decision Letter to the state board of nursing, any state licensing authority with which the school nurse holds or has held a license to practice as a school nurse, the federal government, the school nurse's employer and other interested school parties, including individuals seeking information about the school nurse's certification status, as solely determined by NBCSN. It also may be published on NBCSN's web site.

### ***Review of Adverse Decisions***

Adverse Decisions are subject to Review pursuant to NBCSN's *Appeal Policies and Procedures*.

### ***Application for Reestablishment of Eligibility Following Disciplinary Action***

1. Applications to reestablish eligibility shall be considered and acted upon at the discretion of NBCSN, except in such cases where the revocation is permanent, or the period of revocation is expressly limited to a specific period of time.
2. A school nurse whose eligibility, certification, recertification, or Emeritus designation has been denied or revoked by NBCSN for a specified time period may apply to reestablish eligibility with NBCSN following expiration of such time period.
3. To re-establish eligibility, a school nurse must submit a full statement that includes relevant details that pertain to his or her circumstances. If NBCSN's decision related to a criminal or military justice conviction, the individual may not apply to reestablish eligibility until all sentences have been served and, unless the Review Committee grants an exception, until all judgments have been satisfied.

The school nurse's statement should include:

- a. An acknowledgement of the school nurse's actions and a statement of why NBCSN should consider the request for reestablishment.
- b. An attestation indicating that no new *Code of Conduct* violations have occurred since revocation.
- c. A description of how he or she has met any NBCSN stipulations.

- d. An attestation indicating that a state licensing board and, if applicable, any federal employer considering the school nurse's credentials have been made aware of NBCSN's certification revocation and of the underlying cause(s) that led to the revocation.
4. School nurses must also submit relevant supporting documentation that will be verified by NBCSN. Examples of supporting documentation to be provided by school nurses include, depending on the underlying issue:
  - a. Written notice from a licensing board indicating that the school nurse would be considered for licensure if the school nurse school passes an NBCSN exam.
  - b. Written notice that any criminal sentences or probationary periods have been served, or other legal requirements have been met.
  - c. Documents (e.g. CE certificates, proof of attendance of an ethics/professional boundaries course) meeting requirements stipulated by NBCSN.
5. If the school nurse applying for reestablishment of eligibility for certification does not have an active license to practice, NBCSN's decision to reestablish eligibility will be conditioned on the school nurse providing NBCSN documentation that, prior to regaining NBCSN certification by passing the NCSN examination, the school nurse has obtained a current license to practice as a registered nurse in a state that has full knowledge of the school nurse's disciplinary history. Failure to provide such documentation of licensure will result in revocation of the school nurse's certification and eligibility for certification. Please note, all school nurses applying for reestablishment of eligibility for certification MUST obtain an active license to practice either prior to NBCSN's decision to reestablish eligibility or prior to regaining certification.
6. NBCSN may also place such other conditions on reestablishment of eligibility for certification or on maintaining reestablished eligibility and certification as NBCSN in its discretion deems appropriate.

### ***Responsibility for Notification of Address Changes***

School Nurses are solely responsible for ensuring that their NBCSN account includes the school nurse's current mailing and email address. If the school nurse does not receive notice(s) from NBCSN related to disciplinary review or action due to his or her failure to notify NBCSN in a timely manner of a change of address, that lack of notification shall not be considered as the basis for an appeal or reconsideration of any decision in the matter.

### ***Violations Reporting***

Any individual may submit information to the organization alleging violation of one of the standards listed above. In certain cases, the organization may refer complaints to the applicable state licensing board or other legal enforcement authority. These procedures describe the process used to consider all complaints and take appropriate disciplinary action.

All reasonable measures are taken to ensure that any materials regarding a complaint or disciplinary action process are kept confidential. Complaints must be submitted in writing to the organization at NBCSN 1120 Route 73, Suite 200, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

Only written complaints will be considered, but in its discretion NBCSN may itself initiate complaints and investigate actions based on information obtained by or known to NBCSN (for example, if a certificant has falsified application information or if NBCSN learns of information from newspaper, internet, or other sources). All complaints must include the following:

1. the name and contact information of the person initiating the complaint;
2. a statement of the individual's alleged misconduct;

3. reasons why that misconduct warrants disciplinary action; and
4. supporting documentation, if available.

NBCSN (and legal counsel, as appropriate) will investigate the complaint and seek additional information. If the response to the notification is considered by the Board of Appeals to be satisfactory and adequate to resolve the complaint, the matter will be considered closed and the complainant will be so notified. If the response is not considered satisfactory, NBCSN may request additional information.

NBCSN will consider the matter at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. Review of the matter will not be a trial-type proceeding, and rules of evidence, discovery, etc. will not apply; instead, the Board will review the written record and may provide the individual alleged to have violated the policy an opportunity to appear in person or by telephone to make a presentation and allow the Board to ask questions. It is not expected that the individual will be represented by counsel at his or her appearance, although the Board may consult counsel at any time. The Board will deliberate, issue a decision, and determine what disciplinary action, if any, is required.

Written notification stating the Board's decision, including the reasons for its decision, will be sent to the individual within thirty (30) days following the meeting at which the complaint was heard. The individual will have the opportunity to appeal the decision in accordance with the NBCSN Appeals procedures.

If the decision is not appealed, and if appropriate, notice will also be sent to the individual who initiated the complaint. The Board may provide notice of the decision to relevant licensing boards. The Board may decide also to make the information about the decision available to the public, the individual's employer, or other persons with an interest in the matter.

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- **ONLINE PRACTICE TEST POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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The Online Practice Test(s) for School Nurses (hereinafter Practice Test) will consist of a maximum of 75 questions of the objective multiple-choice type. The Practice Test will be offered online on an ongoing basis.

The purpose of the Practice Test is to allow participants to

- experience taking a computerized exam;
- review content similar to that included in the certification examination for school nurses; and
- learn more about question format, style, and level of difficulty.

The Practice Test will include questions from the same content areas as used in the Certification Examination.

Participants will be provided with the following information:

1. Performance on the Practice Test may differ from actual performance on the certification examination.
2. There is no guarantee that taking this practice test will help the participant pass the certification examination.
3. Participation in the Practice Test is not required as a prerequisite to taking the certification examination.
4. Achievement on the Practice Test does not assure success (or failure) on the certification examination.

In no case shall participants be told that they have “passed” or “failed” the Practice Test. Upon completion of the practice test, the participant will receive an instant score report showing test performance in each of the content areas.

## NBCSN RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

NBCSN will perform the following functions at its expense:

1. Review the practice test at least every three (3) years, and release unused pretest questions from the existing item bank or develop similar questions as needed.
2. Permanently retire from use on the NCSN examination for certification any unused pre-test question released for use in the online Practice Test system.
3. Provide the management firm with specifications for the Practice Test, including the number of items to be included in each content area.
4. Provide final review of the Practice Test before it is released to the management firm for use in the online Practice Test system.
5. Review during the annual budget planning process the Practice Test fee to be charged participants, based on the management firm’s administrative expenses for operating the system and NBCSN’s development expenses.
6. Provide information about the Practice Test to potential participants.

## THE MANAGEMENT FIRM’S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

The management firm will perform the following functions at its expense:

1. Consult with NBCSN on the management of the Practice Test with particular emphasis on test items, general design, analysis, and operations of the program.
2. At least every three (3) years, consult with NBCSN representatives regarding possible revisions to the practice test using only test questions released or developed by NBCSN for the Practice Test system.
3. Import the NBCSN-approved Practice Test draft to the online Practice Test system.
4. Manage credit card fees from participants to take the Practice Test.
5. Make available information about the Practice Test in the NBCSN Handbook for Candidates and on the NBCSN website.
6. Secure the Practice Test to disable electronic copying or screen capturing of test questions and graphics.
7. Determine the total and content area scores for each participant according to standards established by NBCSN and have results ready for participants to print upon completion of the Practice Test.
8. Hold all items used in the Practice Test as NBCSN property to be used solely for NBCSN programs.
9. Consult with NBCSN on professional, technical, and administrative matters relevant to the development and administration of the Practice Test.

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- **RECERTIFICATION**

NCSNs are required to renew their certification to demonstrate that they remain current with new practices, knowledge, standards, laws, methodologies, equipment, medications, and terminology in the specialty practice of school nursing. School nurse certification is granted for a period of five (5) years, at which time the NCSN must meet current eligibility requirements and either 1) retake and pass the

Certification Examination for School Nurses or 2) meet current continuing education requirements. These requirements include:

- A copy of the applicant's current RN license
- Documentation of employment in school health or related services with a minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice in the area of school nursing during the past five (5) years, at least 750 of which must be in the prior three (3) years, defined further below
- Minimum of 75 credits of approved continuing education or professional activities
- Payment of current required fees

Certified School Nurses are notified by email one (1) year and again six (6) months prior to the expiration of their certification. It is the responsibility of each NCSN to maintain an active/current email address, mailing address, and phone contact information with NBCSN. Deadlines missed due to incorrect, blocked, or otherwise incorrect email or mail are the responsibility of the NCSN and may incur late fees or forfeited recertification status.

The President-Elect may grant extensions for a recertification application, provided the NCSN has submitted a request in writing, PRIOR to the expiration date of the initial certificate. Requests received within the 90 days FOLLOWING the expiration date will incur a late fee of \$100 in addition to all recertification fees. After 90 days, the NCSN credential will be revoked and a candidate may only be reinstated by taking and passing the Certification Examination for School Nurses. An extension does NOT extend the amount of time in which to complete continuing education requirements.

## CLINICAL PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION

**Clinical Practice** in school nursing means being actively employed or contracted to provide a *direct* or *indirect* professional contribution to the health and education of students and their families in public or private school settings. A minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice during the last five (5) years, at least 750 of which must be in the prior three (3) years must be met to recertify.

**Direct clinical practice** in school nursing is defined as involvement in the nursing process in a school setting where the nursing actions and judgments are focused on a particular student, family, school community, or group of students and their families where there is continuing professional responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of these actions.

**Indirect clinical practice** in school nursing is defined as involvement that (i) includes clinical supervision of school nurses, education, and clinical supervision of baccalaureate/masters nursing students in school health, administration of school health services, research, consultation, or other engagement in the field of school nursing that contributes to the specialty's body of knowledge or enhances the quality of school nursing practice and (ii) entails continuing professional responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of the involvement.

**Not eligible as clinical practice** in school nursing includes: one-to-one nursing as the nurse's sole responsibility within a school; employment in the direct sales, marketing, or distribution of school nursing-related products or services in pharmaceutical, technology, or other school health-related industries; community health screenings; work in a camp setting; and jobs unrelated to school nursing.

# CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION

To apply for recertification through continuing education (CE), 75 CE credits related to school nursing practice must be completed. The 75 credits may include any combination of CE hours, academic credit, or professional activity. CE credits must be related to the practice of school nursing and must have been completed during the five (5) years prior to the expiration date of the NCSN's certification. CE programs must be sponsored by an approved national or state accrediting agency. Approved professional activities, as well as CE or activity restrictions, limitations, and specifics regarding documentation are listed below.

CE hours may be accumulated in any combination of the following:

## *Continuing Education Programs*

CE (in school nursing) is defined as programs beyond basic nursing preparation that are designed to promote and enrich knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes for the enhancement of (school) nursing practice.

## **COURSE ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS**

- As recommended by American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to be eligible for NCSN recertification credit, the continuing nursing education activities provider must meet national or state predetermined criteria and, at a minimum, document the program provider. Assessed, planned, implemented, and evaluated the program in accordance with adult learning principles and professional education standards and ethics.
- Included procedures and documentation protecting educational content from bias
- Provided learners appropriate information and documentation related to their participation, and
- Maintained records in a secure and confidential manner.

The Board recognizes the following credentialing agencies:

- Nursing specialty organizations listed below, or those accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), such as:
  - American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
  - American Association of Critical Care Nurses
  - American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
  - American College of Nurse Midwives
  - Emergency Nurses Association
  - National Association of School Nurses
  - National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners
- Continuing medical education (CME) credentialing agencies
- Colleges and universities accredited by state, regional, and federal (as US Dept. of Education) accrediting boards (granting academic credit). NOTE: Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) associated with universities are NOT in and of themselves accredited providers. Each course provided by an AHEC must be an accredited course as listed within this section to qualify for recertification credit.
- State boards of nursing



- State departments of health and education whose programs have met the criteria for CE through accredited providers
- National accrediting agencies for licensed professional counselors and social workers

These organizations, in turn, approve other CE providers, such as hospitals, state nursing associations, AHECs, or online and commercial providers.

Recertification candidates may be requested to demonstrate how the course content promotes expertise in school health or is relevant to the school nursing practice of the candidate. Individuals may be requested to provide additional information or documentation before credit will be granted.

Candidates must maintain documentation of all certificates and, upon request or for audit purposes, submit for review. Each certificate must include the date, program title, approved provider number as applicable, name of the accredited provider (NO acronyms will be accepted), and the number of CE hours awarded.

All contact hours must be in subjects related to school health practice and be approved by a national accrediting agency, such as the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), state departments of health and/or education, accredited universities or colleges, or physician CE programs. These may include workshops, seminars, professional development offerings, and state/national conferences. Online courses, teleconferences, poster sessions, and “webinars” are acceptable, provided they are approved by a national or state accrediting agency, such as those listed above.

- Single-offering courses, seminar, or workshops listed as twenty (20) hours or greater must be accompanied by a course outline or content agenda attached to the recertification application.
- Conferences with multiple concurrent sessions must have each session attended identified on the certificate or an agenda.
- Self-paced or online CE programs are acceptable as long as they are approved by one of the approved providers.
- PALS, ATLS, ACLS, and Mental Health First Aid will be accepted for credit **only one time each** during the five-year recertification period. There must be a certificate of completion with credit hours.
- Courses which are considered basic nursing preparation or staff development are NOT accepted. Specific activities NOT ACCEPTABLE include:
  - Any activity providing less than 1.0 contact hour of credit
  - Basic computer technology courses (as Windows, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint), including computer training for district-specific record keeping/EHR
  - CPR/first aid, blood-borne pathogens, and state certification or screening courses in vision, hearing, acanthosis nigricans, and spinal screening, etc.
  - In-services and staff development programs that provide specific information about the work setting, philosophies and procedures, including orientation to a work setting, department and district staff development courses, workshops, and committee meetings (unless pre-approved by an accredited provider as described above)
  - On-the-job training and equipment demonstration
  - Refresher courses designed to update knowledge
  - Courses that focus on self-improvement, changes in attitude, self-therapy, self-awareness, personal weight loss, yoga, or personal appearance, etc.
  - Economic courses for financial gain, such as investments, retirement, preparing resumes, and techniques for job interviews
  - Liberal arts courses in music, art, philosophy when unrelated to client/student care
  - Courses for the lay public

## ACADEMIC CREDIT COURSES

- Courses must be related to school health issues or nursing practice, including nursing courses taken within the framework of a curriculum leading to a degree in nursing.
- Each individual academic credit from an accredited institution of higher learning will be considered as ten (10) contact hours for quarter courses or fifteen (15) contact hours for semester courses.
- Courses may be undergraduate or graduate level and a transcript of successful completion with a grade of C or better, or “pass” on a pass/fail system, is required.
- Online academic courses will be accepted.
- Unacceptable academic courses include any prerequisite course, such as mathematics, government, anatomy, physiology, languages, literature, etc.

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

NBCSN recognizes and supports endeavors that promote and enhance the role of the certified school nurse and grants credits for certain professional activities that meet the criteria described below:

Credits Earned	Activity	Documentation Required to be Uploaded
<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>Participation in NBCSN Problem Item Analysis (PIN) call or other NBCSN activity</b> (less than 5 hrs in length)</p>	<p>1. Copy of certificate of participation.</p>
<p><b>5</b> <i>Max. of 5 credits per year</i></p> <p>Minimum of 50 hours per semester for student clinical experience with school nurse (hours may include precepting multiple students over the course of a single semester).</p>	<p><b>Precepting Student Nurses</b></p>	<p>1. Letter of validation from School of Nursing faculty documenting each year and number of hours of preceptorship.</p>
<p><b>5</b> <i>Max. of 5 credits per year/25 cycle. Points may be the same or different activities each year (e.g. NBCSN liaison for 3 years, then NASN director for 2 years for a total of 25 points)</i></p>	<p><b>Leadership Activities</b></p> <p>1. Officer/Director position for national or state school nurse organizations, including NBCSN <i>OR</i></p> <p>2. NBCSN Audit Committee Member <i>OR</i></p> <p>3. NBCSN Liaison</p>	<p>1. <b>Officer</b>—documentation of position, such as copy of programs, minutes, etc.</p> <p>2. <b>Audit</b>—perform at least 5 audits/year as confirmed by Recertification Chair. Copy of certification of participation.</p> <p>3. <b>Liaison</b>—copy of completed annual report AND report of participation at state or regional conference.</p>

<p><b>1</b> <i>Credit per year of membership</i></p>	<p><b>NASN membership</b></p>	<p>1. Copy of membership card or other evidence for each year claimed.</p>
<p><b>5</b> <i>Limited to 25 credits per 5- year recertification period</i></p>	<p><b>Participation in NBCSN Item Review, Form/Exam Review, Pool Review, Item Writing Workshop or other NBCSN activity</b> (generally at least 5 hrs. in length)</p>	<p>2. Copy of certificate of participation</p>
<p><b>5</b> <i>Limited to 25 credits per 5- year recertification period. Each course may only be used once per 5- year recertification period</i></p>	<p><b>Presentation</b> (including poster) <b>of Professional Education topic (CE or Academic)</b> Each course or poster presentation submitted must be of a unique topic.</p> <p>CE Program must provide accredited CE credits that meet NBCSN guidelines.</p> <p>CE program must be a minimum of 1 hour (60 min) in length.</p> <p><b>Academic Presentation:</b> Academic Presentation: class must be related to school nursing (population health/school health/pediatrics/etc).</p>	<p>1. CE Program: Copy of agenda or brochure listing faculty, topic, length of program and accreditation statement.</p> <p>2. Course syllabus listing name of course, institution, faculty, student objectives, course credit, dates of course. Basic nursing classes are not acceptable. Must be outside regular school nurse or school nurse instructor clinical hours, must reflect new knowledge. Each course must be a unique topic.</p>
<p><b>10</b> Credit is allowed for <b>EACH</b> article with a different topic area published within the 5- year recertification cycle</p>	<p>Original Article Published in Professional Journal</p>	<p>1. Copy of the published article and complete citation.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>Participation as a peer reviewer for a professional journal.</p>	<p>1. Copy of email from the journal indicating the review was submitted. The email should include the date of the review and the journal name.</p>

<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Credit is allowed for <b>EACH board position</b> per 5-year recertification cycle.</p>	<p><b>Participation as a member of a journal editorial board.</b></p>	<p>1. Copy of appointment letter or letter from the journal editor indicating years of service during renewal cycle.</p>
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**ADDITIONAL RECERTIFICATION INFORMATION**

Candidates may be requested to demonstrate how the course content promotes expertise in school health or is relevant to the school nursing practice of the certificant. Individuals may be requested to provide additional information or documentation for the recertification audit.

Subject matter experts serving on exam development committees may not recertify by examination for a period of three (3) years after the conclusion of their committee service. Subject matter experts who are granted the credential for participation in the development of a new credential may only recertify at the end of their initial certification period by successfully passing the certification exam.

**RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION REVIEW AUDIT**

In order to ensure compliance, NBCSN performs audits on a percentage minimum of 10 percent of all recertification applications each year. The online system identifies applications for audit, both through a random selection and through predetermined “red flags” requiring review. Should recertification candidates be chosen for audit, they will be required to submit evidence of compliance with all recertification requirements, including certificates of attendance for continuing education and documentation of other professional activities as listed earlier in the Other Professional Activities table.

Each NCSN selected for audit will receive a notification e-mail with instructions. Documents **MUST** be submitted within the time frame listed in the instructions in order to complete the audit prior to NCSN expiration and avoid credential revocation.

Candidates must submit the required documents digitally. Documents can be scanned or photographed with a digital camera and attached to an e-mail.

NCSNs are requested **NOT** to include documents other than those specifically requested.

The management company will notify the Chair of the Recertification Committee of recertification applications identified for audit. The Chair will then assign the audits to members of the Recertification Committee for review. The review shall be completed using a recertification checklist form. Auditors submit completed audits to the Chair, who after confirming adequacy of the audit, notifies the management company of the audit results. The audit timeline is two (2) weeks from the management company notifying the Chair of the identified audit to completion of the audit and Chair informing the management company.

## ***Procedure for Review of Recertification Applications***

Members of the Recertification Committee review the information provided by the candidate on the application to ensure eligibility:

1. A minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice in the area of school nursing during the past five (5) years, at least 750 of which must be in the prior three (3) years;
2. Current RN license:
  - a. Courses listed by the candidate in the electronic database match the certificates provided;
  - b. Courses claimed for continuing education and academic credit are valid and related to school nursing;
  - c. Other professional activity credits submitted, must include appropriate documentation; and
3. Total credits submitted meet criteria and number at least 75.

If additional information or clarification is needed, the auditing Committee member contacts the Recertification Chair who then contacts the management company to request further information from the NCSN or to clarify the documentation provided.

- When requiring additional documentation, the Chair (or in consultation with the President-Elect) may extend the recertification deadline for a period not to exceed 30 days. The certification expiration date does not change.
- The management company administrative staff should be notified when the Recertification Chair or President-Elect has extended the deadline.

When there is a question about documents for recertification, or if interpretation or decision-making is required, committee member auditors should seek the advice of the Recertification Chair. If resolution cannot be achieved, the Recertification Chair will refer the issue to the President-Elect or Executive Director, who may also consult other Board members.

Once a committee member determines that the candidate has met the recertification criteria

1. The member notifies the Recertification Committee Chair, who will inform appropriate management company staff.
2. The Recertification Chair is responsible to assign and track audits to ensure no one auditor is overburdened and the audits are completed correctly and in a timely manner.
3. The management company administrative staff will send the new certificate to the candidate.
4. The Executive Director and Chair of the Recertification Committee ensure that Committee members and management company staff involved with reviewing applications for recertification have the requisite knowledge and skill required, in accordance with written guidelines, to ensure that applications are complete and meet recertification eligibility requirements.
5. Issues with credential review may be discussed at Board meetings, as required.

## **RECERTIFICATION EXTENSIONS AND LATE FEES**

Up to 90 days after the recertification date, a \$100 late fee will be assessed for processing recertification applications. Unless a request for extension has been submitted to the NCSN office prior to the end of the 90 days, the certification will be revoked and may only be reinstated by taking and passing the Certification Examination for School Nurses.

NCSN's applying for an extension due to extenuating circumstances that make it impossible to file the recertification application by the certification anniversary date, a request to the NCSN Recertification

Chair(s) may be made in writing for an extension. If the extension is denied, the applicant can appeal the decision to the NBCSN Appeals Committee who shall review the request and make a decision. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

NCSNs who may have an extenuating circumstance (such as serving on active military duty, illness, etc.) may extend the recertification period for up to an additional twelve (12) months past the recertification date, or in the case of active military duty, the end of active duty, without incurring late fees or penalties, provided that:

1. documentation of extenuating circumstance or lists dates of active duty and dates of return to school health employment; and
2. continuing education units are earned within a period of six (6) years since the date of the original examination or the last recertification date,
3. A letter of request for extension describing the situation should be addressed to the NBCSN Recertification Chair(s).

## DENIAL OF RECERTIFICATION AND APPEALS OF DENIAL

Recertification by Continuing Education may be denied for **any** of the following reasons:

1. Failure to meet criteria of 75 hours of continuing education
2. Falsification or misrepresentation of CE information
3. Failure to apply before the NCSN expiration date
4. Failure to verify CE information by stated deadlines when proper documentation is requested
5. Failure to submit the recertification fee

If recertification is denied, the recertification application fee will NOT be refunded. Any NCSN who does not meet the CE recertification requirements or who fails to recertify by successfully passing the examination will be permitted to apply for the next regularly scheduled examination period. Certification will only be reinstated following successful completion of the examination.

Decisions regarding appeals shall be issued in writing within 30 days of receipt of the appeal or challenge. If dissatisfied with the determination, the individual may submit a written appeal to the Board of Directors within 30 days of the receipt of the decision. The Board shall issue a written decision within 30 days from receipt of the second appeal. The decision of NBCSN shall be final.

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- **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

The Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to manage its funds in a responsible manner, including ensuring adequate cash availability for operations, funding reserve accounts, maximizing the yield on short-term investments of idle cash, and maximizing the return on long-term investment of funds. All cash and funds shall be managed to ensure maximum yield consistent with safety of the funds. The NBCSN portfolio shall be designed to attain a market-average rate of return or better, consistent with stability and safety of principal. A minimum of six (6) months of operating expenses shall always be kept in reserve.

Daily cash receipts and additional operating capital as needed shall be invested in vehicles that are highly liquid and available on a demand basis. Funds equal to three (3) months operating expenses should be maintained in these types of vehicles. Additional available funds shall be invested in longer-term instruments.

The standard to be applied by those charged with investing funds of NBCSN shall be done in a prudent and fiscally responsible manner.

The investment official, acting in accordance with this written policy and the written direction of NBCSN, and exercising due diligence, shall not be held personally responsible for a specific credit risk or market price change, provided that these deviations are reported immediately and appropriate action is taken to control adverse developments.

The Board shall be provided monthly financial reports prepared by the management firm in order to monitor the financial status of the organization and make adjustments as needed.

## ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is a method by which the policies and programs established by the Board are presented in terms of financial requirements. The budget process may not deviate materially from the Board's Strategic Plan priorities, risk financial stability, or fail to show a generally acceptable level of foresight.

The proposed budget will be prepared by the management company staff and submitted to the Finance Committee for its review prior to the fall Board meeting. The proposed budget must:

1. Contain adequate information to enable accurate projections of revenues and expenses, and separate capital and operational items;
2. Plan expenditures based on conservatively projected revenue; and
3. Consider long-term planning.

Upon approval by the Finance Committee, the proposed budget will be forwarded to the Board for review, comment, and approval.

The Finance Committee will routinely review fees for certification and recertification and make recommendations to the NBCSN Board.

## SIGNATURE CARDS

Approved signers for the NBCSN accounts are the management firm's Operations Manager and Financial Administrator, and the NBCSN President, Executive Director, and Secretary-Treasurer.

## ANNUAL REPORT

The Board shall be issued an annual report of its financial activities, including financial statements, investment income, and portfolio information, and a copy of the most recent Annual Audit Report (less than five [5] years old).

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- **MANAGEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

NBCSN shall employ a management company to act as its administrative staff. This company, along with the NBCSN Executive Director, will oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization. In the event that the board determines a change should be made in the management company, a new management company will be selected from among the responses to a Request for Proposal process.



The Board will annually assess the performance of the management company and will issue written directives for any deficiencies or problems, giving the management company a reasonable period of time in which to correct such deficiencies or problems.

- **OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

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## CUSTOMER SERVICE

NBCSN is aware of its responsibility to its candidates, certificants, and the public they serve. As such, the organization and its staff strive to maintain excellent customer service by responding to inquiries and requests in a timely manner and by adhering to the deadlines set in these policies.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The examinations, certificates, logo, and any other emblems of NBCSN and the name “National Board for Certification of School Nurses” are all the exclusive property of NBCSN and may not be used in any way without the express prior written consent of NBCSN.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All NBCSN operations, methods, materials, documents, procedures, and proceedings relative to certification examinations are considered private, confidential, and proprietary information of the organization. NBCSN certification examination information is to remain secure and confidential. The most current editions of these forms will be maintained by the Executive Director in the forms review of the Dropbox and provided to the management company for posting on the website.

NBCSN requires that all Board and committee members, consultants, and staff sign a confidentiality statement prior to receiving any materials related to NCSN activities, as specified in this document.

The certifying organization assures that confidential information about candidates and certificants is protected. The confidentiality statements will be maintained by the management company. Confidentiality is to be maintained throughout service with the management company, and for five (5) years following that service. Files will be checked annually to determine that all appropriate confidentiality statements are on file.

Confidential material includes all applicant/candidate information except first name, last name, city, state, and credential (which are public information); pass/fail rosters, individual exam scores, and candidate score reports; job analysis/detailed test specifications (with the exception of the content outline, which is published and available to candidates); cut score studies, test analysis reports, and other test data; NBCSN committee files; NCSN item bank; and examination/test draft and masters.

Certification designations are a matter of public record. The name, city, and state of residence and current certification status of certificants are not considered confidential.

NBCSN will periodically publish aggregate certification data while maintaining candidate confidentiality. Published aggregate data will include the number of test takers, the pass/fail rate, the number of individuals recertified, and the total number of individuals currently certified. This data will be posted on the management company’s website and made available to the public. Aggregate results will only be

made public for groups of 10 or more test takers. The rationale, per the advice of the testing vendor, is that in groups of this size it would be difficult to ascertain the test score of any one individual.

Current and former staff of NBCSN or its management company, directors and/or committee members may not discuss or share confidential information or materials with others (company staff, Board, or committee members). Exam candidates agree to the confidentiality requirements by agreeing to the confidentiality statement.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit NBCSN or its management company from complying with obligations it may have under state and federal law, legal process issued pursuant thereto, or lawful orders of governmental authorities. The management company will release confidential information to state licensing boards upon an official written request from a licensing board.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All members of NBCSN, its management company, and its testing firm staff shall avoid conflicts of interest and shall not profit personally from their affiliation with NBCSN, or favor the interests of themselves, relatives, friends, or other affiliated organizations over the interests of NBCSN. Should there be potential for a conflict of interest, the Board, its management company, or its testing firm staff member shall disclose such potential conflict and may be asked to either abstain from a discussion and vote on the matter, or in some circumstances may be asked to resign from the Board. An Ethics statement form will be signed annually by all members of the Board.

## EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Members of NBCSN who are involved in any aspect of test development are specifically prohibited from participating in, whether or not for profit, any educational activities related to the materials in the NBCSN examination during their service on the Board and for a period of three (3) years thereafter. Educational activities include teaching any course, program, or workshop or authoring materials specifically directed toward preparation for the NBCSN examination.

Members of Subject Matter Expert Committees, which review and develop test items, are prohibited from disclosing any information related to specific items and educational activities in which discussion about specific items may occur for a period of three (3) years after the adjournment of the Subject Matter Expert Committee.

## RECRUITMENT OF EXAM DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS

Each year the test development partner and the Exam Committee determine test development needs for the upcoming year and select subject matter experts based on those needs. Candidates for item writing and other test development committees meet the following eligibility requirements at the time of application:

- must be currently engaged in the area of nursing practice for which the exam is being written; and
- must hold an appropriate credential and/or meet current eligibility requirement for the examination.

Selection of committee members is a multi-step process. A call for volunteers is made from among all who meet the eligibility criteria outlined above. The staff at the management company responsible for certification programs and test development, with input from the NBCSN Board of Directors (who holds the NCSN), screen the list of applicants. This group then draws up a list of volunteers for consideration.

The list of candidates is summarized in a standardized table containing the diversity criteria outlined in the ABSNC Standards. The Board makes volunteer selections based on the ABSNC diversity criteria and makes volunteer selections based on a review of those criteria.

Subject matter experts serving on exam development committees may not recertify by examination for a period of three (3) years after the conclusion of their committee service.

In support of NBCSN's commitment to promoting inclusion, equity, and justice, NBCSN will prioritize the applications of volunteers for exam activities who have characteristics that are currently under-represented in the community of NCSNs.

## EXAMINATION SECURITY

Maintaining the security of the NCSN examination material is essential to upholding the integrity of the program. NBCSN shall insist that its staff, vendors, test administrators, and proctors take all reasonable precautions to ensure that individual items, item banks, examinations, and candidate scores are and remain secure. NBCSN shall ensure that no candidate sees the content of the examination before or after the examination is administered. The Policy and Procedures manual of the testing company shall spell out the specifics of the examination security measures. To ensure compliance with this policy, NBCSN shall annually review current Policy and Procedures of its Testing Company for ensuring the security of all examination materials, and review any related complaints made to the Testing Company or NBCSN related to examination security.

Only NBCSN employees and its management company, authorized contractors, and authorized volunteers who are directly involved with administration of the certification program may be granted access to confidential exam-related materials. The test agency will maintain strict security procedures in all areas of exam development, administration, and management to include appropriate procedures for secure printing, storage, and document tracking, and will restrict access to confidential materials.

To safeguard the security of the NCSN exam, neither the exam forms nor final exam questions will be sent via any third-party delivery service (USPS, Federal Express, etc.) to volunteers or other non-authorized recipients, except for the following: mailing of materials to authorized recipients including approved proctors; test administration sites; and NCSN or management company staff. Authorized shipments will be sent only via shipping vendors with tracking mechanisms in place, such as Federal Express, UPS, etc. Receipt of shipments by authorized recipients will be confirmed by staff. Exam materials will be promptly returned to NBCSN or its management company.

Practice exams are developed by members, volunteers, or contractors who do not have access to exam materials. Those developing practice exams will not participate in test development activities. Once developed, the practice exams will be checked against the current form of the certification examination to ensure that the certification examination is not compromised.

Item Writer's Committee: The security of the items generated at the Item Writer's Committee shall be the full responsibility of the testing agency.

Item Review and Test Review Committee Meetings: The item bank will be transported to and from the meeting by representatives of the testing agency and will be secured by management company staff each evening.

Job Analysis and Test Specifications: The job analysis and test specifications are printed by the testing agency and sent by certified mail to NBCSN or its management company staff. The following procedure applies to handling of those documents:

1. The testing agency will call to verify receipt of shipment by staff.
2. Upon receipt of the documents, a label will be attached, such as the following:

**CONFIDENTIAL**

*This booklet is confidential. Its contents may not be disclosed for any reason to any person other than the one to whom it has been issued, unless authorized in writing by the management company.*

3. Each document will be numbered. The documents will be secured in locked certification files.
  - a. Any use of the documents must be authorized by the management company in writing. If authorized persons check any documents out, each document must be signed by those receiving it and signed in upon return.
  - b. The staff will maintain a log of document check-outs and returns, which will remain secured with the documents in the files.

## VERIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION

NBCSN shall provide verification of certification to all interested parties. There shall be a method of online verification on its website; however, verification can also be made by phone, written, or e-mail request to the administrative office. Verification information consists of:

- acknowledgement of the individual's certification, and
- identification of the certification date.

## NCSN DATABASE

The NCSN database shall include, at minimum, the following information about each certificant:

- Name
- Address
- Test Date
- Recertification Date
- Exam Results
- Certificate Number
- such other demographic information as the NBCSN wishes to maintain

The database shall be updated whenever an individual notifies the management company's administrative staff of a change in their name or address or utilizes the software incorporated into the NBCSN website for such purposes. Certificants are responsible for updating demographic information as

often as necessary to ensure that information is current. NBCSN does not sell or share the membership database with commercial vendors or individuals.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

NBCSN recognizes that a quality assurance program is integral to a high level of customer service and to meet accreditation standards. To ensure consistency and to provide fair and equitable service to our customers, it is necessary to have policies and procedures in place. An essential part of the quality assurance program will be the maintenance of policies and a mechanism to ensure that the policies in place are consistently followed. To that end these processes will be followed.

As a routine practice, the NBCSN Board of Directors and a designated individual at the management company will monitor the consistent application of policies. Issues with the consistent application of policies will be evaluated for possible policy revisions. The Board of Directors and a designated individual (account manager) of the NBCSN management company will be responsible for the Quality Assurance Program. To provide further oversight of Quality Assurance processes, compliance reports will be shared with the Executive Director, NBCSN, and management company staff on at least a quarterly basis at the regularly scheduled meetings. The Board team will review and discuss findings and quality assurance processes at these meetings.

Suggestions for policy revisions are encouraged from board members and management company staff. The policy revision process will be managed by the Executive Director and Board, working with the management company. The need for policy revisions may arise from but is not limited to the following sources:

- Systematic review of policies
- Inconsistencies in the application of policies
- Recommendations from members of the Board of Directors or management company
- Identified problems
- Issues identified in process improvement activities

All forms and documents posted on the website will be reviewed annually by each Committee Chair and the Quality Assurance Committee for consistency with approved policies. Any inconsistencies will be evaluated for possible policy revisions.

As part of their orientation process, members of the NBCSN Board of Directors will be oriented to organizational policies. The need for updates and revisions to policies will be communicated to Board members as they arise. Policy revisions will be approved by the Board of Directors.

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- **AWARDS**

NBCSN provides public acknowledgement to individuals and groups that promote the mission and purpose of NBCSN through activities which promote school nursing certification. Certificates of Recognition will be presented at the NBCSN Annual Reception.

## RECOGNITION AWARD

A recognition award may be awarded to an NCSN who has been nominated by an NCSN for:

1. promoting national school nurse certification at the national, state, or local level; and
2. enhancing competency and expertise among school nurse professionals.

A nominee must be an NCSN in good standing and currently employed in the specialty area of school nursing. Current and prior members of the Board are not eligible for the award. A letter of recommendation and documentation of the nominee's activities and achievements related to the above must accompany the nomination application. Applications will be reviewed by the President Elect and a nomination made to the President, who makes the final decision. Multiple awards may be made if there is more than one qualified candidate and no award may be given if there are no qualified candidates. The criteria for selection will include, but not be limited to:

- Evidence of accomplishments in BOTH areas listed above;
- Level of influence. Credit will be given for local, state and national activities Unique or other noteworthy contribution to national school nurse certification

## LIAISON OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Outreach Chair may recognize a state liaison who, based on submission of annual reports and completion of liaison responsibilities, effectively promotes certification on the state level. The Outreach Chair may make one nomination to the President annually.

## PRESIDENT'S APPRECIATION AWARD

The President may recognize an individual or group that has advanced the mission and purpose of NBCSN through activities which promote expertise in school nursing practice through certification.

## ANNUAL EVENT

NBCSN may host an event to honor and recognize the accomplishments of the NCSNs. The Executive Director will collaborate with management company staff to arrange the event, with guidelines and funding provided by the Board. If a specific event is not held, NBCSN will honor award recipients during the NASN Annual Conference.

## APPROVAL AND NOTIFICATION

All nominations for awards shall be approved by the Board at the April meeting. The President will notify recipients of the award and plans for presentation at the annual event or NASN Annual Conference.

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### • TRAVEL AND EXPENSE GUIDELINES

NBCSN will pay reasonable travel expenses for authorized representatives. Members of the Board and approved staff will be reimbursed for expenses while on official business or attending the annual meeting and other meetings of the Board. Representatives are expected to use discretion and good judgment in all matters involving NBCSN funds. Appropriate receipts must be submitted with all requests for reimbursement.

Reimbursement will be made for:

1. Transportation
  - a. All regularly scheduled forms of travel (airplane, train, bus, etc.) and the use of a personal automobile
  - b. Only round-trip coach airfare, using the most economical flight available at the time
  - c. Automobile mileage reimbursement at the current IRS mileage rate, but not to exceed the cost of a round-trip coach ticket
  - d. Ground transportation (including tips) to and from the hotel or meeting site
  - e. Parking fees or highway tolls
2. Lodging
  - a. Lodging will be reimbursed at the single occupancy rate at the designated meeting hotel
  - b. In cases when an NBCSN representative must arrange for lodging, reimbursement for reasonable room rates for the geographic region will be allowed
3. Meals
  - a. meals will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$75 per day
4. Communication
  - a. telephone calls, faxes, and other means of communication on behalf of NBCSN will be reimbursed, providing receipts accompany documentation validating NBCSN business.
5. Internet access

## SUBMISSION

An NBCSN expense voucher, accompanied by original receipts, must be submitted within 30 days after the last day of travel. Vouchers postmarked 60 days after the last day of travel may incur a 25% deduction in reimbursement.

## FORMS

Forms used in the course of business for NBCSN by Board members, Committee members, volunteers, and management staff shall be updated as needed and filed by the Executive Director in the Board's Dropbox, Forms folder. The Executive Director and management company staff will collaborate to ensure that any forms posted on NBCSN's website are up-to-date and consistent with those in the Dropbox.

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- **Appendix**

## CODE OF CONDUCT



Code of Conduct for Certified School Nurses (NCSN), Certifying School Nurses with NBCSN-Issued Credentials and Emeritus Credential (NCSN-E)

## ***Preamble***

The National Board for Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN) endeavors to assure the public that nationally certified school nurses (NCSNs) meet professional standards of knowledge and skills. Additionally, NBCSN has established certain principles to ensure that the school nurses it certifies are upholding appropriate standards of professionalism and ethics in practice. The NBCSN's *Code of Conduct for Certified School Nurses (NCSN)*, and *Certifying School Nurses with NBCSN-Issued Credentials including Emeritus Designation (NCSN-E)* outlines principles that all certifying school nurses and school nurses holding an NBCSN credential are expected to uphold. Failure to uphold these principles may be cause for disciplinary review.

Disciplinary actions taken at the conclusion of that review may include formal censures, fines, suspension, revocation of certification or eligibility for certification or NCSN-E designation and/or other actions deemed appropriate by NBCSN. Disciplinary actions may be reported to the applicable state licensing board or other legal enforcement authority, the federal government, the school nurse's employer or other interested parties, including individuals seeking information about the school nurse's NCSN certification or NCSN-E designation, as solely determined by the NBCSN and in compliance with NBCSN's information disclosure policy. This *Code of Conduct* represents some, though not necessarily all, of the behaviors that may initiate review under NBCSN's *Policies and Procedures for NCSN Disciplinary Matters*.

## ***Principles of Conduct***

Certified or certifying school nurses shall protect the integrity of NBCSN-issued credentials and of the processes by which those credentials are earned and awarded. Certified or certifying school nurses and school nurses with the NCSN-E designation shall not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security (including unauthorized reproducing, distributing, displaying, discussing, sharing or otherwise misusing test questions or any part of test questions) before, during or after an NBCSN examination.

- shall not engage in irregular behavior, as defined in NBCSN's *Policies and Procedures for School Nurse Disciplinary Matters*.
- shall not employ deceptive means, including submitting to the NBCSN any document or testimony that contains a misstatement of fact or omits a fact to obtain, attempt to obtain or assist others in obtaining or maintaining an NBCSN credential.
- shall not manufacture, modify, reproduce, distribute or use a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized NBCSN certificate shall not falsely represent themselves in any way to be a Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN) or a NCSN-E or otherwise use or assist others in using fraudulent credentials, as set forth in in the NBCSN's *Policies and Procedures for School Nurse Disciplinary Matters*.
- shall promptly inform NBCSN when possessing knowledge or evidence that raises a substantial question of cheating on or misuse of questions from an NBCSN examination, fraudulent use of an NBCSN card, certificate or other document or misrepresentation of NBCSN certification status by a school nurse or any other individual.



***Certified or certifying school nurses shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards related to their professional role, including but not limited to those governing clinical practice. Certified or certifying school nurses:***

- shall respect appropriate professional boundaries in their interactions with students and families, and others.
- shall avoid behavior that would pose a threat or potential threat to the health, well-being or safety of others apart from reasonable risks taken in a student's interest during the delivery of health care.
- shall not disclose student confidential information, publicly disclose information about a student that the school nurse learned as part of the school nurse's practice, nor disparage any student in a public setting, (including through social media) based on information observed or learned in the school nurse's practice.
- shall recognize and understand their professional and personal limitations.
- shall practice without impairment from substance abuse and shall practice without impairment from cognitive deficiency or mental illness that, even with appropriate reasonable accommodation, adversely affects their practice.
- shall maintain and demonstrate the ability to engage in nursing professional role activities appropriate to their education, experience, and position.
- shall behave in a manner that is lawful and ethical, and that upholds accepted standards of professional practice.
- must report to the NBCSN any adverse regulatory or credentialing action within 30 days of revocation, suspension, surrender, lapse, loss or denial of or any restrictions imposed on a license, authorization, or credential to practice as a health care provider (including authorization to practice as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure), whether such adverse action is by decision, consent order, stipulation, or agreement.
- must report to NBCSN within 30 days convictions, guilty pleas or no contest pleas to felonies and certain misdemeanors, as described more fully in the *Policies and Procedures for NCSN Disciplinary Matters*.

School nurses with the NCSN-E designation shall not use the NCSN-E designation in any clinical setting or in the context of any clinically-related interaction, including clinical volunteer service.

*Adopted:*

*Last Revised: June 2018*

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*Revised and adopted March 2, 2020*

*Revised and adopted June 8, 2020*

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