

2022a

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR SCHOOL NURSES HANDBOOK FOR CANDIDATES

RECERTIFICATION HANDBOOK



EXAMINATION DATES

<https://www.nbcsn.org/news-events/>

This handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination and Recertification Procedures for School Nurses. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This handbook is subject to change.

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CERTIFICATION

The National Board for Certification of School Nurses, Inc. (NBCSN) endorses the concept of voluntary certification by examination for all school nurses. Certification is one part of a process called credentialing. It focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current competence in a specialized area of practice. Board certification in school nursing is highly valued and provides formal recognition of school nursing knowledge and competence. The Nationally Certified School Nurse (NCSN) credential is a personal commitment to higher standards that inspire credibility and confidence.

The NCSN program was granted initial accreditation by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) in May 2008 and was reaccredited in 2013 and 2018. ABNS is the standard-setting body for specialty nursing certification programs and offers a very stringent and comprehensive accreditation process. NBCSN demonstrated that it meets the 18 ABNS standards of quality. Briefly stated, this means that a nationally recognized accrediting body has determined that the NCSN credential is based on a valid and reliable testing process and that the structures in place to administer the examinations meet, and even exceed, the standards of the certification industry from a legal, regulatory and association management perspective.

Certification does not end with the successful completion of the examination. In order to maintain the NCSN credential, NCSNs must either document a minimum of continuing education credits in school health issues every five years or retake the examination. This demonstrates a commitment to continued competence.

MISSION

The mission of the National Board for Certification of School Nurses, Inc. (NBCSN) is to advance the quality of school health services (school nurse practice) by providing a rigorous national credentialing process, to validate competency based on professional standards.

VISION

The vision of NBCSN is to have national certification by NBCSN widely recognized and highly valued by providers, employers, and the public as the standard of excellence for school health services.

PURPOSE

The purposes of the NBCSN are to:

1. Develop, administer, and evaluate a national certification process for school nurses that
 - a. Provides recognition to those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the NBCSN and pass the National Certification Examination for School Nurses by awarding the credential of National Certified School Nurse (NCSN).
 - b. Establishes and measures the level of knowledge required for certification in school nursing.
 - c. Provides a standard of requisite knowledge required for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the health professions in the assessment of school nurses;
2. Develop and evaluate additional mechanisms for professional competence 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.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible candidates must:

1. Submit a copy of their license as a registered nurse (RN) in one of the United States.
2. Submit copy of diploma or transcript (unofficial is acceptable):
 - a. A bachelor's degree or higher **in nursing** or the equivalent in other countries (**Applicants who completed their education outside of the U.S. must submit verification of their international credentials obtained through a certified evaluation service.**)
 - i. OR
 - b. A master's degree in education with a concentration in school nursing or school health services from an NBCSN approved, accredited institution. **Contact info@nbcsn.org with information about specific programs (not every program will qualify).**

- i. OR
 - c. 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 years prior to taking the test. 1,000 hours is roughly equivalent to the hours worked by a full-time school nurse who works at least 6 hours/day for a school year of 180 days 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.
 5. Pay the required fee.
-

ADMINISTRATION

The Certification Program is sponsored by the National Board for Certification of School Nurses, Inc. (NBCSN). The Certification Examination for School Nurses is administered for NBCSN by:

Association Headquarters
1120 Route 73, Suite 200
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

Questions concerning the examination should be referred to Association Headquarters at 833.276.0986 or info@nbcnsn.org.

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

Please see the Exam Prep page on the NBCSN website for information on available examination preparation materials. There is no requirement to purchase or use any of the recommended materials. <https://www.nbcnsn.org/ncsn/the-exam/exam-prep/>

Please note that the suggestions on the NBCSN website are not exhaustive, and review will not guarantee success for every candidate. NBCSN only publishes the revised *School Nursing Certification Review* book (2020) and two practice tests, and recommends the NurseBuilders programs. NBCSN does not endorse any specific study guide or program. No study materials can guarantee that you will pass the national NCSN exam.

ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass the Certification Examination for School Nurses are eligible to use the registered credential NCSN after their names and will receive a certificate from NBCSN. A registry of Certified School Nurses will be maintained by NBCSN and may be reported in its publications.

School nurse certification is valid for a period of five years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the Certification Examination for School Nurses or meet current continuing education requirements in order to retain certification.

REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification may be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an Application, credentials, or documentation pertaining thereof.
2. Revocation of current Registered Nurse license.
3. Misrepresentation of certification status.

Any misrepresentation may be reported to the appropriate state board of nursing.

NBCSN provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of Board Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process by directing any questions, complaints or concerns in writing, to the President for Board consideration within 30 days of the incident.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Complete the application for the Certification Examination for School Nurses from the [NBCSN website www.nbcsn.org/apply](http://www.nbcsn.org/apply).

Read and follow the directions on the Application and in this Handbook for Candidates.

FEES

Application Fee for the Certification Examination for School Nurses as of January 1, 2022 (Visa, MasterCard, and American Express):

- \$370.00 Early Bird rate (In place from date application window opens until 2 weeks prior to application deadline)
- \$390 Regular rate (In place during the last two weeks of the application window)
- Any application submitted after the deadline will be assessed and \$100 late fee in addition to the regular fee.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Changing Test Appointment within the Testing Window

1. If it is **30 days prior** to your scheduled appointment, you may reschedule your test appointment for no fee. To do so, you must complete two steps:
 - a. Contact Prometric and cancel your original appointment.
 - b. Reschedule your appointment with Prometric to another date within your testing window.
2. If it is **between 29 and 5 days prior** to your scheduled appointment, you may reschedule your testing appointment for a \$50 fee payable to Prometric. You must complete two steps:
 - a. Contact Prometric and cancel your original appointment.
 - b. Reschedule your appointment with Prometric. The \$50 fee will be charged each time you reschedule your appointment.
3. If it is **5 days prior** to your scheduled appointment, you are unable to reschedule. You must appear and sit for the exam or all fees will be forfeited.

Withdrawal from Exam

1. If it is **30 days or more prior** to your scheduled appointment or end of the testing window, you may withdraw your test appointment for a \$75 fee. To do so, you must complete two steps:
 - a. Contact Prometric and cancel your original appointment.
 - b. Withdraw your application by logging into your NBCSN account and completing the withdrawal request. \$75 of your exam fee is non-refundable.
2. If you are between **29 and 5 days prior** to the end of the testing window or test date you may withdraw from the exam for a \$125 fee. You must complete two steps:

- a. Contact Prometric and cancel your original appointment. A fee of \$50 will be charged.
 - b. Withdraw your application by logging into your NBCSN account and completing the withdrawal request. \$75 of your exam fee is non-refundable.
3. If you are 5 days prior to end of your testing window or test date, you are unable to withdraw. You must appear and sit for the exam or all fees will be forfeited.

Late for Testing Appointment / No Show

The entire testing fee is forfeited for candidates who are more than 15 minutes late for a test appointment or who fail to appear for an appointment.

Exam Retake

If you need to retake the NBCSN exam, you may reapply during any subsequent exam session after the end of your testing window. The retake fee is the same as the regular exam.

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The Certification Examination for School Nurses is administered during an established one month testing periods (spring, summer and fall) on a daily basis, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Prometric.

Prometric has several hundred testing sites in the United States, as well as Canada. Scheduling is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. You will not be able to schedule your examination appointment until you have received an Authorization to Test.

Testing also available through Remote Proctoring – see information below.

SCHEDULING YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

Once NBCSN has processed your application and determined that you have met all eligibility requirements, we will notify you via email with your Authorization To Test (ATT). Your ATT email will include all of the information you need to schedule your testing date and location within your testing window. You cannot schedule your exam until you receive this ATT communication. If you have not received your ATT within one week of submitting your application, contact NBCSN at 833.276.0986 or info@nbcnsn.org.

Appointment times are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. We recommend you schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your ATT email in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date. It is your responsibility to contact Prometric at <http://www.prometric.com> to schedule the exam appointment.

TESTING CENTER INSTRUCTIONS

Plan to arrive at your exam site 30 minutes prior to your appointment time. It is highly recommended that you become familiar with the location of the testing site prior to the testing date. Please plan for weather, traffic, parking and any security requirements that are specific to the testing location. Failure to arrive at your scheduled appointment on time may result in the cancellation of your appointment.

You must present a current government issued photo identification that contains your SIGNATURE. These are three acceptable forms of identification:

- Driver's license
- Passport
- Military ID

The name you use to register for the exam must exactly match the name on your ID. If the testing center administrator questions your identification, you may be asked for additional proof of identity.

SPECIAL TEST CENTERS, EXCLUDING UNITED STATES AND PARTS OF CANADA

It may be possible to establish a special testing center to take a paper and pencil examination in your own country. A request for special testing can be sent to info@nbcsn.org or by calling 833.276.0986. All requests must be received eight (8) weeks prior to the beginning of the testing window.

REMOTE PROCTORING

NBCSN is excited to announce that you are now able to schedule and sit for your exam from the safety of your home!

Working with our exam administration partner, Prometric, we have implemented a remote proctoring solution that is available to all candidates.

You will need a camera, microphone, quiet and well-lit room, and clean area if you wish to utilize this testing solution.

To prepare for your exam session, we recommend the following:

ProProctor User Guide (MAC users please see specific instructions for settings requirements on page 11) – [click here](#).

View the informational Remote Proctoring Webinar [here](#)

A copy of the slides from the webinar can be found [here](#)

Carefully read the Remote Proctoring Regulations and adjust your testing environment accordingly – [click here for the user guide](#).

Prior to your exam launch, install the ProProctor Application, and perform a System Check – [click here](#).

If anyone is looking to contact Prometric to schedule or reschedule an exam for test center or remote proctoring.

The direct link is <https://www.prometric.com/test-takers/search/nbcnsn>

ADA AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Special testing arrangements will be made for individuals with special needs. There is a section on the application where you can request accommodations for special needs, and provide details on your requirements.

ABOUT THE COMPUTER BASED TESTING FORMAT

The NCSN exam has been formatted for the computer since 2007. Questions are displayed, one at a time, on the computer screen. The answers to any item may be changed at anytime during the testing session. None of the answers are submitted until the candidate completes the exam or designates "SUBMIT" on the last screen of the examination. After that time, the answers for any item may not be changed.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

NBCSN provides a mechanism for answering candidate questions and responding to comments or challenges made by a candidate. It is the responsibility of the candidate to initiate this process in writing within 30 days of the receipt of the examination results or within 30 days of the incident, whichever is sooner. All questions/comments should be directed to NBCSN with the exception of those concerning the administration of the examination or the testing site which should be referred to Prometric (<http://www.prometric.com>).

RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

1. Simple calculators are permitted, but calculators must be small (hand held or smaller), noiseless, cordless, and tapeless, and must have no printing capability, expansion capability, or alphanumeric keyboards or displays. A calculator is also available on the computer screen. Calculators included in cell phones and other electronic devices are not allowed.
 2. Electronic devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, Bluetooth type devices, MP3 players such as iPods, cameras, voice recorders, laptop computers and tablets cannot be used during the examination and must be turned off.
 3. No papers, books or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the examination room.
 4. No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the testing period. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
 5. Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.
 6. Unless prior permission has been granted for you to bring a beverage or a snack to the test center due to a medical need (see Special Needs on page 7) you cannot bring food or beverages to the test center.
-

REPORT OF RESULTS

<https://www.nbcsn.org/resources/obtaining-results/>

RE-EXAMINATION

Eligible candidates may take the Certification Examination for School Nurses as often as desired upon filing of a new Application and payment of fees. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

RECERTIFICATION

To maintain NCSN status, recertification by examination or continuing education is required every five years. Information about the requirements for recertification can be found on the NBCSN website at <https://www.nbcsn.org/ncsn/recertification>.

It is the responsibility of the NCSN must keep his or her contact information up-to- date with NBCSN (address, telephone and email) in order to receive the reminder notices sent out in advance of a candidate's recertification date and to avoid an additional fee for submitting a late application.

See more recertification information on Page

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. **NBCSN will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate.** State or other jurisdictions previously authorized by the candidate for state certification purposes will receive notification of Pass/Fail status of the applicant.
 2. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to NBCSN.
 3. A registry of Nationally Certified School Nurses will be maintained by NBCSN and may be reported in its publications.
 4. NBCSN will provide a letter to the employer regarding the Pass/Fail status, at the written request of the candidate.
-

CONTENT OF EXAMINATION

1. The Certification Examination for School Nurses is a computer-based examination composed of a maximum of 200 multiple choice, objective questions with a total testing time of four (4) hours.
2. The content for the examination is described in the Content Outline starting on page 14.
3. The questions for the examination are obtained through a rigorous process of item writing and item review from individuals with expertise in school nursing and school health issues and are evaluated on a regular basis for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the NBCSN.
4. NBCSN, with the advice and assistance of Prometric, prepares the examination.
5. The Certification Examination for School Nurses will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

CONTENT OUTLINE

I	HEALTH APPRAISAL	26%
II	HEALTH PROBLEMS AND NURSING MANAGEMENT	27%
III	HEALTH PROMOTION/DISEASE PREVENTION	20%
IV	S P E C I A L HEALTH ISSUES	14%
V	PROFESSIONAL ISSUES	13%

I. HEALTH APPRAISAL

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>A. General Physical Health</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Collection <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Subjective b. Objective 2. Interpretation of Data/ Planning 3. Intervention/Referral 4. Evaluation | <p>B. General Psychosocial Health</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Collection <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Subjective b. Objective 2. Interpretation of Data/ Planning 3. Intervention/Referral 4. Evaluation |
| <p>C. Systems</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cardiovascular <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 2. Ears <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 3. Endocrine <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 4. Eyes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 5. Gastrointestinal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 6. Musculoskeletal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 7. Neuro-Developmental <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 8. Nose, Mouth, and Throat <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 9. Reproductive/Genitourinary <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 10. Respiratory <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral 11. Skin and Scalp <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data Collection b. Interpretation / Planning c. Intervention/ Referral |

II. HEALTH PROBLEMS AND NURSING MANAGEMENT

- A. Emergency Care
 - 1. Abdomen
 - 2. Anaphylaxis
 - 3. Burns
 - 4. Cardiac
 - 5. Dental/Oral
 - 6. Head trauma
 - 7. Hemorrhage/bleeding
 - 8. Lacerations/Punctures/Avulsions
 - 9. Overdose, Poisoning, and Exposure
 - 10. Respiratory
 - 11. Spinal Cord
 - 12. Neurological
 - 13. Mental Health
 - 14. Musculoskeletal
 - 15. Other
- B. Acute, Episodic, and Chronic Conditions
 - 1. Cardiovascular system
 - 2. Gastrointestinal system
 - 3. Genitourinary/Reproductive system
 - 4. Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat
 - 5. Integumentary system
 - 6. Mental Health
 - 7. Metabolic and Endocrine system
 - 8. Multisystem
 - a. Autoimmune Diseases
 - b. Allergies
 - c. Cancer
 - d. Genetic/Birth Defects
 - e. Other
 - 9. Musculoskeletal system
 - 10. Neurological system
 - 11. Respiratory
- C. Communicable Diseases
 - 1. Bacterial infection
 - 2. Viral infection
 - 3. Fungal infection
 - 4. Sexually Transmitted Infection/Disease
 - 5. Infestations
 - 6. Other

III. HEALTH PROMOTION/DISEASE PREVENTION

- A. Immunizations
- B. Risk Reduction and Infection Control
 - 1. Identification of Risk Factors
 - 2. Prevention Methods
 - a. Surveillance
 - b. Self-Care Skills
 - c. Group Education
- C. Health Education
 - 1. Students
 - 2. Staff
 - 3. Families
 - 4. Communities/Stakeholders
- D. Counseling / Conflict Resolution
- E. Community Health Needs
- F. Cultural Considerations
- G. Environmental Concerns
- H. Safety Education
- I. Disaster Preparedness

IV. SPECIAL HEALTH ISSUES

- A. Special Health Needs
 - 1. Abuse and Neglect
 - 2. Assistive Care
 - 3. Eating Disorders
 - 4. Human Sexuality
 - 5. Gender Identity
 - 6. Pregnancy/Parenting
 - 7. Physical Problems (e.g. organ transplant, disabilities)
 - 8. Psychosocial Problems (e.g. self-harm, trauma, suicide)
 - 9. Substance Use, Abuse, and Addiction
 - 10. Assistive Technology
 - 11. Bullying Harassment, and Violence
 - 12. Other (e.g., human trafficking, homelessness/poverty, food insecurity)
- B. Educational/Health Management
 - 1. Legal Considerations
 - a. Laws Relating to Special Education (e.g., IDEA)
 - b. Americans with Disabilities (504)
 - 2. Plans
 - a. Individualized Education Plan
 - b. Individualized Healthcare Plan
 - c. Section 504 Plan
 - d. Emergency Action Plan
 - 3. Resources/Referrals

V. PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

- A. Code of Ethics (ANA/NASN)
- B. Nurse Practice Act/Licensure/Certification/ Scope and Standards of Practice
- C. Administrative
 - 1. Accountability/Responsibility
 - a. Job Description
 - b. Malpractice
 - c. Documentation
 - 2. Supervision, Delegation, and Evaluation
 - a. Professional Licensed Staff
 - b. Unlicensed Personnel
 - 3. Leadership (e.g. mentoring, orienting, advocating)
- D. Consultation to Administration on Health Issues
 - 1. State and Federal Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines
 - 2. School Board Policy
 - 3. School Health Services
- E. Electronic and Hard Copy Health Records
 - 1. Accuracy
 - 2. Confidentiality
 - 3. Storage / Retention
 - 4. Student and Parent Rights
 - 5. Access to Records
 - 6. Authorization for Release/Exchange of Information
 - 7. Analysis and Reporting
- F. Medication
 - 1. Administration
 - 2. Prescription
 - a. Nonprescription
 - 3. Authorization
 - a. Medical
 - b. Parental
 - 4. Documentation (e.g. administration, errors)
 - 5. Storage, Safety, and Disposal
- G. Treatment Policy
 - 1. Authorization for Treatment
 - 2. Protocols and Procedures
- H. Legal Issues
 - 1. Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting
 - 2. Confidentiality (e.g., HIPAA, FERPA)
 - 3. Communicable Disease Reporting
 - 4. Workplace Environment (e.g. discrimination, harassment)
 - 5. Local Policy, State, and Federal Laws (e.g., McKinney-Vento, ESSA)
- I. Research and Evidence-Based Practice

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. In the school setting, a student with a seizure disorder should:
 - a. wear a helmet for protection.
 - b. have a seizure action plan on file.
 - c. sit near the teacher for close supervision.
 - d. have a medic alert tag for field trips.

2. When writing a Health Plan for a student with seizures, which of the following need NOT be considered?
 - a. Altered health maintenance related to knowledge deficit of benefits of compliance to prescribed regimen.
 - b. Potential for self-esteem disturbance related to chronic condition.
 - c. Potential for aspiration related to seizure activity.
 - d. Potential for infection related to chronic conditions.

3. A doctor has faxed the nurse the medical information about a student's newly diagnosed seizure condition. In order to manage this student's care at school, the nurse should first:
 - a. talk with the teacher about the student's need for classroom safety.
 - b. talk with the campus administrator about the student needing additional services.
 - c. talk with the parent to determine how the family and student are coping with the condition.
 - d. talk with the PE teacher about changes in the student's activity level.

4. There has been an accident on the playground. When the nurse arrives, a 10 year old student is observed to be holding their front tooth. The nurse asks the teacher to call the parent because the child must be transported to a dentist immediately. The nurse then should:
 - a. clean off the tooth by rubbing and rinsing with normal saline.
 - b. protect the tooth by wrapping in a gauze pad or tissue.
 - c. rinse the tooth with water while holding it by the crown.
 - d. drop in milk solution while holding the tooth by the crown.

5. The nurse suspects a medication protocol in the district is not best practice. Which of the following is the least appropriate method for investigation?
- Contact the state's school nurse consultant.
 - Conduct a literature review.
 - Ask a colleague in a neighboring district.
 - Survey the state's regulations, legislation and guidelines.
6. The health department conducts vision and hearing screening as a contracted service to the school district. The students' vision and hearing screening records are:
- subject to the privacy accorded by the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and belong to the school district.
 - subject to the privacy accorded by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and belong to the health department.
 - subject to the privacy accorded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and belong to the school district.
 - considered mandated health information and not subject to privacy rules.
7. A Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) outbreak in the school is best combated by:
- isolation of infected students.
 - frequent hand washing.
 - notifying health department.
 - closing the school for decontamination.

8. A nine year old student with Type I Diabetes presents to the school nurse to report that their blood sugar is high and they need to self-administer a correction dose of insulin. They have an individualized health care plan in place with parental signature, as well as signed written orders for short acting insulin daily at lunch and “as needed” for blood glucose readings >150 from their health care provider. Their meter reads 242 and the prescriber’s order for determining the correction dose is:

Blood Glucose - 150

50

They have their insulin pen and asks the nurse to double check that they have dialed in the correct number of units. It is 10am and his scheduled lunchtime is at noon.

The appropriate correction dose of insulin to administer would be:

- a. 2 units of Lantus insulin.
 - b. 1.5 units of Lantus insulin.
 - c. 2 units of Novalog insulin.
 - d. 1.5 units of Novalog insulin.
9. A 6th grade student has transferred into the district during the absence of the school nurse. Upon return, the nurse finds a written health care plan with parent signature, orders from the physician for an EpiPen to be administered “as needed” for severe allergy reactions to nut products, and an unexpired auto-injectable epinephrine 0.15mg. pen in the mailbox. After introducing herself to the student and noting that the student is of normal height and weight for her age, the most appropriate next action for the school nurse would be to:
- a. make copies of all paperwork and distribute to all staff and volunteers who may have contact with the student.
 - b. call the ordering physician to clarify the correct dose of the epinephrine.
 - c. call the parent to obtain an additional “back up” dose of medication to be used for field trips.
 - d. take a photo of the child and attach to the health care plan to assist appropriate staff in identifying this at-risk student.

- 10.** During a health lesson, the school nurse is talking to middle school students about the importance of building strong bones now to prevent fractures and osteoporosis. Which of the following facts is NOT important to include?
- Bone growth doubles during ages 9-18, so calcium requirements double.
 - In addition to calcium rich foods, sunlight and weight-bearing exercise build strong bones.
 - Calcium rich foods include broccoli, cheese and yogurt.
 - When fractures occur in children, bone density screening is recommended to detect rickets or osteoporosis.
- 11.** A 13-year-old boy has become a frequent visitor complaining of severe headaches. Upon his most recent visit, the nurse notices bruises on his neck and petechiae around his eyes, and suspects that he may be involved in the “choking game”. The nurse’s first course of action should be to:
- refer to the counselor for suicide assessment.
 - visit with the principal to determine if other students have talked about this dangerous activity.
 - call his parents to warn them about her suspicions and to increase their vigilance.
 - talk to the student about his activities during time spent alone.
- 12.** A 5-year-old student is brought to the school nurse by a teacher. The teacher states the student fell off of the monkey bars and landed on right arm. The child is crying and complaining of pain around the right elbow. The nurse notes swelling at the site. The nurse should
- put ice on the site, put the arm in a sling, and notify the parent(s).
 - put ice on the site, notify the parent(s), and send the child back to class.
 - put ice on the site, notify the parent(s), and recommend follow-up with the primary care provider.
 - put ice on the site, notify the parent(s), and recommend follow-up with the primary care provider at the end of the day.

Correct Answers to Sample Questions:

1.b; 2.d; 3.c; 4.d; 5.c; 6.a; 7.b; 8.c; 9.b; 10.a; 11.d; 12.c

For more sample questions see the Exam Prep section of the website <https://www.nbcsn.org/challenge-the-school-nurse-3/>.

RESOURCES

The following resource list may be helpful in preparing for the NCSN exam. It does not constitute a complete listing nor an endorsement by NBCSN. **The first three publications should be available in every health office, the majority of the NCSN Exam questions are based on information from these books.** Primary resources provide the critical knowledge necessary for the school nurse.

Supplemental resources may be helpful for a more thorough understanding of an area with less familiarity. Use the most current edition of the resource. The initials “n.d.” or “no date” indicate the website resource is updated too frequently to list a current publication date.

[Click here for the most recent resources.](#)

NOTES

RECERTIFICATION

All NCSNs are required to renew their certification in order to demonstrate that they have kept current with new practices, methodologies, equipment, medications, and terminology in the specialty of school nursing. School Nurse certification is granted for a period of five (5) years at which time the certificant must either retake and pass the Certification Examination for School Nurses or meet current continuing education and recertification requirements.

[Please watch this video tutorial on how to complete the NCSN-E and NCSN application.](#)

Rationale for Recertification

Continuing competence is defined as:

The ongoing commitment of a registered nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, and judgment with the attitudes, values, and beliefs required to practice safely, effectively, and ethically in a designated role, patient population and/or setting.

NBCSN conducts a job analysis every 5 years to confirm that the Nationally Certified School Nurse credential and examination correctly reflect the most current and up-to-date school nursing practice. Recertification is required every 5 years.

“Continuing certification refers to the requirements that promote lifelong learning, maintain the currency of professional knowledge, and promote patient safety. The rationale for requiring continuing certification is based on the degradation of the fundamental knowledge and skills required for certification over time” (Spence, et.al., 2021).

As an applicant is required to be a registered nurse to be certified, it follows that continual renewal of that license is required for recertification.

Continued employment in the practice of school nursing, school nurse administration, school nurse education, 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 continues to expand the school nurse’s knowledge and improve the breadth and quality of services nationally certified school nurses provide.

Courses and professional activities are designed to enhance the school nurse’s current knowledge and skills and to provide new knowledge and skills to help the school nurse provide the most appropriate, safe, and up-to-date care to the school community.

Reference

Spence, D., Wicks, T., Wojnakowski, M. and Plaus, K. (2021). Benchmarking study on continuing certification in healthcare and allied health fields: program variables, commonalities, and trends. *Journal for Nursing Regulation*, 12(2), 34-40. https://www.nbcna.com/docs/default-source/research-files/benchmarking-study.pdf?sfvrsn=40eac920_2

PROCESS FOR RECERTIFICATION

Certified school nurses are notified one (1) year in advance of the expiration of their certification. Candidates for recertification must meet current eligibility requirements and submit appropriate documentation to demonstrate that criteria are met.

These include:

- A copy of the applicant's current RN license.
 - Employment in school health or related services,
 - 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 years, defined further below, **OR**
 - take and pass the current NCSN examination.
 - Payment of required fees.
-
- **It is the responsibility of the candidate to maintain active/current address and contact information with the NBCSN. Deadlines missed due to forwarded and lost mail are the responsibility of the candidate and may incur late fees or forfeited recertification status**
 - The President may grant an extension for a recertification application, provided the candidate has submitted a request in writing within 90 days of the candidate's recertification date. Requests received within 90 days after the candidate's recertification date will incur a late fee of \$100, which must be paid in addition to the application fee. There are no refunds of fees. No request for an extension will be granted beyond 90 days after the recertification date. After the 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.

CLINICAL PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION

Clinical Practice in school nursing means 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 of 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:

1. includes clinical supervision of school nurses, education and clinical supervision of baccalaureate/master's 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
2. entails continuing professional responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of the involvement.

Not eligible as clinical practice in school nursing includes:

1. one-to-one nursing as the nurse's sole responsibility within a school;
2. employment in the direct sales, marketing or distribution of school nursing-related products or services in pharmaceutical,
3. technology or other school health-related industries;
4. community health screenings;
5. work in a camp setting;
6. preceptorship/mentor and;
7. jobs unrelated to school nursing.

RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION

To apply for recertification by continuing education, 75 hours of continuing education or [approved professional activity credits](#) related to school nursing practice must be documented. These activities must be related to the practice of school nursing, sponsored by an approved national or state accrediting agency, and must have been completed during the five years prior to the expiration date on the candidate's certification. ***Additionally, beginning January 1, 2020, each CE program must be worth a minimum of 1 credit hour.***

While not required, NBCSN strongly encourages NCSNs include a variety of topics throughout the [exam domains](#) when submitting hours of continuing education.

Continuing education (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.

Continuing nursing education activities are assessed, planned, implemented, and evaluated in accordance with adult learning principles and professional education standards and ethics. The educational design process includes procedures for protecting educational content from bias, providing learners appropriate information and documentation related to their participation, and maintaining records in a secure and confidential manner. (ANCC)

To count towards recertification renewal, a program must have been [approved by one of the credentialing agencies \(accredited providers\) approved by the NBCSN](#). They must have met national or state predetermined criteria to approve programs and provide continuing education (CE). The Board recognizes the following credentialing agencies:

- Nursing specialty organizations listed below, or those accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), 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 credentialing agencies
- Colleges and Universities accredited by state, regional and federal (as US Dept. of Education) accrediting boards
- State boards of nursing
- State departments of health and education whose programs have met the criteria for continuing education through accredited providers
- National accrediting agencies for licensed professional counselors and social workers
- Authoritative federal entities, e.g., CDC, FDA

All certificates of attendance must include the name of the approved accreditation or certification body. Organizations such as hospitals, state nursing associations etc., may work with approved/accredited providers to provide continuing education programs and should note the collaboration and the provider/accreditation name on certificates.

DOCUMENTATION OF APPROVED CREDITS

Continuing Education Credits

- All contact hours must be in subjects related to school health practice and be approved by a national accrediting agency (as described above), state department of health or education, accredited universities or colleges, etc. These may include workshops, seminars, professional development offerings, and state/national conferences. Online courses, teleconferences, and “webinars” are acceptable, provided they are approved by a national or state accrediting agency.
- Single-offering courses, seminars, workshops or conferences listed as twenty (20) hours or greater must be accompanied by a course outline or content agenda attached to the recertification application.
- For conferences with multiple concurrent sessions, each session attended must be identified individually on the certificate or agenda.
- Self-paced or online CE programs are acceptable for credit if approved by one of the credentialing organizations recognized by the NBCSN.
- Courses which are considered basic nursing preparation or staff development are not accepted. Activities NOT ACCEPTABLE for continuing education credit include:
 - Basic CPR, first aid, blood-borne pathogens training and other state certification and screening courses, as vision, hearing, Acanthosis Nigricans, spinal assessment, etc.

- PALS, ATLS, ACLS will be accepted for credit only one time during the five-year recertification period.
- Basic computer technology courses, such as Windows, Word, Excel and PowerPoint, including computer training for district specific record keeping.
- In-service programs that provide specific information about the work setting's philosophy 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, as investments, retirement, preparing resumes and techniques for job interviews.
- Liberal art course in music, art, philosophy, etc, when unrelated to patient/client/student care.
- Courses for lay people.

Academic Credits

- Academic courses must be taken within the framework of a curriculum that leads to an academic degree in nursing or any academic course relevant to nursing practice. An academic course taken for credit may be used to meet NBCSN requirements if a grade of “C” or better or “pass” on a pass/fail system is achieved.
- Academic courses related to earning an MSN (or an NBCSN approved MEd in School Nursing or School Health) DNP, or PhD in Nursing are eligible for academic credit.
- 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.
- A transcript of successful completion of each course must be submitted with recertification documentation.
- Online academic courses from accredited institutions will be accepted.
- Prerequisite courses, such as mathematics, government, anatomy, physiology, languages, literature, etc. cannot be accepted to meet any part of the continuing education requirements for a registered nurse.

Miscellaneous activities

- Applicants and 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 before credit will be granted.

Checklist for Audit of Recertification

Please follow this checklist as you prepare for your recertification:

- Copy of current RN License
- Documentation of a minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice in the area of school nursing during the past five years, at least 750 of which must be in the prior three years. (A letter from a supervisor/school district on letterhead.) W2 or Check stub is *NOT* acceptable.
- Copies of all course certificates, with information listed below on *each* certificate:
 - Your ***name***
 - ***Number*** of credits per course
 - ***Name*** and ***date*** of program (must be related to School Nursing)
 - Name of ***credentialing organization*** approving the program
 - A ***syllabus*** or ***content outline*** for each course worth ***more than 20 credits***
 - Appropriate documentation requirements for any ***academic course*** work
- Documentation related to ***Miscellaneous Activities***, if applicable
- Required recertification fees.

Go to <http://www.nbcsn.org/recertification> to get details about qualifying courses, miscellaneous professional activities, and associated fees.

NBCSN *strongly* recommends you include MORE than the 75 credits required, should one or more of your courses/activities not meet the requirements you will not need to submit more documentation.

If you have not already done so, we welcome you to try out our new online system for keeping track of your certification and continuing education information. You can enter the system at any time to update your personal contact information and add CE information as you earn the hours. Log in with the email address you use for your account. You will be asked to change your password the first time you log in to the system.

If you have not yet tried the system, or are having difficulty logging in, please email info@nbcsn.org or call 1-833-276-0986 to ask for assistance.

