



Pennsylvania
Department of Health

AUGUST 5, 2025

Voices of School Health 2025

Bureau of Community Health Systems
Division of School Health
Colleen Schultz, Director

Session Overview

- Division of School Health Overview
- Updates & School Health Legislation
- SHARRS
- Mandated Services Review
- NLC Update
- Environmental Health Topics and Resources
- Continuing Education
- Resources



Division of School Health

School Health Division Director

- Colleen Schultz, M.Ed., CSN RN

School Health Consultants

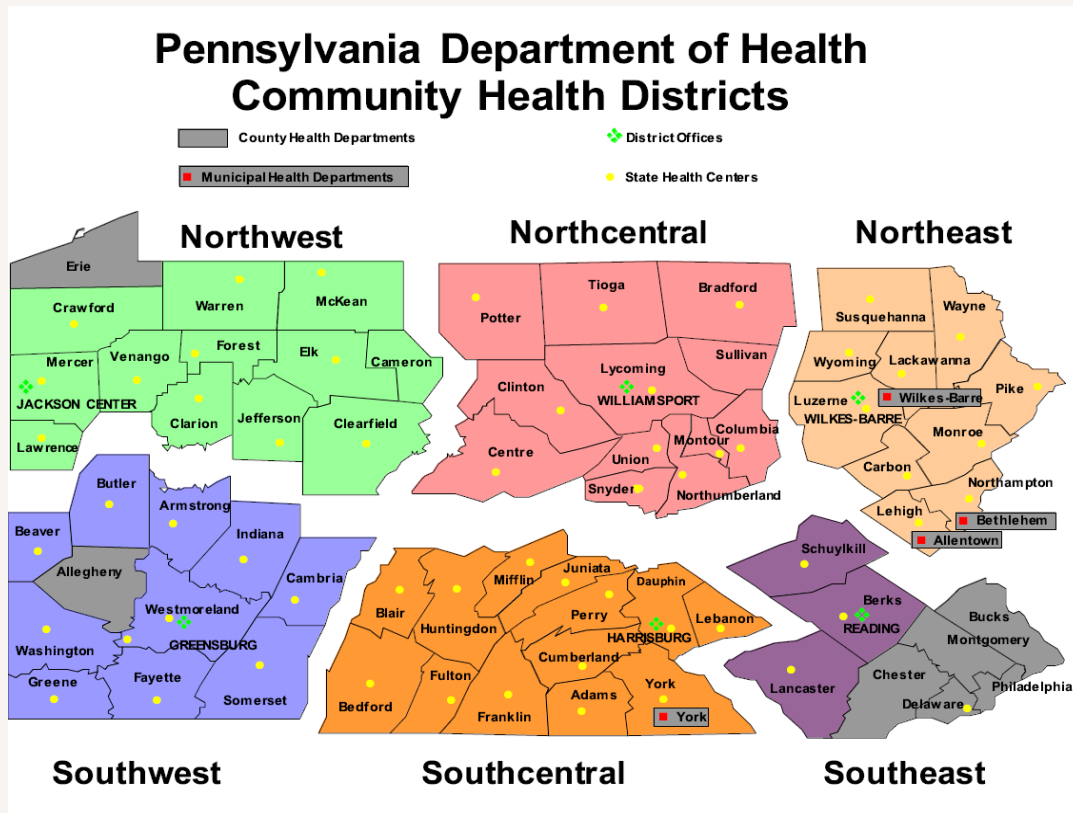
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School Health Updates



School Nurse Career Exploration Fact Sheet

School Nurse Advocacy

- Consider highlighting SHARRS data from prior school year
- Infographic tools to tell visual story



PaTTAN collaboration with School Health



Working to develop an informational fact sheet for high school students to highlight school nursing as a career



[Bureau of Special Education – Career Exploration](#)

Legislative Updates



Epinephrine Act 195 and Neffy

[Act 195 of 2014 School Access to Emergency Epinephrine](#)

Act 195 **allows** school entities to train school employees in:

- Recognition of anaphylaxis
- Administration of epinephrine **auto-injectors** to students

Does not allow non-licensed persons to administer other forms of epinephrine (e.g. nasal spray)



House Bill 1043



Referred to House Health Committee March 25, 2025.



Would update language in Act 195 to reflect the following language:



“Epinephrine delivery system” means a device approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration that contains a premeasured dose of epinephrine and is used to administer epinephrine into the human body to prevent or treat a life-threatening allergic reaction.

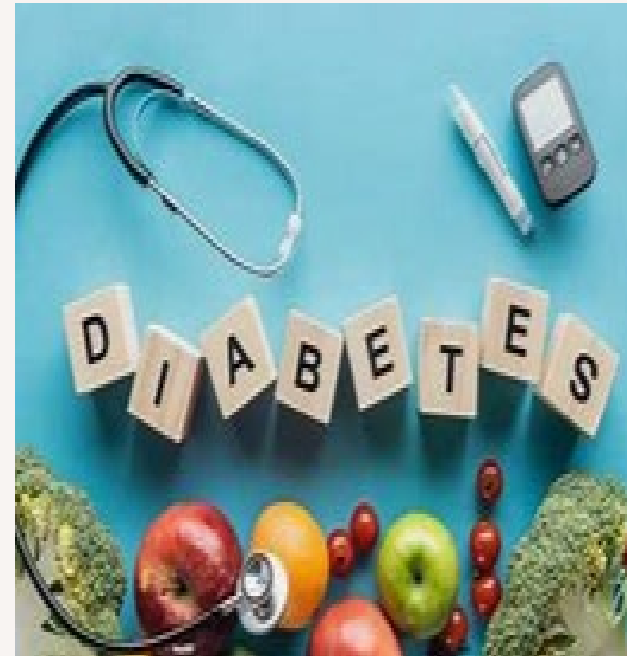


[House Bill 1043](#)



Diabetes Act 117

- [Act 117 - Parental Education of Type 1 Diabetes](#)
- [Type 1 Diabetes Parent Fact Sheet](#)
- [Type 1 Diabetes Parent Fact Sheet - Spanish](#)



Anti-Seizure Medication

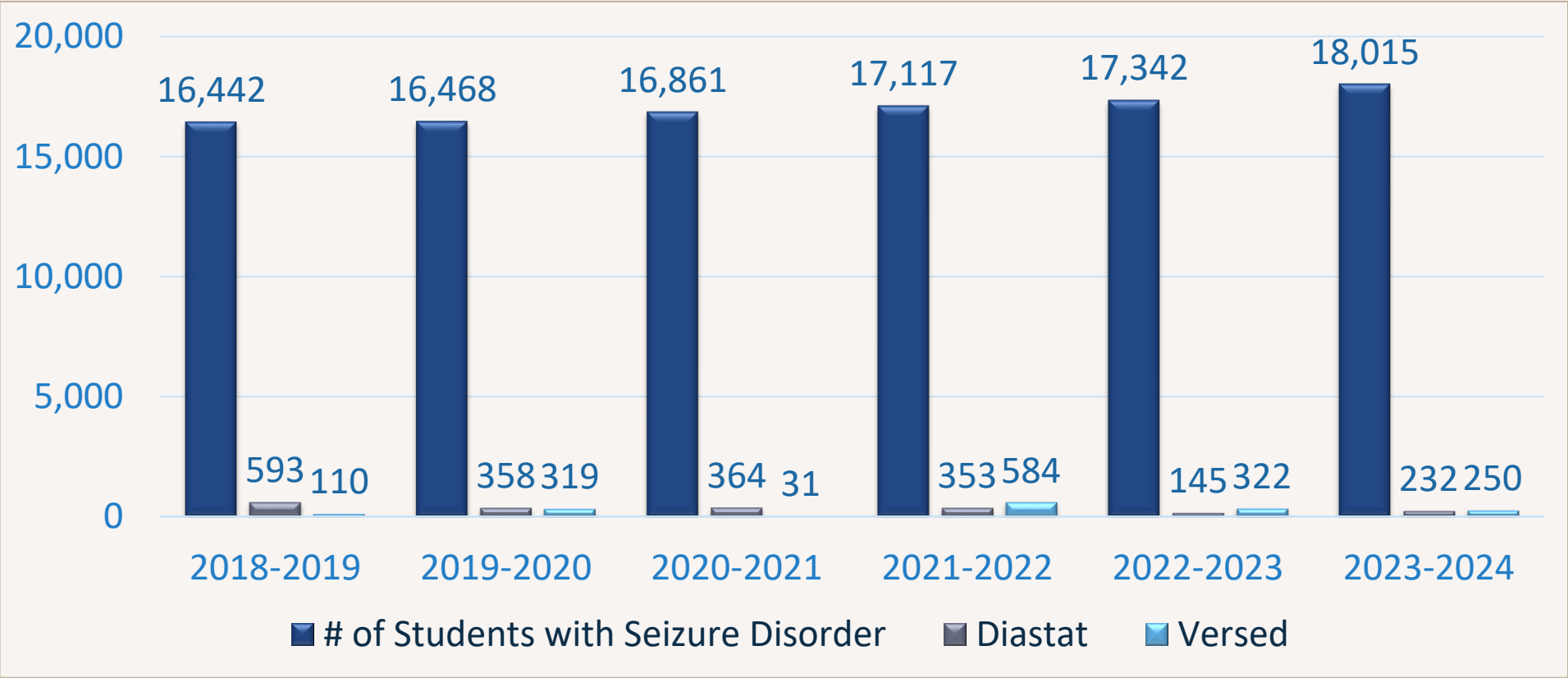
House Bill 656

- Not passed yet – referred to House Education Committee February 20, 2025.
- ‘Trained school employee’ may administer emergency anti-seizure medication or treatment.
- Defined as: *Nayzilam nasal spray or a similar remedy, vagus nerve stimulator magnets and other non-rectal emergency medications and treatments approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration for patients with epilepsy for the management of seizures by persons without medical credentials as required by the Commonwealth.*



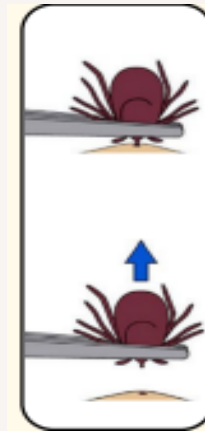
SHARRS – Seizure Medication

Seizure Emergency Medication by School Year



Act 120 – Lyme Education and Tick Removal

- [Schools and Camps | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)
- [Act 120 Tick Legislation Guidance for School Nurses](#)
- [Health Room Tick Removal Flyer](#)
- [Act 120 Frequently Asked Questions](#)



Act 122 – Vision Screening



Proposed Regulations posted in PA Code and Bulletin June 28, 2025



Public comment period 30 days through July 28, 2025



IRRC comment period for 30 days through August 28, 2025



[Regulation # 10-241 Proposed Vision Screening](#)



House Bill 191

Requires AED's at School Athletic Events

Passed in House on June 9th and referred to Senate Education Committee on June 18th

- Each school entity must offer CPR/AED instruction to employees and volunteers at least once every 2 yrs.
- Requires schools (public and nonpublic) to ensure at least one CPR/AED trained individual present in each school building during the school day.
- Schools must develop or amend an existing cardiac emergency response plan for school day and school athletic activities; requires annual sudden cardiac arrest drills.
- Tasks PDE with establishing AED Program.
- [HB 191](#)



Other Legislation – FAQ's



Act 73 – Peyton's Law



Requires:

- Student athletes, and parents of student athletes, to read and sign an acknowledgement form regarding SCA
- Coaches to complete an annual training course
- Student athletes stop participation in athletic activity if showing signs or symptoms of SCA until they can be evaluated and cleared by a licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or cardiologist
- Electrocardiogram information and testing provided to parents of student athletes and student athletes

Act 73 - School Health



Act 101 – Safety in Youth Sports

Requires all school entities to develop return to play policies for student athletes with concussions

[Concussion Management - School Health](#)

[Traumatic Brain Injury](#)

Requires training for coaches

[BrainSTEPS](#)

Does your school district have a concussion management protocol, team or policy?



Menstrual Hygiene Product Funding



Shapiro Administration Delivers
Funding for Free Period Products
to all Pennsylvania School
Districts

Act 55 of 2024 established
funding for menstrual
hygiene products for schools



Proposed 25-26 budget
continues funding of \$3
million



School Nursing – Advocacy

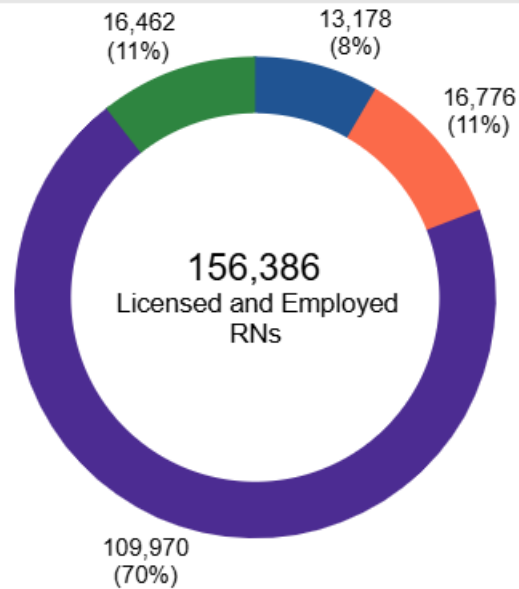


HRSA Nursing Workforce

NCHWA Pennsylvania Data 2018

RETIREMENT PLANS

Pennsylvania, 2018 | Licensed and Employed RNs

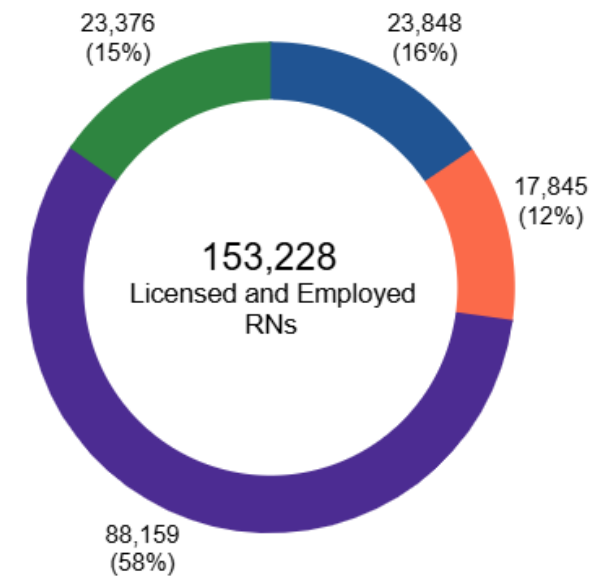


■ Already Retired or Within 2 Years ■ More than 5 Years
■ In 3 to 5 Years ■ Undecided

NCHWA Pennsylvania Data 2022

RETIREMENT PLANS

Pennsylvania, 2022 | Licensed and Employed RNs



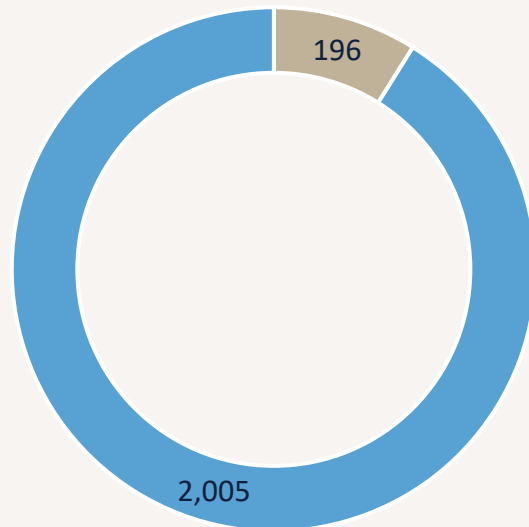
■ Already Retired or Within 2 Years ■ More than 5 Years
■ In 3 to 5 Years ■ Undecided



SHARRS – Certified School Nurses

Total CSN's – 2,201

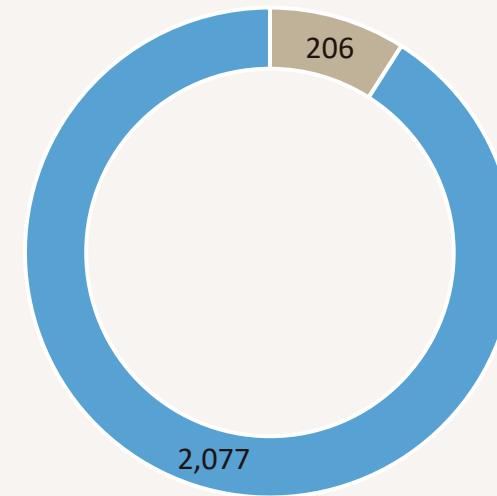
2018



■ ER Cert ■ CSN

Total CSN's – 2,283

2023



■ ER Cert ■ CSN



School Nurse Certification Programs

[Cedar Crest College](#)

[Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania](#) (MSN Public Health Nursing with School Nursing Focus)

[Eastern Mennonite Univ/Lanc](#)

[Eastern University](#)

[Gannon University](#)

[La Roche University](#)

[Millersville University of PA](#)

[Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania](#)

[University of Pittsburgh / Main](#)

[West Chester University of Pennsylvania](#)



Resources for the Novice School Nurse



[PA Department of
Health School Health
website](#)



[PASNAP - Resources for
New School Nurses](#)



[PDE Certification Staffing](#)

Level 1 and Level 2 certification information



Certified School Nurse/Duties



Certified School Nurse

Pennsylvania defines “school nurse” within PA School Code:

[24 P.S. Education § 14-1401](#)

"**School nurse**" means a licensed registered nurse properly certificated by the Superintendent of Public Instruction as a school nurse who is employed by a school district or joint school board as a school nurse, or is employed in **providing school nurse services to children of school age** by a county health unit or a department or board of health of any municipality with which a school district or joint school board has contracted for school health services pursuant to the provisions of section 1411 of this act....



Certified School Nurse –PA School Code

24 P.S. Education § 14-1421

(b) The administration and supervision of the educational and teaching aspects of the program shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Public Instruction who shall—

1. Approve certification of school nurses and dental hygienists for employment by a school district or joint school board and administer and direct their services and program: **Provided, That the services of school nurses and dental hygienists shall be utilized exclusively in connection with medical and dental examinations and associated health activities.**



CSPG 80 - School Nurse (PK-12)

[CSPG 80 – School Nurse \(revised 3/1/2025\)](#)

Certification Assignment

An educator holding a valid PA certificate as a **School Nurse is qualified to provide information and services in school health related areas.** The School Nurse assesses, documents, and manages the health care needs of children in grades PK-12, including those with disabilities and to recognize symptoms and consequences of safety and environmental factors related to student health.

For additional information on the duties of **School Nurse (PK-12)**, go to [28 Pa. Code Subchapter B. School Nurse Services.](#)



Treating Staff



Treating Staff



Neither school health regulations nor law address nursing services to school personnel.



Internal school decision.



Considerations – Treatment of Staff

- Nurses do not know the staff's medical history, medication contraindications, allergies, or other medications being taken.
- Do you have an order to administer medication/treatment?
- School policy or health procedure?
- Staff documentation/health record maintenance/release?



Staff- Board of Nursing Regulations

Chapter 21 - Board of Nursing

§ 21.11. General functions.

(a) The registered nurse assesses human responses and plans, implements and evaluates nursing care for individuals or families for whom the nurse is responsible. In carrying out this responsibility, the nurse performs all of the following functions:

- (1) Collects complete and ongoing data to determine nursing care needs.
- (2) Analyzes the health status of the individuals and families and compares the data with the norm when possible in determining nursing care needs.
- (3) Identifies goals and plans for nursing care.
- (4) Carries out nursing care actions which promote, maintain and restore the well-being of individuals.
- (5) Involves individuals and their families in their health promotion, maintenance and restoration.
- (6) Evaluates the effectiveness of the quality of nursing care provided.



Good Samaritan Law



§ 8331. Medical Good Samaritan Civil immunity



Physician or any other practitioner of the healing arts **or any registered nurse**, licensed by any state... present when an emergency occurs and who, in good faith, renders emergency care at the scene of the emergency, shall not be liable for any civil damages as a result of any acts or omissions by such physician or practitioner or registered nurse in rendering emergency care...



Exception: “acts or omissions intentionally designed to harm or any grossly negligent acts or omissions which result in harm to the person receiving emergency care”



DEFINITION.-- As used in this section "good faith" shall include, but is not limited to, a reasonable opinion that the immediacy of the situation is such that the rendering of care should not be postponed until the patient is hospitalized



SHARRS

SHARRS Instruction Manual: Chapter 12, Health Services

Health Services section of the report captures data on select medical and nursing services to school students **and staff**/other adults in public and private/non-public schools, respectively, which occurred while under school jurisdiction

- Staff/other adult contacts for acute/chronic illness
- Staff/other adult contact for acute chronic injury
- Staff/other adult emergencies requiring activation of EMS
- Staff/other adult emergencies requiring use of an AED



Mandated School Health Services

Mandated Health Services

Provision of School Health Services and Mandated School Health Services

School entities are to provide the following health services for students who attend or who should attend an elementary, grade or high school, either public or private, and children who are attending a kindergarten which is an integral part of a local school district. These requirements also apply to students who are home schooled.



Mandated Health Services Grid

SERVICE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	Notes
School Nurse Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Maintenance of Health Record	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Immunization Assessment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Medical Examination	*	*					X						X		*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade
Dental Examination	*	*		X				X							*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade
Growth Screen	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Hearing Screen	X	X	X	X				X					X		
Scoliosis Screen							X	X							6th grade physical may be used in lieu of 6th grade screen
Tuberculin Test	*	*									X				*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade. Unless approved to discontinue
Vision Screen-Far Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Vision Screen-Near Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Vision Screen-Convex Lens Test (Plus Lens)		X													1st grade students meeting criteria & new students (any grade) not previously screened
Vision Screen-Color Vision Test		*	*												*1st or 2nd grade & new students (any grade) not previously screened
Vision Screen- Stereo/Depth Perception Test		*	*												*1st or 2nd grade & new students (any grade) not previously screened



Parental Consent

Neither the PA Public School Code nor the Regulations address consent for screenings or exams.

The Division of School Health guidance:

- Written permission is needed for Physical and Dental examinations.
- Parents should be notified in advance of all exams and screenings.
- Division provides information for schools to guide them in their decision making.



Parental Refusal

Pennsylvania School Regulations

§ 23.45. Objections to examination on religious grounds.

(a) School children or school employee may be excused from regular or special medical or dental examinations on presentation of written evidence to the school administrator that the examinations are contrary to the religious beliefs of the parent or guardian of the child or of the employee.

(b) Exemption from medical or dental examinations will not be granted if the Department of Health finds that facts exist under which the exemption constitutes a present substantial menace to the health of other persons exposed to contact with the unexamined person.



Parent/Guardian refuses Screen/Exams

- Document in chart and try to obtain written refusal.
- Educate parent on benefits of screen/exams.
- Encourage parent/guardian to have screens/exams done at private provider and to provide the results.
- Same guidance would be provided to student who is a legal adult.



Modifications



April 2000 - Secretary of Health sent a letter to schools encouraging them to apply for a modification to the physical examination requirement.

Modification extended the time frame for accepting private physical/dental examinations from 4 months prior to the start of the school year to 1 year prior to the start of the school year.



Schools should be counting students in the actual mandated grade in the SHARRS report.

Modification is not permitted for exams completed by the school provider; they must be performed in the mandated grade.



TB Testing – School Students and Staff

Testing of School Students and Staff

The entire description of the TB testing requirements for schools is located in 28 PA Code, Chapter 23. Information for school students can be found in [Section 23.9](#) and staff in [Section 23.44](#).



TB Testing School Staff

School Staff/Volunteer Requirements

All schools must continue to test employees and volunteers as outlined below. If the school is located in an area with a county or municipal health department, there may be requirements or requests from these local health departments to alter TB testing policies. If school policies are changed as a result of these requests or requirements, the school must also submit a request for modification to the Department of Health.



Wellness Letter

PA Department of Health updated template letter for parent notification of student growth screenings conducted yearly at schools in September 2024.

- Also contains vision, hearing and scoliosis screening results to help streamline parent/guardian notification.
- Use of template NOT mandatory
- Separate BMI letter notification discontinued
- [Template Pennsylvania Student Wellness Report](#) (English)
- [Template Pennsylvania Student Wellness Report](#) (Spanish)



Referrals

If a referral is needed, then nurses should still be sending out referrals to parents and requesting return documentation.



Referrals - Vision

Vision

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/programs/school-health/vision-screen.html>

Procedure:

- A. The family shall be notified of the results of the vision screening test.
 - 1. For each student who PASSES the vision screening tests, a completed copy of the “Parent/Guardian Notification” (Appendix F1) should be provided to the family.
 - 2. For each student who FAILS the vision screening test, **a completed copy of the “Vision Screening Referral” (Appendix F2) and an “Eye Specialist Report” (Appendix F3) should be provided to the family.**

If after approximately four-six weeks, results of an eye care specialist’s vision examination have not been received, contact the parent or guardian.



Eye Specialist Report

SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM EYE SPECIALIST REPORT

Print Name of Eye Care
Specialist_____

(Return report to School Nurse)

Signature of Eye Care Specialist

Telephone



Referrals/Vision/SHARRS

SHARRS Chapter 12 – Health Services Page Health Exams, Screens and Select Services

10 Vision Screens

- Count the number of students in grades K-12 and all “Other” classes screened for vision problems
- Screens performed by private health care providers may be accepted as long as they meet the screening components included in the guidelines
- Any brand of screening equipment is acceptable as long as it meets the screening components included in the guidelines

A Referred for Further Evaluation/Treatment

Count the number of students referred for further evaluation and/or treatment

B Completed Referrals Reported

Count the number of students who reported the referral was completed



Referrals/Hearing

PHYSICIAN/HEARING SPECIALIST REPORT

Child's Name: _____

Age: _____

Address: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

Results of Threshold Hearing Tests

DATE OF EXAM	RIGHT EAR						LEFT EAR						PASS (P) OR FAIL (F)
	250	500	1000	2000	4000	8000	250	500	1000	2000	4000	8000	

Provider Audiogram Attached?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Tentative Diagnosis: _____

Type of Hearing Loss: _____

Prognosis: _____

Recommendations: _____

(Provider's Signature)

(Date)

(Address)

(Telephone)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

(Address)

(Telephone)



Referrals/Hearing/SHARRS

Chapter 12 – Health Services Page **Health Exams, Screens and Select Services**

11 Hearing Screens

Count the number of students in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 7, 11 and all “Other” classes screened for hearing problems

A Referred for Further Evaluation/Treatment

Count the number of students referred for further evaluation and/or treatment

B Completed Referrals Reported

Count the number of students who reported the referral was completed



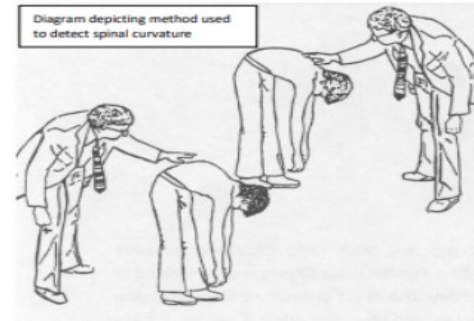
Referrals/Scoliosis

Letter to Physician and Physician Findings

Dear Physician:

Pennsylvania Department of Health regulations require each child in grades 6 and 7 and age- appropriate children (11 and 12 years of age) in ungraded classes to be screened for scoliosis.

By using the method depicted in the diagram below, a possible spinal curvature was noted on this student. Please note your findings on the checklist below.



OBSERVATIONS AT SCREENING

1. Rib/Hump Lumbar Rotation
____ Right Thoracic Rib Hump
____ Left Thoracic Rib Hump
____ Right Lumbar Rotation
____ Left Lumbar Rotation
2. Other Orthopedic Conditions
____ Pelvic Level
____ Right iliac crest higher
____ Left iliac crest higher
____ Kyphosis
____ Lordosis
____ Other

PHYSICIAN'S FINDING

EXAMINATION (Please check)

1. Scoliosis confirmed.....☐
* X-ray taken
Degree of curve (specify) _____
2. Possible scoliosis.....☐
No X-ray taken
3. No scoliosis.....☐
X-ray taken
4. No scoliosis.....☐
No X-ray taken
5. Other orthopedic conditions.....☐
Confirmed

RECOMMENDATIONS (Please check)

1. Will observe.....☐
2. Recommend bracing.....☐
3. Recommend surgery.....☐
4. Discharged.....☐
5. Comments: _____

Signature: _____

Physician (print): _____

Date: _____



Referrals/Scoliosis/SHARRS

Chapter 12 – Health Services Page Health Exams, Screens and Select Services 12 Scoliosis Screens

Count the number of students in grades 6 & 7 who were screened for scoliosis

Students who had a 6th grade physical meet this requirement, do not need screened by the nurse and should be included in the count

Students currently under the care of a healthcare provider for scoliosis do not need screened and are counted as if the screening was performed

A Referred for Further Evaluation/Treatment

Count the number of students referred for further evaluation and/or treatment

B Completed Referrals Reported

Count the number of students who reported the referral was completed



Exclusion



Nothing in Law or Regulations regarding exclusion for non-adherence for completed physical and dental examinations.



The district may set up consequences as they desire.



This should be stated in the school's policy/procedure/student handbook, etc. and parents made aware of the school's exclusionary criteria or consequences.



NLC



Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)

PA Board Of Nursing

What is the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)?

The NLC is an agreement among 40+ states and territories to recognize each other's registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN) who are licensed by compact members, similar to how states recognize each other's driver's licenses.



NLC Status

Pennsylvania fully implemented the [NLC](#) on July 7, 2025, and Pennsylvania RNs and LPNs can now apply for a multistate license.



NLC – Background Check

Nursing | Department of State | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

NEW Background Check Requirement – Effective July 7, 2025

Applicants for a multistate license issued by the State Board of Nursing must obtain a criminal history record check from [the state in which they reside](#) **and** complete the process for a fingerprint-based FBI background check through IdentoGO.

Licensees renewing their Pennsylvania or multistate licenses are **NOT** required to obtain a background check for renewal.



Verify a Professional License

[Verify a Professional or Occupational License | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

[**BPOA - Pennsylvania Licensing System**](#)

Status:

Active (Single State)



NCSBN Resource

[Home](#) | [NURSECOMPACT](#)



Nursys

NURSYS - Look up, verify and monitor your nurse licenses anytime, anywhere.

Nursys is the only national nurse licensure and disciplinary database. As a primary source equivalent the data is provided directly from the boards of nursing.

<https://www.nursys.com/>



Mentorship Resources

After a successful first year, Moses Taylor Foundation is excited to partner with Penn State PRO Wellness and Highmark Foundation to grow the School Nurse Mentorship Program.

School Nurse Mentorship Program: Now Seeking Mentors and Mentees (constantcontact.com)



Vaping/E-Cigarettes

E-cigarettes, also known as vapes, are battery-operated devices that heat a liquid and produce an aerosol.

A person using an e-cigarette inhales this aerosol into their lungs.

E-cigarettes typically contain nicotine

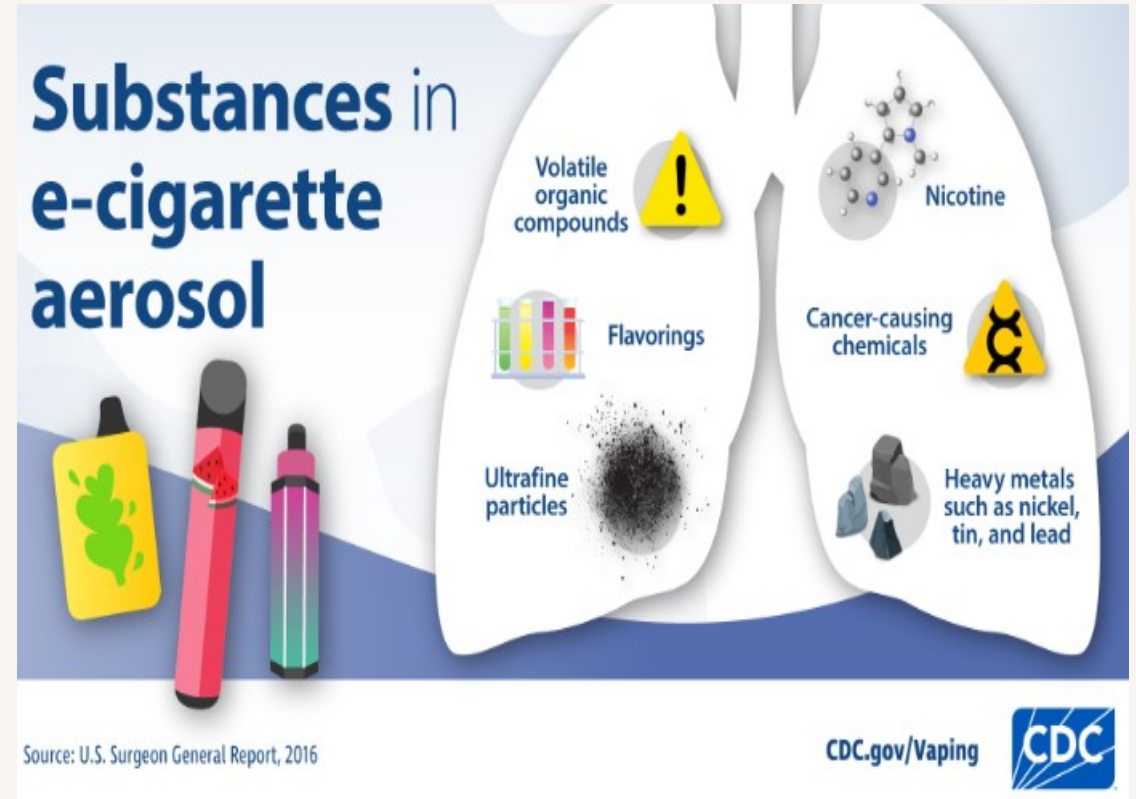
E-cigarettes often come in bright colors



Vaping/E-Cigarettes

E-cigarette aerosol is NOT harmless “water vapor.” It can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including:

- Nicotine (can harm adolescent brain development)
- Cancer causing chemicals
- Heavy metals (nickel, tin, and lead)
- Tiny particles that can be inhaled deep in the lungs.
- Volatile organic compounds
- Flavorings such as diacetyl (chemical linked to serious lung disease)



Vaping/E-Cigarettes

In the United States, youth use e-cigarettes, or vapes, more than any other tobacco product.

1.63 million (5.9%) students currently used e-cigarettes.

Most tobacco use, including vaping, starts and is established during adolescence. There are many factors associated with youth tobacco product use.



Vaping/E-Cigarettes

Resources:

[Electronic Cigarettes](#) – CDC – Get the facts about electronic cigarettes, their health effects and the risks of using e-cigarettes

[Empower Vape-Free Youth Campaign](#) | [Electronic Cigarette Use Among Youth](#) | [Youth & Tobacco Use](#) | [CDC - Educator Resources](#)

[Resources for Professionals About Vaping & E-Cigarettes: A Toolkit for Working with Youth](#) - FDA Toolkit for professionals working with youth

[CATCH My Breath](#)

[Parents Against Vaping \(PAVe\)](#) - Parents Against Vaping

[PAVe](#) webinars in Pennsylvania – Parents Against Vaping (PAVe) partnered with the Pennsylvania Tobacco Prevention and Control Program to speak to a variety of audiences



Tobacco Prevention and Control

Pennsylvania's Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control has four goals:

- Prevent initiation of all tobacco product use among youth and young adults;
- Promote quitting among adults and youth;
- Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke; and
- Advance health equity by identifying and eliminating commercial tobacco product-related inequalities and disparities.



[Tobacco Prevention |](#)
[Department of Health |](#)
[Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)



Environmental Issues in Schools



Environmental Issues in Schools

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
Bed Bugs
Head Lice
Scabies



IPM

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
[Environmental | Department of Health](#)
[| Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

Act 35 and 36 of 2002

[Act No. 35 of
2002 - The Official
Website of the
Pennsylvania
General Assembly](#)

[Act No. 36 of 2002 -
The Official Website
of the Pennsylvania
General Assembly](#)



Bed Bugs

Bed Bugs

Small, flat insects.

Bite at night and feed on blood

Can live several months without a blood meal

Not known to spread disease

[Environmental | Department
of Health | Commonwealth
of Pennsylvania](#)



Signs & Symptoms

Bed Bugs

Signs and Symptoms

- itching

- loss of sleep

How to tell if you've been bitten

- May be no signs

- small bite marks

- Serious allergic reaction (rare)



Bed Bugs – Where to look?

Bed Bugs

Where to look for bed bugs:

- seam of mattress/boxspring
- bedframe and headboards
- dresser tables
- inside cracks and crevices
- behind wallpaper



Treatment

Bed Bugs

Treatment:

can apply antiseptic creams or lotions to help with itching
usually does not require medical treatment



Bed Bug Resources

Bed Bugs

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) does NOT recommend students with bedbugs be removed from school. There is no exclusion criteria in PA Code.

Not a reportable condition

Additional resources:

<https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs>

EPA Bed Bugs and Schools:

<https://www.epa.gov/ipm/bed-bugs-and-schools#steps>

EPA contact information for additional guidance if needed.

<https://www.epa.gov/ipm/forms/contact-us-about-managing-pests#tab-3>

CDC:

[About Bed Bugs](#) | [Bed Bugs](#) | [CDC](#)



Pediculosis

Lice Head lice (*Pediculus capitis*) Not known to transmit disease

Parasitic insects

Feed on human blood

2-3 mm long (about the size of a sesame seed)

Symptoms:

may have no symptoms at first

itching (most common)

tickling feeling or sensation of something moving in hair

irritability and sleeplessness

sores on head (from scratching)



Head Lice

Most common among preschool and elementary school age children and their household members and caretakers

An estimated 6-12 million infestations occur each year in the US

Infestation much less common among African American than other races



Transmission

Lice

How it spreads:

Direct contact (cannot hop or fly)

Wearing clothing, such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, or hair ribbons worn by an infested person

Using infested combs, brushes, or towels

Lying on a bed, couch, pillow, carpet, or stuffed animal that has recently been in contact with an infested person



Prevention

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities.
- Do not share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Do not share combs, brushes, or towels.
- Do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with a person infested with head lice.
- Machine wash (hot water) and dry clothing, towels, bed linens, and other items that a person infested with lice wore or used during the two days before treatment. If you can't wash or dry clean items, seal them in a plastic bag and store them for two weeks.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture
- Do not use fumigant sprays or fogs; they are not necessary to control head lice and can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.



Diagnosis



Misdiagnosis of head lice infestation is common.

Finding a live nymph (baby louse) or adult louse on the scalp or hair is the best way to diagnose a head lice infestation.

Nits attached more than $\frac{1}{4}$ in from base of hair shaft almost always hatched or dead



Head Lice Treatment

Treat an active infestation.

Medications (pediculicides) either over-the-counter or by prescription.

Medications generally safe and effective when used correctly.



Recommendations

- The Pa DOH in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) does NOT recommend schools have a no-nit policy or perform school wide head lice checks.
- Department of Health regulations ([28 PA Code, Chapter 27 Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases, Section 27.71](#)) requires that students be excluded if suspected of having live lice.



Resources – Head Lice

- [PA DOH: Head Lice Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [PA DOH: Head Lice Recommendations for Caregivers](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [United States Environmental Protection Agency Information](#)
- [CDC Head Lice Information](#)



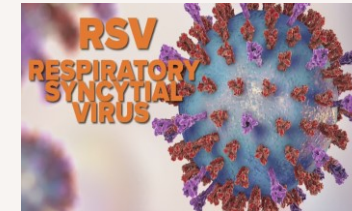
Respiratory Guidance

Respiratory Viruses (ie Covid, Flu, RSV)

PA DOH encourages schools to follow CDC recommendations on preventing the spread of illnesses

[Respiratory Virus Guidance | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)

[Preventing Spread of Infections in K-12 Schools | CDC](#)



Prevention – Respiratory Illness

Take steps to prevent infections in schools by:

Improve air quality

Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting

Hand washing

Respiratory etiquette

Vaccination



[Everyday Actions for Schools to Prevent and Control the Spread of Infections | CDC](#)



Additional Strategies

Additional strategies during increased illness activity:

Distancing and cohorting

Illness monitoring

Allow masking

COVID testing

Managing exposure



[Additional Strategies that May Be Used to Minimize Infectious Disease Transmission in Schools during Times of Elevated Illness Activity | CDC](#)



Exclusion Criteria

Exclusion of sick students or staff:

Fever, especially with a new rash or behavioral changes.

Persistent vomiting.

Persistent diarrhea. Diarrhea that causes 'accidents,' is bloody, or is more than two bowel movements above what is 'normal' for the person in 24 hours.

Sores that are draining fluid and cannot be covered.

Worsening respiratory virus symptoms (stuffy or runny nose, cough, sore throat) not caused by something else, like allergies.



Readmission Guidelines

No fever for at least 24 hours (without using fever-reducing medicine).

Fever with a new rash has been checked by a doctor and fever is gone.

Fever with productive cough has been checked by a doctor and fever is gone.

Open sores are crusted over and under medical treatment.

Vomiting has resolved overnight, and the child can hold down food/liquids in the morning.

Diarrhea has improved, no more accidents and no more than two bowel movements above what is 'normal' for the child in 24 hours. Bloody diarrhea should be evaluated by a healthcare provider before return.

Respiratory symptoms are getting better overall for at least 24 hours. Consider additional actions to prevent spreading the illness after return (normally for five days).

[When Students or Staff are Sick | CDC](#)



Respiratory Guidance

Keeping schools open:

Schools should use multiple prevention strategies to stay open. Any changes in school operations should be coordinated with their local health authorities and other impacted community partners.

PA DOH does not recommend school closures in the event of [respiratory outbreaks](#).

For more details, visit [Maintaining School Operational Status | CDC](#).



Resources

PA DOH: [Respiratory Virus Dashboard](#)

PA DOH: [School Health \(pa.gov\)](#)

PA DOH: [COVID-19 Testing in Pennsylvania](#)

PA DOH: [Stay Up to Date on Respiratory Virus Vaccines](#)

CDC: [Respiratory Virus Guidance \(cdc.gov\)](#)

CDC: [Ventilation in Schools and Childcare Programs](#)

CDC: [Prevention and Control of Respiratory and Gastrointestinal Infections in Kindergarten through Grade 12 \(K-12\) Schools \(cdc.gov\)](#)

CDC: [Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control in K-12 School \(cdc.gov\)](#)

CDC: [Preventing Spread of Respiratory Viruses When You're Sick | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)



Wellness Policies

Each local education agency participating in federal Child Nutrition Programs is required to develop and implement a wellness policy.

Must include measurable goals for nutrition education, physical activity, food provided on school campus, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness.

The Dept of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition Services is responsible for oversight of school wellness policies. [Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition Services.](#)

Wellness policies can be integrated into the [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child \(WSCC\)](#) framework for school health.



Wellness Policy Requirements

- Include goals
- Include nutrition guidelines
- Food and beverages availability
- Food and beverage marketing
- Include a variety of people
- Identify school official
- Inform and update
- Measure and assess



CE and back to School Resources

PASNAP Conf March 20-22, 2026, [The Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners | Nursing Network](#)

Clinical Considerations in School-based Health

NASN (National Assoc of School Nurses) Clinical Guidelines, Toolkits, and E-Manuals

TRAIN PA [Home - TRAIN PA - an affiliate of the TRAIN Learning Network powered by the Public Health Foundation](#)

PaTTAN [PaTTAN - Home](#)



Department Resources

Immunizations Questions/Contact: Bureau of Immunizations 717-787-5681
[School Immunizations | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

School Immunization Law Report (SILR) questions: Contact Janine Strick at 717-787-5681

Communicable/Vaccine Preventable Diseases: Contact County/Municipal Health Dept: [State Health Centers | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#) [County-Municipal Health Depts | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

[28 Pa. Code Chapter 27. Communicable And Noncommunicable Diseases](#)

Reportable Disease: Contact local Department of Health state health center (SHC)/district office or county/municipal health department (1-877-724-3258).

[Reportable Diseases | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#) [State Health Centers | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)



General Reminders

Please do not send any personally identifiable information when sending e-mails to school health consultants.

Provide updated information to your school health nurse consultant, new nurses, etc. to add to their distribution lists.



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Questions



Thank You

School Nurse

[noun] [skool nuhs]

They call them school nurses because superhero is
not an official job title.

They are always armed with a cold compress, an ice
pack and loads of reassurance.

All of their knowledge they share to promote a healthy
and safe environment.

A school nurse is truly someone you can depend on.

See other: Superhero, best school nurse

Our sincere thanks for all that you do for
the health and safety of all Pennsylvania
K-12 students, staff and families.