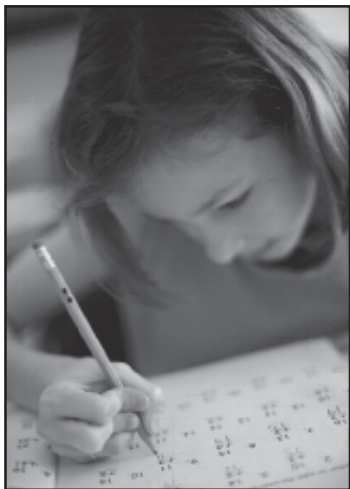


West Springfield's School Nurses Need Your Support

School nurses keep your children safe and ready to learn

Studies show that a healthy child is a child ready to learn, and that without the care and expertise of school nurses, many of our students could not attend school. School nurses are also there to respond in an emergency.



The school nurse is the primary health care provider for many children

One in seven (600 out of 4,000 students) children in the West Springfield schools have special health care needs that require the care and monitoring of the 10 professional school nurses working in our school system.

Our school children face issues of diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, as well as psychological disorders, congenital issues, muscular dystrophy and cystic fibrosis, all requiring and demanding more, not less nursing care to learn well. Last year, there were:

- More than **300 visits** per day to the school nurses offices
- More than **125 medications** administered per day

School nurses are among the most well educated and skilled members of the registered nurse profession

Today's school nurses are highly trained professionals, with education and certification requirements that are higher than those required of nurses in any other setting, including hospitals. These skills include first aide and emergency care, psychiatric nursing, chronic disease management, management of numerous medications, counseling and medical device management. In addition, the Department of Education requires the exact same licensure requirements for both school nurses and teachers.

Yet School Nurses are not treated like other professionals in the school system

While school nurses have equal, if not greater professional responsibility for the well being of children in our schools, and while school nurses have the same level of education, and the same licensure requirements as teachers and other professionals in the system, the nurses pay scale is as much as 30 percent less than other professionals (see back page of this flyer). 21 surrounding school systems provide pay equity for their school nurses. We are losing talented nurses to other systems that treat their nurses as professionals. Help us recruit and retain the school nurses needed to keep your children safe, healthy and ready to learn.



It's Time to Be Fair to Those Who Care & Grant Our Nurses Professional Parity

If you agree, sign our petition, or call
Mayor Edward Gibson at 413-263-3041

School Committee Vice Chairman Daniel Sullivan at 413-737-6211

The Case for Professional Parity

Teachers

School Nurses

- Teachers use “Assessment” to evaluate how a student learns and how a student is progressing (using educational tools, i.e. correcting papers, standardized testing, etc.)

- Nurses use “Assessment” to evaluate a student’s health (using health tools, i.e. checking for fever, blood pressure, blood sugar level, vision, hearing etc.)

- Teachers and counselors communicate with parents regarding their students

- Nurses and counselors communicate with parents, doctors, agencies, and specialists

- Teachers keep records on their students in their class

- Nurses keep records on every student and must document every health encounter

- Teachers write lesson plans for students

- Nurses write individualized Health Care Plans for students with medical/health conditions

- Teachers attend TEAM, 504 and pupil study meetings regarding students progress

- Nurses attend TEAM, 504 and pupil study meetings to assist teachers with medical knowledge regarding their students

- Teachers use every possible “teachable moment” to educate students

- Every interaction between the nurse and student/ staff member includes “teaching” regarding health, illness, wellness, first aid, etc.

- If a teacher makes a mistake or an error in their lesson, it can “have a negative impact on a child’s future.” *USA Today*

- If a nurse makes a mistake or an error in judgment, “maybe a child doesn’t have a future.” *USA Today*

- Teachers with a bachelor’s degree and 22 years experience make:

\$50,000/yr.

- Nurses with a bachelor’s degree between 22-37 years experience make just:

\$38,000/yr. – 24% less