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SYNOPSIS
Establishes position of State School Nurse Consultant in DOE to promote quality school nursing services and school health programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ACT establishing the position of State School Nurse Consultant in the Department of Education and supplementing chapter 4 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a State School Nurse Consultant. The State School Nurse Consultant shall be a certified school nurse who holds a master's degree in nursing and has management experience and leadership and education administration training or skills. The State School Nurse Consultant shall work with school districts and school nurses to promote quality school nursing services and school health programs that address the broad health needs of students. The State School Nurse Consultant, in performing the duties of the position, shall collaborate with the Department of Health and the New Jersey State Board of Nursing.

b. It shall be the duty of the State School Nurse Consultant to:

(1) Serve as a liaison and resource expert in school nursing and school health program areas for local, regional, State, and national school health care providers, and policy setting groups;

(2) Provide consultation and technical assistance to school districts, parents, and community members;

(3) Coordinate school health program activities with public health, social services, environmental, and educational agencies as well as other public and private entities;

(4) Monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in health and medical care, school nursing practice, legislation, and legal issues that impact schools;

(5) Facilitate the development of policies, standards, and guidelines and interpret updates and disseminate policies, standards, guidelines, and procedures to enhance coordinated school health programs;

(6) Foster and promote staff development for school nurses, which may include planning and providing orientation, coordinating or providing educational offerings, and networking with universities and other providers of continuing education to meet identified needs;

(7) Promote quality assurance in school health services by initiating and coordinating a quality assurance program that includes needs assessment, data collection and analysis, and evidence-based practice;

(8) Participate in State-level public interagency partnerships and private partnerships with Statewide stakeholders to foster a coordinated school health program, representing school nurses in multi-disciplinary collaborations;
(9) Initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to a coordinated school health program, the health needs of children and youth, school nursing practice, and related issues; and
(10) Serve as a liaison regarding school health issues with the Department of Health and the Legislature.

2. The State School Nurse Consultant shall report annually to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1). The report shall include a summary of the activities of the State School Nurse Consultant during the year, and any specific recommendations deemed appropriate and necessary concerning school nurse services and school health service programs.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State School Nurse Consultant to work with school districts and school nurses to promote quality school nursing services and school health programs that address the broad health needs of students through the State. The person appointed to the position is required to be a certified school nurse who holds a master's degree in nursing and has management experience and leadership and education administration training or skills. The State School Nurse Consultant is required to collaborate with the Department of Health and the New Jersey State Board of Nursing and perform the following duties:

- Serve as a liaison and resource expert in school nursing and school health program areas for local, regional, State, and national school health care providers, and policy setting groups;
- Provide consultation and technical assistance to school districts, parents, and community members;
- Coordinate school health program activities with public health, social services, environmental, and educational agencies as well as other public and private entities;
- Monitor, interpret, synthesize, and disseminate relevant information associated with changes in health and medical care, school nursing practice, legislation, and legal issues that impact schools;
- Facilitate the development of policies, standards, and guidelines and interpret updates and disseminate policies, standards, guidelines, and procedures to enhance coordinated school health programs;
- Foster and promote staff development for school nurses;
• Promote quality assurance in school health services by initiating and coordinating a quality assurance program;
• Participate in State-level public interagency partnerships and private partnerships with Statewide stakeholders to foster a coordinated school health program, representing school nurses in multi-disciplinary collaborations;
• Initiate, participate in, and utilize research studies related to a coordinated school health program, the health needs of children and youth, school nursing practice, and related issues; and
• Serve as a liaison regarding school health issues with the Department of Health and the Legislature.

School nursing services are a vital component of the support services required for the health and safety of students and staff while at school. The State School Nurse Consultant will provide nursing leadership to ensure effective school nurse services throughout the State and, in addition, develop and promote quality standards for school health services programs that reflect current school nursing practice. The leadership provided by the State School Nurse Consultant will foster a better understanding among educators, parents, and the general public regarding the relationship between health status and a student’s capacity to learn.