



School Nurse Program Standards

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Standards Adopted
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The Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program Standards Development Panel

Commission on Teacher Credentialing 2007

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Overview of the Handbook

The Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program standards provided in this Handbook were provided to the Commission for review at the October 2007 Commission meeting, and approved at the November 2007 Commission meeting. The Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards had not been revised since 1994.

This Handbook provides background information on the development of the 2007 Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program Standards, the statutory requirements for a school nurse credential, and the program standards, including standards for the Special Teaching Authorization in Health.

Introduction to the Development Process for the 2007 Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program Standards

The work leading to the development of the draft standards began in 2005, when members of school nurse organizations and school nurse credential program directors started discussing at their own professional meetings the need to revise and update the Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards. CTC staff was invited to several of these meetings to hear the views of the field with respect to the status of these program standards.

At the time, the field indicated the following major areas for needed revisions to the standards:

- *Eliminate duplication between the current Health Services: School Nurse standards and the Commission's Common Standards.*
- *Streamline and merge Categories III-V and the Role Concepts.*
- *Reformat the standards to align with the format of newer standards adopted by the Commission.*

The work of the development team to revise the Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards began officially in 2006, when applications were solicited from the field for members of the Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards panel. A panel of experts in the field, representing K-12 practicing school nurses, college and university School Nurse Credential Programs, and school nursing organizations, was appointed by the Executive Director, and the first meeting of the group was set for January 2007.

The Standards Development Process and Timeline

The standards development panel held two one-day meetings and one two-day meeting between January 2007 and May 2007, and in addition, communicated via email about suggested drafts and revisions to drafts between face-to-face meetings. All meetings were held at the Commission offices.

At the initial meeting in January 2007, the panel members were oriented to their official charge and to the nature of the task before them. Members reviewed the current standards and discussed the feedback from the field concerning suggested revisions to these standards, and also reviewed the Commission's revised Common Standards. Panel members suggested a new, streamlined organizational structure for the Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards, and divided into groups to work on segments of the new standards.

At the second meeting in March 2007, panel members formally agreed on (a) the revised organizational structure for the draft standards, (b) using only a comprehensive standards statement and no "required elements" or "essential questions," and (c) working as a single unitary group to decide on wording for

the standards rather than continuing to use the small group work approach. At the conclusion of this meeting, panel members had developed a complete working draft of the proposed new program standards.

At the third meeting in April 2007, panel members (1) reviewed the completed draft for final revisions and for completeness; (2) discussed preconditions applicable to the Health Services: School Nurse credential programs; (3) wrote an introduction to the Handbook; and (4) suggested appropriate sources for distributing the Field Study of the draft standards.

Commission staff recognize and highlight the dedication, expertise, and work ethic of the Health Services: School Nurse standards development panel members, who were able to complete this highly complex and detailed work within a five-month time frame.

Key Differences between the Prior Standards and the 2007 Standards

1. The 2007 standards have addressed all of the concerns expressed by the field concerning the length, complexity, and duplication of content contained in the prior (1994) standards. The prior standards had 29 individual program standards which also incorporated six different “role concepts” for school nurses. The “role concepts” represent individual types of duties that school nurses would typically perform as of 1994.

The 2007 standards are simplified into 9 overarching program standards that incorporate a streamlined set of three “school nursing competencies” which group in job-related ways the duties and responsibilities that were part of the prior “role concepts.” The 2007 standards also update the three sets of competencies to reflect the current practice of school nursing. These three competencies, and examples of school nursing roles and responsibilities included within each competency are:

Competency 1: Providing health and wellness services (Primary Level Intervention)

Examples of school nurse duties and responsibilities:

- Child abuse and neglect
- Community health resources and connections
- Mental health
- Nutrition
- Substance use and abuse
- School health program

Competency 2: Providing direct client care services (Secondary and Tertiary Level Intervention)

Examples of school nurse duties and responsibilities:

- Acute and chronic health care management
- Care of the medically fragile (e.g., Spina Bifida, Cerebral Palsy)
- Case management in the school setting
- Health screenings
- Acute injury assessment/intervention
- Crisis intervention

Competency 3: Demonstrating Professional Management Skills

Examples of school nurse duties and responsibilities:

- Data collection

- Documentation and record keeping
- Collaboration
- Advocacy (student, family, community, professional)
- Professional organizations

2. The draft standards have also been updated in terms of new content to reflect increased emphasis on the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by school nurses to address the needs of the increasing numbers of medically fragile students in public schools, the expanded roles school nurses play in addressing the health and wellness needs of the larger school community (including students, families, school staff, and the community), and the role of the school nurse in collaborating with other agencies on health- and wellness-related issues both within and outside the school setting.

3. The previous set of 29 individual program standards encompassed areas that have since become part of the Common Standards for all programs, and this overlap has been addressed in the 2007 standards by eliminating references to the content of all six standards from Category I of the 1994 standards and all six standards from Category II of the 1994 standards. All of this content is now covered in the Common Standards.

Finally, the draft standards contain only expanded standards statements without additional “required elements” or “questions to consider.” The panel felt that since the standards statements were inclusive and clearly written, it was not necessary to include further information since doing so would be redundant and not helpful to the field.

The Common Standards to which all School Nurse Credential Programs will have to respond are provided at the beginning of the Standards section, followed by contains the Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program standards and the Special Teaching Authorization in Health program standards.

Field Review of the Standards

During the period of May-July 2007 a field review of the draft Health Services: School Nurse credential program standards was conducted to obtain input from the field and other stakeholders regarding these standards. The field review form was sent to School Nurse Credential Program sponsors and to school nursing professional organizations, and was also posted on the Commission’s website. Email notices of the availability of the survey appeared several times on the Professional Services Division’s E-news mailing as well as on the main Commission website page.

A total of 44 surveys were returned. The respondents represented thirty-nine K-12 school nurses, two college/university School Nurse Credential Program faculty, and two individuals who were both K-12 school nurses and college/university faculty. One respondent did not state an affiliation.

Respondents were asked two major questions about each of the nine draft individual program standards:

1. How important are these program characteristics for preparing effective School Nurses?

Not all respondents answered this question for each of the standards. The number of responses per individual standard ranged from a low of 33 responses to a high of 39 responses. The overwhelming majority of the responses, however, indicated that each of the program characteristics identified in each

of the standards were rated as either “Essential” or “Important.” Few to no characteristics on any standard were rated by respondents as either “Somewhat Important” or “Not Important.”

2. Are there any critical characteristics of program quality missing from the above standards that are important in a program that will prepare effective School Nurses? If “Yes,” which would you add?

The field survey results showed that the majority of respondents indicated that there were no critical characteristics missing from any of the 9 individual standards.

Respondents were also asked a question about the overall set of program standards as a whole:

- *Please judge the extent to which the full set of program standards described in this survey encompass the program elements that are necessary to prepare an effective School Nurse by answering the questions below:*
 - *Taken as a whole, what percentage of the program elements needed to prepare effective School Nurses is covered by the full set of program standards?*
 - *If less than 100%, please identify any critical program elements that are missing from the program standards (not mentioned in your previous responses).*

The results of this question showed that 22 of the 44 respondents rated that the full set of standards dealt with 100% of the necessary program elements; an additional 19 respondents rated that the full set of standards dealt with 90% or greater of the necessary program elements. Comments made by respondents who rated the completeness of the full set of standards at 100% typically focused on the efficiency of a reduced number of standards compared to the original 29.

Statutory Requirements for a School Nurse Credential

The statutory requirements for a school nurse credential are contained in Education Code Section 44267.5, as reprinted below:

(a) The minimum requirements for a services credential with a specialization in health for a school nurse are all of the following:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree from an accredited institution
- (2) A valid California license as a registered nurse
- (3) One year of coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree in a program approved by the commission

(b) The period for which a services credential with a specialization in health for a school nurse is valid shall be as follows:

- (1) For a preliminary credential, pending completion of the one year of coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree in a program approved by the commission, five years.
- (2) For the professional credential, after completion of requirements specified by the commission, five years.

(c) The services credential with a specialization in health for a school nurse shall authorize the holder to perform, at grades 12 and below, the health services approved by the commission and designated on the credential.

(d) The holder of a services credential with a specialization in health for a school nurse who also completes the requirements for a special class authorization in health in a program that is approved by the commission is authorized to teach classes on health in a preschool, kindergarten, grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and classes organized primarily for adults.

STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS FOR HEALTH SERVICES: SCHOOL NURSE CREDENTIAL PROGRAMS

Introduction by the School Nurse Standards Development Panel

School nursing is a specialized area of professional nursing practice that requires California licensure as a registered nurse and the Health Services: School Nurse Credential. School nurses support students' ability to be in school, healthy and ready to learn. To successfully perform the role of a school nurse, candidates must have additional knowledge, skills and abilities to function effectively in the complex systems of education and health. Candidates who have successfully completed a school nurse credential program are uniquely qualified to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children.

The standards for school nursing credential programs provide a basis for program design as well as for evaluation of the competence of candidates for the credential. These standards allow for continuity of program approach and quality assurance for all school nursing credential programs. The standards incorporate broad statements that describe what a program needs to provide candidates so that candidates can learn and master the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities needed in order to be successful within the educational setting.

School nursing is governed by the *Nursing Practice Act* and the California Education Code. The *Nursing Practice Act* (NPA) is the body of California law that mandates the Board of Registered Nursing to set out the scope of practice and responsibilities for RNs. The *Nursing Practice Act* (<http://www.rn.ca.gov/npa/npa.htm>) is located in the *California Business and Professions Code* starting with Section 2700. Regulations which specify the implementation of the law appear in the *California Code of Regulations*. Representative Education Code sections pertaining to school nursing are: 44877 (training in Child Abuse); 49426 (duties); and 49414 (epinephrine autoinjectors).

The intent of legislation and of statute are exemplified in the description contained within these standards of the additional specialized knowledge, skills and abilities that school nurses need to function effectively in this unique role.

The eleven members of the 2007 school nurse panel that revised these standards for school nursing credential programs extensively deliberated on each program standard and on the list of competencies expected of a registered nurse prepared for the specialty of school nursing. The panel included credentialed school nurses and faculty of university school nurse credential programs, all with extensive experience with school nurse practice.

Preconditions

Preconditions are requirements that must be met in order for an accrediting association or licensing agency to consider accrediting a program sponsor or approving its programs or schools. Some preconditions are based on state laws, while other preconditions are established by Commission policy. Institutions are required to submit information related to the Preconditions to the Commission at three points in the accreditation system: 1) during year one of the accreditation cycle, 2) during year four of the accreditation cycle and 2) upon submitting a new program proposal.

There are essentially two kinds of preconditions. The first are the Commission's ten General Institutional Preconditions. These apply to all professional preparation programs—teacher and services credential preparation programs. These preconditions do not apply to subject matter programs.

The second type of preconditions apply to particular kinds of credential preparation programs. There are four Program Specific Preconditions that apply to all types of educator preparation programs. In addition, there are preconditions for many types of educator preparation programs. All program sponsors must respond to each of the applicable preconditions.

Click to the following link to locate the preconditions. <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/standards/Standards-Preconditions.pdf>.

*The required Preconditions for the **School Nurse Program** are: General Preconditions 1-10, and Program Specific Preconditions 1-4.*

Common Standards

The Common Standards address issues of institutional infrastructure, stability, and processes that are designed to ensure that the implementation of all approved programs is successful and meets all standards. Consequently, there is a single response to the nine Common Standards that reflects the institution's support of each of its educator preparation programs. Institutions are required to submit information related to the Common Standards to the Commission at two points in the accreditation system: 1) during year 5 of the accreditation cycle- the year before the accreditation site visit; and 2) upon submitting a new program proposal.

The institution must develop **one response** to the Common Standards that reflects institutional support for all approved educator preparation programs. In other words, individual programs do not respond to the Common Standards. The Common Standards document is inclusive of the entire unit, consequently only one Common Standards document will be submitted to the CTC for each approved institution/program sponsor regardless of how many approved programs are offered. Click on the following link to locate the Common Standards

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/STDS-common.html>.

If the institution's Common Standards are up to date and the institution submits a new program proposal, the institution must complete an addendum to the Common Standards that assures the Commission that the institution will support the proposed program in the same way it has supported other educator preparation programs. Click on the following link to locate the Common Standards Addendum <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-standards.html>.

The Common Standards Glossary should be consulted for definitions of any of the terms found in *italics* in the Common Standards.

Program Standards

Program Standard 1: Program Design

The school nursing services program and any prerequisites include a purposeful sequence of coursework and field experiences that effectively prepare candidates to provide school nursing services to all students to optimize learning. The school nursing services program prepares candidates to understand contemporary conditions of schools and society and how school nursing services need to change and evolve to address these changing conditions.

The design of the program is based on a clearly stated rationale that has a sound theoretical and scholarly foundation anchored to the knowledge base of school nursing. By design, the program provides extensive opportunities for candidates to (a) learn to address the health related educational needs of all students; (b) learn to access and use community resources to address the health related needs and concerns of students, parents, staff, and other members of the educational community; (c) learn to develop and implement plans of care as appropriate to the needs of students; (d) know and understand the roles and responsibilities of school the nurses within the educational setting; and (e) to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities with respect to the school nurse competencies as exemplified in the School Nurse Competencies (SNCs) provided in Appendix A.

Program Standard 2: Collaboration in Implementing the Program

Sponsors of the School Nurse Credential Program establish collaborative arrangements with other institutions and entities that contribute substantively to the quality and effectiveness of the design and implementation of candidate preparation. These arrangements include collaboration between School Nurse Credential Program providers and local education agencies for purposes of providing appropriate practicum and other fieldwork relating directly to the practice of school nursing. Participants cooperatively establish and review the terms of the agreements, including well-defined roles, responsibilities and relationships.

Program Standard 3: Relationships Between Theory, Research and Practice

By design, the School Nurse Credential Program provides a variety of opportunities for candidates to reflect, analyze, and implement the relationships between theory and evidence based practice related to school nursing. In coursework, school-based observations and supervised fieldwork, candidates examine nursing, education, other theories and research, and their relationship to (a) student health and wellness; (b) school and community health; and (c) student achievement.

Program Standard 4: Preparation to Promote Student Health and Wellness

The program prepares candidates to integrate health and wellness concepts in the educational setting to allow students to be in school, healthy, and ready to learn. Candidates are knowledgeable about primary (disease prevention and health promotion), secondary (health screening, emergency, and acute care) and tertiary (rehabilitative or palliative care) levels of health care intervention as these relate to students and their families. In order for students to be optimally ready to learn, the program ensures that the candidate understands and can effectively apply the critical concepts of health and wellness within the school setting. These include, but are not limited to:

- promoting school safety, including disaster preparedness;
- delivering first aid and emergency care
- identifying and accessing local community and public health resources;

- addressing public health issues in the community that may affect schools;
- addressing student, family and community mental health and wellness;
- promoting nutrition and fitness;
- addressing specialized healthcare needs of students, including special education students;
- understanding child and adolescent growth and development;
- promoting staff wellness;
- addressing issues of community and family violence and substance abuse;
- addressing acute and chronic diseases or conditions within the student population

Program Standard 5: The Sociocultural Context of School Nursing

The program provides candidates with opportunities to further develop their understanding of the sociocultural context in which school nurses work. As part of these opportunities, candidates experience the range of diversity represented within the local community including culture, ethnicity, language, age, gender, gender identity, students with special needs, socioeconomic status and value systems. The program assists candidates to formulate strategies for identifying and appropriately addressing social and cultural community issues that affect school health and students’ abilities to learn. The program assists candidates to adapt their approach in order to meet the needs of English learner students and their families.

Program Standard 6: Legal and Ethical Aspects of School Nursing Practice

The program provides candidates with an understanding of the local, state and federal laws and regulations applicable to the practice of school nursing. The program assists candidates to understand the practice of school nursing within a public educational system, including the structure and authority of school district administration, the scope and practice of school nursing as regulated by the California Board of Registered Nursing, applicable sections of the Education Code, and/or other relevant local, state, and federal codes and regulations.

The program helps candidates understand how to apply decision making skills in an ethical manner within situations unique to the school setting. The program encourages candidates to continue to grow and develop as professionals within the area of school nursing.

Program Standard 7: Preparation For Health Management Responsibilities Within the School Setting

The program helps candidates understand the school nurse’s role in providing health leadership and management, health education, health research, direct client care, training and supervision of other personnel as applicable, and planning and coordination of healthcare services and programs. The program helps candidates understand and demonstrate a collaborative approach to providing and/or facilitating health-related activities, including acting as a member of a team addressing student achievement. The program provides opportunities for the candidate to demonstrate effective communication, using a variety of supporting technology, with a wide range of audiences including students, staff, parents and community.

The program helps candidates apply his/her entry level knowledge of the standard nursing process of assessment, diagnosis, outcome identification, planning implementation, and evaluation specifically within the school setting in order to resolve or reduce barriers to student learning.

Program Standard 8: Field Work Experience

The program provides candidates with a broad range of hands-on school nurse field experiences in a variety of settings. Candidates are provided with a preceptor for mentoring and supervision during the field experiences. The program has a clearly defined and systematic process for the identification, selection and assignment of qualified preceptors. The program bases field experience assignments on an individual assessment of each candidate's prior background and experiences.

Working collaboratively, course instructors and preceptors encourage and enable candidates to function appropriately and effectively in a school nurse role.

Program Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence

Prior to recommending each candidate for a Health Services: School Nurse Credential one or more persons responsible for the program determine on the basis of thoroughly documented evidence that each candidate has demonstrated satisfactory performance on the School Nursing Competencies (SNCs). The program uses formative assessment processes to inform candidates of their status in relation to the SNCs, and to assure that candidates have the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities prior to being recommended for the credential. The evaluation of candidate competence is provided by at least one school nurse preceptor and one institutional supervisor.

The School Nursing Competencies (SNCs)**A. Providing health and wellness services (Primary Level Intervention)**

Candidates for a Health Services: School Nurse credential understand how to provide a wide range of health and wellness services for students and the school community, including but not limited to state-mandated screenings, required immunizations and health education. These services include, but are not limited to, facilitating access to health care beyond the school setting; identifying available community health resources; promoting environmental health and safety; exercising leadership when necessary with appropriate other agencies within the community; promoting healthy nutrition of students and staff; providing coordinated health services to better manage limited resources; organizing and implementing the overall school health program; and promoting the oral health of students. In addition, candidates promote mental health of students and staff, are alert to potential situations of child abuse and/or neglect and report such situations appropriately; and also recognize signs and symptoms of potential substance use and abuse and make appropriate referrals. Candidates are alert to issues of student attendance and intervene appropriately to promote student attendance.

B. Providing direct client care services (Secondary and Tertiary Level Intervention)

Candidates for a Health Services: School Nurse credential demonstrate the ability to provide healthcare services to students and emergency and/or first aid assistance to others in the school setting. They understand how to manage the acute and chronic healthcare of all students, including those who are medically fragile, such as students with spina bifida, cerebral palsy, and/or muscular dystrophy. Candidates understand the case management process, and can appropriately apply that process to the school setting. Candidates understand the process of identifying and responding to the potential spread of communicable disease, and also apply appropriate preventive measures. Candidates can effectively manage and implement health screening programs and procedures. Candidates assess and appropriately manage acute injuries that occur in the school setting. Candidates appropriately store, manage, and dispense medications to students, and appropriately document medication administration within the school setting. Candidates appropriately identify crisis situations, and provide intervention

services. Candidates identify and address health-related barriers to learning (e.g., food allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizures, headaches, ADHD).

C. Demonstrating Professional Management Skills

Candidates for a Health Services: School Nurse credential demonstrate the ability to use their professional knowledge and skills to promote the overall health of the school community. Candidates advocate appropriately with students, family, community, and others to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles. Candidates use and model evidence-based health care practices in the delivery of school nursing services. Candidates can communicate effectively in writing and can make clear oral presentations to a wide variety of audiences. Candidates organize and maintain accurate and complete health records. Candidates use their time effectively, and manage fiscal and personnel resources prudently. Candidates demonstrate the ability to train, supervise and monitor others who may assist with medication administration and may provide specialized physical health care procedures to students. Candidates demonstrate the ability to work in a collaborative and collegial manner with others.

Program Standards for the Special Class Authorization: Special Teaching Authorization in Health

Standard 10: Curricular and Instructional Skills

The Special Teaching Authorization in Health Program provides multiple authentic opportunities for students to: (1) learn to assess students' academic skills; (2) develop, implement, reflect on, and evaluate a variety of pedagogical approaches to teaching health, including developing and teaching unit and individual lesson plans and learning objectives that provide equitable access for all students to the health curriculum. Candidates have opportunities to learn about students' characteristics and learning needs, including students with diverse cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and to practice using that information to inform their instructional strategies and classroom lessons.

Standard 11: Classroom Teaching Field Experience

The Special Teaching Authorization in Health Program provides candidates with supervised teaching experience in a variety of schools and classrooms relating to the age range authorized by the credential (e.g., preschool, elementary, middle and secondary schools, and/or adult settings). Candidates also participate in field experiences that include practice in different instructional and grouping strategies typically used in public schools, such as small group instruction as well as whole class instruction. The Program assures that candidates receive feedback and guidance from supervisors during the classroom teaching field experience.

Standard 12: Candidate Competency in Academic Instruction

The Special Teaching Authorization in Health Program assures that each candidate demonstrates competency in implementing academic instructional skills in the area of health. Candidate competency includes all of the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

- Planning, implementing, and evaluating a health education curriculum within the context of a comprehensive school health model
- Facilitating positive health decision-making and health-related positive behaviors among K-12 students
- Planning, implementing, and teaching, as appropriate to the age/grade level of students, all of the following: personal health; basic principles of human nutrition and dietary practices for health and well-being; basic principles of growth and development, family life, and human sexuality; basic principles of injury and violence prevention as well as safety promotion; the mental, physical, and social effects of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; the basic elements of access to appropriate intervention and resources to respond to a health crisis; basic principles of environmental health, disease prevention, and risk reduction; basic principles of consumer health; and any other topic not specifically listed here but covered with the K-12 Health Framework.

Standards Implementation Plan for the Health Services: School Nurse Credential Program Standards

- October 2007 - Review of the draft standards by the Commission
- November 2007 - Adoption of the draft standards by the Commission
- December 2007-January 2008 - Release of an advisory to the field regarding submission guidelines and timelines for program revisions and document submission, including the final dates for
 - programs to be approved under the newly adopted standards and/or discontinue courses under the old guidelines; and
 - transitioning candidates from the “old” programs to the “new” programs
- January 2008-June 2008 – Program planning and revision activities; document preparation
- June 2008 and ongoing - Process for review of institutional program documents submitted for approval
- August 2008 and ongoing - COA approval of revised Health Services: School Nurse credential programs recommended for approval