

# School Nurse Program Standards and Competencies

**Commission on Teacher Credentialing**

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## 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.