



April 20, 2020

Governor Tony Evers  
Room 115 East State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7883  
Madison, WI 53708-7863

**School Nurses Are Essential Elements in Public Health and Schools Need to be Prepared for When They Are Asked to Reopen**

Dear Governor Evers:

The Wisconsin Association of School Nurses (WASN) would first like to thank you and your administration for your leadership during these difficult and trying times. You have been willing to make tough decisions and provide leadership to minimize the impact of COVID-19. You have been a strong and steady voice throughout this crisis.

As a lifelong educator and education advocate, you understand the important and vital role that school nurses play in our society. School nurses are on the front lines of our health care system. School nurses are also administrators who manage the health needs of populations (school communities) and manage other employees when it comes to medication administration and health care delivery.

As you continue to lead the state's response to the COVID-19 epidemic, we encourage you to pursue the following strategies:

**Make sure that school nurses are included in the public health strategies moving forward:** In recent statements, you have highlighted the importance of investing in public health as we move on from the current crisis. We could not agree with you more. Please make sure that school nurses are part of the public health strategy. As just one example of school nurses' key role in public health, it was a school nurse who first identified the H1N1 virus.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that every school have a full-time school nurse. The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) recommends that school nurse staffing focus on workload and complexity of chronic conditions and special needs. Unfortunately, some school districts in Wisconsin do not have a single school nurse. The latest data available (from the 2018-19 school year) show that there are 1,928 pupils for every school nurse in the state. The bottom line is we need



more school nurses.

**Ensure that schools are prepared when they reopen:** The reality is that most Wisconsin schools are not currently prepared to reopen following the pandemic. It would not be safe to suddenly have the students all return to school. If you look to other countries where they have successfully begun to reopen schools, they have taken specific actions to ensure safety and health.

At a minimum, the state and school districts need to make sure that schools have the following:

- An appropriate supply of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). We can assure you that most schools do not currently have these essential items in adequate supplies. They need to be available for situations when a student, employee, or visitor appears to have COVID-19.
- Environments that ensure proper spacing and health-focused cleanliness. Environmental controls for schools should follow best practices. Schools also need to be wary of populations that are sensitive to certain chemicals and odors, ensuring safe cleaning methods and products for all.
- Strategies for dealing with students and staff who may be virus carriers. School officials need to know what to look for and what to do when certain red flags appear.

The leaders and members of the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses (WASN) stand ready to help with this crisis. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us, or our lobbyist, Jack O'Meara at [jack@omearapublicaffairs.com](mailto:jack@omearapublicaffairs.com).

Sincerely,

Nicholas Herrick  
WASN President  
School Nurse Supervisor  
Children's Wisconsin

Mary Jo Beining  
Chair, WASN Legislative Committee  
School District Nurse  
Ashwaubenon School District