

# SCASN Newsletter

South Carolina  
Association of  
School Nurses

SCASN NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007



## Calendar

- **June 13-14, 2007**  
**2007 SCASN Summer Conference**, Myrtle Beach, SC
- **June 28- July 1**  
**NASN 39th Annual Conference**, Gaylord's Opryland Resort, Nashville, TN
- **August 18**  
**NCSN Examination**
- **November 15-16**  
**26th Annual School Nurse Conference**, North Charleston, SC

## Remedial Civics for Nurses - a note from the president

It was embarrassing but I had to admit - the mop-haired high school junior knew more about South Carolina government than I did. We met at a legislative breakfast representing YMCA Youth Leadership and I was there representing SCASN. Civics class was no longer part of the high school curriculum when I was in school so I realized I needed to face the fact that I was in need of a remedial course in civics.

What should be covered in my remedial civics education? I found the following breakdown of civic involvement by Dan Butin in the forthcoming Encyclopedia of the American High School.

**Volunteerism:** Short-term and long-term community service.

**Civic participation:** Membership in local or national organizations.

**Electoral engagement:** Regular voting and involvement with political parties and campaigns.

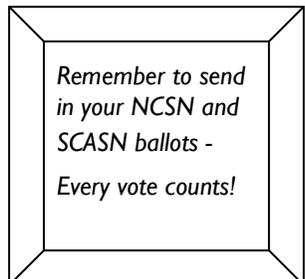
**Political voice:** Contacting officials or the media. Participating in rallies or demonstrations in support of a cause.

Most School nurses I have talked to are very involved in volunteering, most often with local and national organizations that impact the health of our students. Nearly all School Nurses I talk with vote regularly. I frequently cite the ANA's report that 92% of nurses are regular voters.

It is in the area of Civic participation and Political voice that SC School Nurses and SCASN need work to bring our grades up. We need to continue to work to increase SCASN and NASN membership in South Carolina. As SCASN works through the Strategic Planning process, we are looking at how to keep current members and how to reach out to future SCASN members. Your input, as members, is invaluable in working towards this goal.

Jessica Porter, SCASN President

Jporter@lexington1.net



## *SCASN Annual Conference*

*will be in Myrtle Beach, June 13-June 14, 2007. The brochure should arrive in your mailboxes within the next 10 days. The conference will be held at a brand new school facility with much more room than we had before. On the evening of June 13, we will have our Annual Dinner Meeting and will receive CEUs for the presentation of our strategic plan. The cost of the evening is \$12.00. The following day, we have a packed agenda with breakfast and lunch included. The registration fee is \$70.00 for members and \$80.00 for non-members.*



## Legislative Update - Cindy Poole, Legislative Committee [crpoole@sc.rr.com](mailto:crpoole@sc.rr.com)

The Student Health and Fitness Act (which included funding of a school nurse for every elementary school for 2007-2008) was not fully funded in the House version of the budget for next year. The Senate has now taken up the budget and begun working on their version of the budget bill and this is where we want to expend our efforts to educate Senators and ask for their support of FULL FUNDING FOR THE STUDENT HEALTH AND FITNESS ACT.

SCASN has developed some talking points for you to use in contacting your local legislators as well as all members of the Senate Finance Committee - please remember that we are encouraging full funding of the Student Health and Fitness Act so as to impact the overall health and wellness of students and we don't want to just focus on the nurse portion of the bill. We were initially included in this piece of legislation as an integral part of improving student's health so we want to support the entire legislation. Telephone calls are good but email is also a great way to contact your legislators. The following link will take you to a page that lists the members of the Senate Finance Committee

<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/html-pages/senatecomm1st.html> and this link will take you to a page with the email addresses of all senators <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/html-pages/senateemail.html> .

When contacting legislators, remember to:

1. Thank them for prior support and service
2. Ask for their support of the current issue - in this case Full funding of Student Health and Fitness Act - use the talking points
3. Appreciate them - tell them you would appreciate their consideration of this issue

Remember to include your contact information in case they want to respond back to you or ask more questions. It is helpful to put Constituent Opinion in the subject line of your email as well. It has also been suggested that you email your legislators from a personal email address and not your work address just in case your district has a policy about that kind of thing.

If you have questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thanks for you help and support in this very important legislative issue - I know you are all very busy taking care of students but this is an extremely important issue and we need your voices to be heard. Thank you for everything you do to make a difference in your student's lives!!

## State Director Report - Carolyn Duff [cduff@richlandone.org](mailto:cduff@richlandone.org)

This has been a very busy year for NASN. The ballots for the election of new officers, president-elect and secretary-treasurer have been sent out. Unexpectedly, however, there were some mailing difficulties. Therefore, many NASN members did not receive their ballots. NASN will therefore mail out new ballots by first class mail and extend the deadline for returning them to Corporate Headquarters. Please look for your ballot in the mail and send your vote in promptly.

NASN now has on board, since last August, a Director of Government Affairs, Mary Louise Embrey. She has 30 years of experience working as an advocate for children in the federal government and is a wonderful asset to NASN. She is not a nurse, but understands and supports the NASN mission and values. In early March, I had the good fortune to be invited to represent NASN at the Nurse in Washington Internship Program (NIWI) with Mary Louise. Between the program presenters and Mary Louise's sideline instruction, I learned a lot about legislative advocacy. I did have the opportunity to try out my new skills. I visited with staff in Senator DeMint's office and in Representative Joe Wilson's office. I also had the opportunity to speak in favor of the Healthy Families Act with Senator Edward Kennedy.

There are several things I learned that I would like to share with you:

**All politics are** really local. When our Members of Congress are back home, they are easily accessible, and it is the best time to visit them.

If you have shown up in the D. C. offices, it is very important to show up at the home offices as well, and get to know the Member's staff in his/her district.

**You are both a constituent and an expert in your field, and you are doing the elected** officials a favor by bringing something to the table and teaching them something they do not know.

**Attending Town Hall Meetings is another effective way to** "show up." Members pay particular attention to attendees at these meetings and participating in the process allows you to voice your priorities and concerns in a public forum and to amplify your voice with Members of Congress.

**One of the best results from a series of Town Hall Meetings is for Members to return to Washington and tell their staff that** "those school nurses" were everywhere. You know you got the Member's attention, and the staff will give more attention to you.

**To make a difference in the outcomes of legislation, you must** Stay on top of the issues affecting school nursing and school health, and then, make your opinions known. One way to stay on top is to visit the Advocacy Section of the NASN web site. That section is for members only, so you will have to log in. Your login number is your member number which you can find on the paper address label enclosed in your Journal of School Nursing packet.

The NASN Conference Committee has put together a great conference for this summer in Nashville (June 28 through July 1, 2007). You should have received the brochure by now. At this conference, for the first time, there are 4 learning tracts so that you can choose breakout sessions according to one particular area of interest or to meet your individual learning objectives. The tracts are Research, Practice, Leadership/Legal, and Health Promotion. There are 40 breakout sessions in the agenda.

This will be the last conference where a paper and pencil test will be given for the National Certification for School Nurses Examination. After that the exam will be offered only on-line. Get more information at [www.nbcnsn.org](http://www.nbcnsn.org).

I hope to see you in Nashville, but if you cannot travel so far, please consider coming to the SCASN Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, June 13-June 14, 2007. The brochure should arrive in your mailboxes within the next 10 days. I look forward to seeing you there.

## Grant writing 101- By Katrina Haynes RN,BSN

Grant writing sounds like an intimidating subject, right? In reality, it's one of the things that nurses do best : begging for resources, and giving justification. If you have ever had to come up with a list of reasons you were entitled to a new or replacement item, then you've already got the concept. The tricky part is jumping through the paperwork hoops.

-Start by identifying needs for your work area, which are not normally met by the regular budget. You've got quite a wish list, right?

-Speak with your principal about your list and make sure he/she knows that you are going to be making requests from the PTA, local, or national organizations. Your principal may want to be aware in case the PTA comes to them to ask why there is not enough money in the regular budget for your items. Some principals are sensitive that it may appear they are not "economic" enough with school funds.

-Respectfully inquire with the Parent-Teacher organization in your school when they make up the budget for the year and ask if they would consider letting you speak to the board members about your requests. Often, these groups are totally unaware of all the things you do for the school population as a whole. Parents will often be your best allies.

-Join an email list which sends out "grant alerts". Unless you have time to pour over publications weekly, it's best to go with a method to bring grant opportunities directly to you. You can go to the following websites to sign up for email alerts . *Be sure to set your preferences to "digest" to avoid multiple daily messages.* [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org), <http://listserv.buffalo.edu/user/sub.shtml> and request SCHL-RN as your email list group.

-Keep an open mind about grant requests and be willing to change it to fit the requirements of the donating foundation. If a particular grant wants focus on a specific group or activity, be willing to bend to accommodate. Ultimately, it will benefit ALL groups by bringing focus on your efforts to meet the needs of your students.

-Complete all forms with extra attention to detail. Have someone else recheck and triple check your paperwork. Committees will automatically trash your wonderful ideas if all their blanks and forms are not correct.

-Write your grant as if YOU are on the committee reading it. Make the person reading it as excited and compelled about your idea as you are. Explain how your idea is unique, and how many problems it will solve.

-Speak the language of the grant committee reading your request. If they are educators, then focus on key phrases like "instructional time, educational standards". If they are in a health related field, then focus on how your grant is specific to the issue closest to their hearts.

*Toot your own horn. Let your school staff know that you are working to make their school better in creative ways!*

K.H.

### ***Believing that full funding of the Student Health and Fitness Act is in the best interest of our children we therefore respectfully urge full funding of this Act.***

*Child health advocates* within South Carolina, and nationally, have lauded South Carolina's passage of the Student Health and Fitness Act in 2005 as an initiative that puts the health of children first. Passage of the Act was important; however, making good on this commitment to our children by allocating full funding for implementation is even more important.

Physical activity and healthy nutrition are the basic building blocks for a healthy body. When a child is not physically active and continually consumes an unhealthy diet, the child may not be able to pay attention in class, may get sick often, and is more likely to be overweight.

Consequences of an overweight childhood include an increase in health conditions such as hypertension (high blood pressure), diabetes, asthma, bone and muscles problems, sleep disorders, early sexual maturation, and depression; not to mention, the self-esteem issues that children who are overweight experience due to peer teasing and parent criticism. If left unchecked, the medical costs related to obesity, which are now estimated to be over \$130 billion each year, will continue to soar out of control.

According to the South Carolina's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2005), only 29.8% of high school students reported being physically active for 60 minutes or more each day and only 16.2% reported eating five or more fruits and vegetables every day.

It is important to establish healthy behaviors early in life. Schools are natural settings to influence the health and well-being of students. Parents and children expect schools to be safe and healthy learning environments. In addition to "saying" that students need to be physically active and eat healthy foods, schools must show students how to be physically active and eat healthy. Schools must be afforded the tools to give children the best possible opportunity for becoming healthy productive citizens.

A school nurse is a critical member of the education team. A school nurse can provide essential leadership in coordinating school health promotion efforts for helping students to maintain a healthy weight to decrease the burden of illness and increase the quality of life and life expectancy. A school nurse can help students deal with the problem of being overweight in a proactive manner and also eliminate the impact of poor nutrition on learning outcomes.

School nurses provide many services that keep students healthy and in the classroom ready to learn. In addition to providing health services for treating chronic health conditions, school nurses can assist students in developing good decision-making skills; provide education to students, faculty and parents; advocate for health promotion policies; and coordinate the efforts of the school team.

***South Carolina Association of School Nurses***

