

# SCASN Newsletter

South Carolina  
Association of  
School Nurses

SCASN NEWSLETTER

Spring 2008

## A School Nurse Day Greeting

Message from the President

Wednesday, May 7 is National School Nurse Day. Governor Sanford will issue a proclamation. You may be recognized at your school or the day may pass without a comment from anyone at your school.

Whether you work at a school that goes all out to make their school nurse feel appreciated or work at a school where apparently no one got the memo to put National School Nurses' Day on their calendars - I want to thank you on behalf of some of the many students you have helped over the years.

On behalf of the student who came to school without eating breakfast and you bought him breakfast bars out of your own money – thank you for giving him the fuel to let him learn.

On behalf of the student that was too ashamed to tell anyone she was cutting herself but she trusted you and you helped her get treatment – thank you for getting her help and letting her know she wasn't the only one that had those feelings.

On behalf of the teacher who finally told you about that lump that wouldn't go away and you had to talk to her like a small child until she made an appointment with her doctor – thank you for helping her get early life-saving treatment.

And for all that frequent flier who came to you for a stomach ache one day and then a pencil jab the next – thank you for understanding that it was much more than a stomach ache, much more than a pencil jab. Thank you for providing a consistent and caring presence in that student's life that helped give him the resiliency to overcome the crisis and chaos that made up his life at home.

Thank you for all that you do for South Carolina's students. On May 7 and all year long, the South Carolina Association of School Nurses says – thank you for being a school nurse.

Jessica Porter, RN, BSN, NCSN

President, South Carolina Association of School Nurses



### CALENDAR

- **May 7, 2008** National School Nurses Day
- **May 31, 2008** Application deadline for summer NASN exam
- **June 11, 2008** H.A.N.D.S. continuing education program, Myrtle Beach, SC
- **June 11, 2008** SCASN Reception and Annual Meeting, Myrtle Beach, SC
- **June 12, 2008** 2008 SCASN 8th Annual Summer Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC
- **June 28-July 1, 2008** NASN 40th Annual Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
(preconference June 27)
- **November 20-21, 2008** 28th Annual School Nurse Conference, North Charleston, SC



## A Nurse in Every School

How many times at nurses meetings had we dreamed about the “what if we had a nurse for every building”. We dreamed big about how much we could accomplish to be a real school nurse in one building, instead of a visiting school nurse for a few hours a day or maybe a full day once a week for several buildings. “It will never happen, at least not before I retire” was the most common reply you would hear among the mumblings of the group. To be a full time nurse to one school did not seem possible for our district.

July 2007, we submitted our application for the grant from South Carolina Department of Education, and held our breath. When the final word came we had been given enough to fund 7 nurses the entire group screamed like 10 year olds at a pajama party. Immediately we began to brainstorm on how, when, who, and what’s next. We could not wait to only have ONE school.

As we celebrated, some began to feel a sense of loss and fear. A bit sentimental we worried we would lose our small close-knit group. The way of doing our job was changing, and we had to acknowledge even a good change could be difficult one. It was extremely hard to choose between schools. At the last nurses meeting as our small group we shared remember when’s. A few even shed a tear or two over having to choose one of their schools over the other. Although we were happy our team was more than doubling, we realized the new challenges ahead would change our world completely.

I asked two of the veteran nurses about how they felt transitioning from multiple schools to one school has impacted them as a school nurse and their students. Renee Parkman RN, Prosperity Rikard Elementary School replied “in the past I often felt pulled in many directions, and had to prioritize, I feel like I have found the other half of me that has been in several directions, now I am able to be a whole nurse in mind and body at one school.” Lynnette Lever RN, Pomaria Garmany Elementary, states, “Continuity of care is better. I am here daily for medications, first aid; timely follow up on abnormal screening results, and education to students. I am available for parent or teacher conferences to discuss health related concerns. In short I am where I need to be at all the time”. They both agree that in the past it was difficult, but now being responsible for one school is wonderful. Ms. Parkman sums it up by saying, “the continuity of care has improved and when children are healthy this opens new doors for a positive learning environment.”

Since January 2008, the School District of Newberry County has a nurse in every school plus a School Nurse Coordinator. We have changed our entire system. We have new routines, new policies, and new opportunities to help our students. It is an on going process. I am proud to say our team accepted the challenge, and are working diligently to ensure every student has their health care needs met.

By Kim McPherson RN, School Nurse Coordinator  
The School District of Newberry County

**BALLOTS FOR NEW  
SCASN OFFICERS  
ARE IN THE MAIL -  
YOUR OPINION IS  
VERY IMPORTANT TO  
THE SUCCESS OF  
SCASN. PLEASE TAKE  
THE TIME TO VOTE  
AND RETURN YOUR  
BALLOT**

*Debbie Burkett,  
Nominations Committee*

## Seeking Volunteers

SCASN and the National Association of School Nurses advocate for more research in school nursing. Now we have an opportunity to contribute to school nursing research.

SCASN has received a request from Dr. Cheryl Krause-Parello an Assistant Professor of Nursing and Coordinator of the School Nurse Program at Kean University in New Jersey, asking that SCASN collaborate in recruiting school nurses to participate in a research questionnaire. The questionnaire will take less than 30 minutes to complete. If you are interested in participating in this research, send me your name, school, and e-mail address. I will send the names to Dr. Krause-Parello and each school nurse will then receive an e-mail link to the questionnaire from Dr. Krause-Parello.

Thank you for collaborating with this research. Jessica Porter RN, BSN, NCSN

President

South Carolina Association of School Nurses tel. 803-996-4407

## National Board Certification

Now that the certification exam will be given at four South Carolina locations, I have heard from many nurses who are studying to take the exam for National Board Certification as a school nurse.

The application deadline for the summer 2008 exam is 05/31/08. Exam dates will be 07/26/08 through 08/09/08.

The examination sites are Columbia, Winnisboro, Graniteville, and Rock Hill.

Attaining National Board

Certification as a School Nurse is a challenging but very rewarding step in a school nurse's professional career. At this time a school nurse must have a B.S.N. to pursue National Certification.

SCASN members who are currently studying for the exam have offered to share the following study resources:

1. Information on a review course to prep for the exam
2. Flash cards to study for the exam

3. Study hints gathered from the SCHLRN listserv

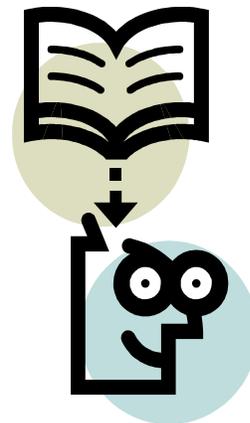
4. Pre and post test practice tests (These are not related to the review course.)

Email

[JPorter@lexington1.net](mailto:JPorter@lexington1.net) for study tools

Jessica Porter RN, BSN, NCSN

President South Carolina Association of School Nurses tel. 803-996-4407



## Your life stories are needed .....

My name is Sue Heacock and I have been a practicing RN for 12 years. I am in the process of writing an *inspirational book for nurses by nurses*. I have two goals in this endeavor:

- To celebrate nursing and those heroes in the profession
- To increase both interest in joining the profession and retention of professional nurses throughout the United States

I am writing to request your assistance. I am seeking true inspirational stories of nursing practice from nurses themselves. I will review all stories received and select the best to include in my book. Nurses submitting stories chosen for publication will be contacted individually for consent. The requirements are that stories be 5 paragraphs or less, humorous and/or inspirational, and exhibit the heart of nursing. The author must include his/her name, practicing city/state, and an email address for future contact. All stories can be emailed to me directly at the email address listed below.

In order to locate the best motivational stories, I need your help

Thanks a great deal for helping me in this venture. I truly believe my work will inspire individual nurses and benefit the profession. Do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions or concerns.

Sue Heacock, RN, MBA Tampa, FL

704-433-0464 [imsueh@yahoo.com](mailto:imsueh@yahoo.com)

## Legislative Update

Back In February of this year, SCASN had a very unique opportunity. As many of you may know an [appeal is in progress to the Supreme Court concerning the major lawsuit against the state of South Carolina as it pertains to the poorer school districts and the inequalities in those areas](#). SCASN was invited to sign on with Appleseed Legal Justice in their *Amicus Curiae* brief in [Abbeville County School District et al., vs. South Carolina et al.](#) The focus of Appleseed's brief centered on how the factors of poverty affect achievement in school. Included in the brief was a discussion of poor health as one of the socio-economic conditions commonly found in families of poverty. SCASN's Executive Committee unanimously voted to provide a letter of support documenting the organization's belief that poor health due to poverty can and does effect education.

**Cindy Poole**

## Director's Report

NASN is gearing up for the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I hope to see many of you there. By now, all of you should have received your conference brochures and can see that there are wonderful learning opportunities on the agenda. When you register, I would appreciate it if you would e-mail me ([cduff@richlandone.org](mailto:cduff@richlandone.org)) and let me know that you are going to be part of the South Carolina delegation. I would like for all of us to connect there.

The January Board of Directors meeting was held in Alexandria, Virginia, to have easy access to Capitol Hill for the board members' "Visit to the Hill." All 50 of us descended on the House and Senate office buildings to visit our members of Congress and to present our legislative priorities for 2008. The priorities are as follows:

- Improve Medicaid and SCHIP and preserve Medicaid Administration Claiming and Transportation for school districts
- Improve school nurse to student ratios in all states
- Include specialized instructional support personnel, including school nurses, in the language of the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The ultimate goal is establishment of a National School Nurse position within the United States Department of Education.
- Update nutrition standards for school foods sold outside of the school meals through support of Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act (HR 1363 and S 771).

Mary Louise Embrey, NASN Director of Government Affairs, goes to the Hill for all meetings concerning legislation related to the priorities and takes every opportunity to speak on behalf of NASN and the health of school students. She keeps members informed when action is needed through e-mails and through the Weekly Digest. Members of Congress listen carefully to the stories of school nurses and how particular legislation impacts school nursing services and health services for students.

On March 25, I had the opportunity to go to Washington to represent NASN on a panel at a Senate Briefing on the new regulations from Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). The rule that affects school districts is the elimination of Medicaid reimbursement for Medicaid administrative activities (Medicaid Administrative Claiming) and transportation. Those funds amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars to school districts. Many school districts use those funds to add school nurse positions or pay salaries of school nurses. A moratorium created by legislation passed in November on the implementation of that rule will expire June 30, 2008.

The briefing was for Senate staffers and was sponsored by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. The panelists all spoke on different CMS rules. I spoke about the Medicaid administrative activities of school nurses and how the loss of Medicaid Administrative Claiming will negatively impact the connection of eligible students to health care. After the briefing, panelists were asked to remain and meet with the staff of the two senior ranking members of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Baucus (D, Montana) and Senator Grassley (R, Iowa). They asked what their "bosses" could do legislatively to eliminate the negative impacts of the new rules.

For me, this was a great learning experience. "Staffers" of the Members of Congress are assigned to develop expertise on specific issues, such as Medicaid, and to keep their bosses informed on those issues so that Members can be knowledgeable and vote responsibly. The staffers get things done. I walked away from the meeting feeling that NASN had been heard and our message would get to the decision makers.

A briefing was presented to the House staff the week after I was there. Speaking to Administrative Claiming was a school nurse from Alexandria, Virginia. The outcome at this point is a changed Protecting Medicaid Safety Net Act (H.R. 5613) negotiated by a committee of House republicans and democrats to preclude implementation of several CMS rules until April 14, 2009. The republicans on the committee indicated that, with the negotiated terms, the president will not veto the bill if it is passed by Congress.

A Senate companion bill, S.2819, Economic Recovery in Health Care Act, was introduced on April 3 by a bipartisan group of senators. If both bills pass, it will be a victory for school children, school nurses and school districts. I urge you to contact your representatives and ask them to co-sponsor these bills. SCASN will keep you posted.

**Carolyn Duff**



## Come to the Beach for the Eighth SCASN Annual Conference

By now, the SCASN Annual Conference brochure should be in your hands. If it is not, you can download one at [www.scasn.com](http://www.scasn.com). When you look it over, you will see that we are offering a pre-conference session this year on June 11, 2008. The pre-conference will be a full day of diabetes training. The vehicle will be H.A.N.D.S. (*Helping Administer to the Needs of the Student with Diabetes in School*), the NASN nationally recognized training program for school nurses. One fee will cover your breakfast and lunch and a very comprehensive program manual and other materials. SCASN is looking for a big turn-out for H.A.N.D.S.

At the end of the day, there will be a reception for all SCASN members prior to the SCASN Annual Meeting from 4:30-5:30. This is a change from previous years. Instead of a dinner meeting, the SCASN Annual Conference will be short and all business, so that you all can have that special dinner at the beach in your favorite Myrtle Beach restaurant.

Do not stay out too late, however, because we will get an early start the next day for a full agenda of school nursing topics. Begin at 8:00 with a continental breakfast and visits to exhibitors. Lunch will be provided, too. The day will end at 4:30 leaving plenty of daylight hours for you to get out on the beach. Consider extending your stay for the weekend in Myrtle Beach and have your family join you for a mini-vacation. However you choose to use your time, please come to the conference, and do not forget your sunscreen.

### South Carolina Education Policy Fellows Program 2007-2008

First of all let me say to SCASN thank you for giving me this opportunity. At the beginning of this year I felt lost in a world of education that I did not understand: that has changed! As school nurses I think we often feel this sense of health profession and education profession clashing and it is mainly due to both professions not understanding the dynamics of the other.

I attended EPFP meetings monthly and participated in two seminars. During our monthly meetings I met and talked with Jim Rex, Superintendent of Education, Dr. Walter Edgar, author of a text book on South Carolina which gives a history of education in South Carolina, and Kathy Mahoney, a lawyer that hears cases for education for the Supreme Court of South Carolina. These were just a few of the speakers that enlightened us on education policy, how it is developed at the state level and how it is implemented into law. In January, I met Senator Courson, chairman of the Senate Education Committee and Representative Bob Walker, chairman of the House of Representatives Education Committee. I then attended a session of the House of Representatives.

The Atlanta Seminar occurred in December and was entitled "Making the Global Connection". Discussions were on the need for global education. The speakers were representative of education, broadcasting and politics. The Washington Seminar occurred in April and was one of the highlights of my career in school nursing. We went to Congress meeting all of the South Carolina congressmen and attending a session of the House of Representatives, heard political takes on education law, heard opinions on No Child Left Behind, and listened to many speakers that are revered in their profession.

I had the opportunity on several occasions to voice the importance of School Nurses and feel that I was heard! The role of the school nurse in education was clear in all the discussions in our monthly meetings. The most obvious correlation came in Washington as an education demography expert discussed the number of persons over 60 in 2010 being altered by a decline in life expectancy that will be caused by Childhood Obesity. The second correlation came from a leading economist that discussed the rising cost of Medicaid and Medicare resulting from not just the elderly but the increase in chronic illness in children and use of Emergency Rooms by the non-insured and underinsured, those whom we as school nurses work with every day.

This is brief but I hope gives an insight into this awesome experience. I hope SCASN can send other representatives yearly so they can experience this program. I believe the program will benefit leadership in SCASN and show educators that SCASN can be beneficial to education.

Thank you again,

Cathie Storey, RN

*If you would like more information on the SC Educational Policy Fellows Program or would like to be considered as a Fellows candidate as part of SCASN leadership development, please contact Carolyn Duff or Jessica Porter (Contact information on the SCASN website.).*

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Visit us online at  
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## SCASN 8th Annual Summer Conference

The 2008 SCASN Eighth Annual Summer Conference: Advancing School Nursing Practice will be held on June 11-12 at Ocean Bay Middle School in Myrtle Beach, SC.

- A preconference program, H.A.N.D.S.—Helping Administer to the Needs of the Student with Diabetes in School will be presented on June 11 from 8 AM-4:30 PM.
- The SCASN Annual Meeting and reception will be at 4:30 PM. All SCASN members and persons interested in SCASN are invited to attend. It is a good opportunity to meet your president and board members as well as your peers.
- The SCASN Annual Summer Conference— Advancing School Nursing Practice program will start at 8 AM with a continental breakfast and exhibits. Multiple speakers will broaden the skills and knowledge for the school nurse practice. Fees include breakfast and lunch.

***What a great way to start the summer—hope to see you at the beach!***

