3.0.C.6 Attracting and Retaining Nurses

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Need for Nurses

• Often the only healthcare professional that some students see regularly
• A full-time nurse can reduce the time that principals, teachers, and administrative staff use to provide health services
  – A 2011 study estimated a savings of $133,175 by reducing other staff workloads
• According to NCES in 2011-12, 49.6% of schools have a full-time nurse, 32.6% part-time, and 20.7% no nurse at all
Recommended and Actual Nurse Ratios

- The National Association of School Nurses recommends:
  - 750:1 for Healthy Students
  - 225:1 for students requiring daily service
  - 125:1 for complex health needs
  - 1:1 when needed for individual care
- American Academy of Pediatrics recommends one school nurse per school
- A 2010 study found a range of 396 to 4,411 students per nurse, with only 14 states at or below the 750:1 recommendation

### SREB Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States Per Nurse (2010)</th>
<th>SREB States and Massachusetts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>472</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2,318</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1,114</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State Policies

- Five states have policies recommending nursing levels:
  - Indiana – 750:1
  - Iowa – 750:1
  - Oregon – 750:1
  - Utah – 5,000:1
  - Virginia – 1,000:1

- Ten states have policies requiring nursing levels:
  - Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Jersey – Minimum 1 nurse per school district
  - Louisiana – Districts must employ 1 nurse per 1,500 students
  - Maine and South Dakota – require a RN to manage district services
  - Maryland – Health coverage must be provided, no specific levels identified
  - Minnesota – Districts with more than 1,000 students must employ a full-time nurse or contract for that service
  - Pennsylvania – Districts should not exceed a 1,500:1 ratio
State Policies

- Five states have specific funding levels for nurses:
  - Alabama – Goal of 1 per 500 pupils, line item in the state budget
  - Delaware – 1 per 40 units, units are dictated by student ratios
  - Georgia – 1 per 750 elementary pupils, 1 per 1,500 secondary pupils
  - Maine – 1 health professional per 800 pupils
  - Tennessee – 1 per 3,000 pupils

State Policies

- A few states have funding for positions that could include nurses, like Arkansas funding in the matrix of 1 counselor/nurse per 200 pupils
  - North Carolina – Funds non-instructional support at $268.86 per pupil
  - West Virginia – Funds professional student support personnel at between 43.97 to 45.68 per 1,000 students
Attracting and Retaining

• Districts compete directly with private and public health providers
  – The average salary for both RNs and LPNs is lower than the national average salary
    • About $11,000 for RNs and $7,500 for LPNs
• National studies show there is a national shortage
  – Data shows a lack of training capacity with over 75,000 qualified students turned away in 2018

Attracting and Retaining

• A 2019 EdSource mentions incentives that might attract school nurses that include:
  – Showcasing the school schedule which provides more time off than traditional nursing settings
  – Increasing salaries
  – Offering increased supports and resources
Attracting and Retaining

• School district examples include:
  – Oakland School District is providing $5,000 bonuses paid in two parts after the first two years of service
  – San Jose USD has a multiyear orientation program that includes mentors for new hires, which has reduced turnover
  – Outside of the school setting, Rapid City Regional Health identified having strong nurse leaders as an approach to keeping nurses overall