

## School Nurse Practice Considerations

School nursing is a specialty practice within the profession of nursing. It is guided by the [School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice](#), school policies and procedures, and the [Missouri Nurse Practice Act](#) and other state statutes and rules (see the **State Statutes and Rules**). School nurses use these resources in addition to the [Framework for the 21st Century School Nursing Practice™](#), [National Association of School Nursing](#) (NASN) [position statements](#) and [clinical practice documents](#) and other evidence-based practices to establish the foundation of their practice. The school nurse's practice is also impacted by a number of other factors including:

- Characteristics of the practice environment:
  - School district policies, procedures, and protocols
  - Number of students the school nurse is responsible for
  - Student's existing health concerns
  - Resources available, including unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP)
- The school nurse's education
- The school nurse's knowledge, skills, and abilities

The variability in these characteristics requires the school nurse to review the various facets of this specialty practice to design a school health program for their school/school district. The following document provides a list of considerations the school nurse should review and evaluate as they design their practice.

A special note to new school nurses; this list can seem overwhelming to a nurse entering the practice of school nursing. You are not expected to have the answers to all the considerations listed below within the first weeks or months of your new position. The development of a school nurse practice is ongoing. It is recommended that you make a commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement and use this document as a guide during your first year of school nursing.

(The Considerations listed below are listed in alphabetical order.)

### Contact Information

- Create a list containing name and contact information for:
  - Superintendent
  - School administrators
  - Supervisor
  - Health services staff
  - Engineer
  - 504 Coordinator
  - School Social Worker
- Review academic calendar to identify:
  - Early release days
  - Professional development days

- Holidays
- Discuss with supervisor the process for the “call tree” (the procedure or chain that shows how people will be contacted in case of an emergency or unusual incident)

### Data

- Determine if there is data that needs to be collected and reported to school administration, school board, or supervisor
- Review the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services-[Inventory of Students with Special Health Care Needs data reporting form](#) and instruction page
- Review the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services [School Health Services Online Reporting System User Manual](#)

### Delegation

- Review policies to determine if they contain specific language regarding delegation
- Review job descriptions (school nurse and UAP) to determine if job descriptions include language specific to delegation
- If UAPs are currently performing delegated nursing procedures identify if there is documentation of UAP competency on file
  - If the school nurse will continue to delegate nursing procedures to UAPs, reverify and document UAPs competency
- Resources:
  - See Skill Competency Checklists on [Show Me School Health](#) website
  - Link to [Show Me School Health](#) Delegation Continuing Education Module
  - [Missouri Delegation Decision-Making Tree](#)
  - National Association of School Nurses: [Nursing Delegation in the School Setting](#)
  - American Nurses Association: [Principles of Delegation](#)

### Documentation

- Identify how student health records are documented (paper, electronic, hybrid)
- Identify who has access to student health records
- Resources:
  - [Show Me School Health](#): The Essentials of School Nurse Documentation continuing education module
  - Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: School Health Manual (See Local Records Retention Schedule table)
  - [Missouri Public School Records Retention Schedule](#)
  - National Association of School Nurses:
    - [School Health Documentation](#)
    - [Electronic Health Records: An Essential Tool for School Nurses to Keep Students Healthy](#)
    - [HIPAA and FERPA](#)

### Emergency Action Plans (EAP)

- Identify which students have EAPs

- Note: Pursuant to Missouri Statute [167.625. Will's law — definitions — epilepsy or seizure disorder, individualized emergency health care plan, requirements — immunity from liability, when](#) the school nurse shall develop an individualized health care plan and an individualized emergency health care plan for the student with epilepsy. (The term Individualized Emergency Health Care Plan is also known as an Emergency Action Plan or Seizure Action Plan)
- Determine if additional students need an EAP by reviewing students with chronic health conditions (can usually be pulled electronically if student records are electronic)
- Develop EAPs, as needed
- Review student's EAPs to determine if they contain all the necessary information
  - It is recommended to review/update student's EAPs annually and/or if there is a change in the student's health condition
- Identify who is responsible to respond in the event of a student emergency during the school day, during field trips, and all school-sponsored events (i.e., after school programs, extracurricular activities, sport practices and events, etc.)
- Verify that the individuals responsible to respond in the event of a student emergency have the proper education and training
  - Determine who is responsible for training bus drivers on how to respond in the event of a student emergency
  - If school contracts before and after school care or program staff, determine who is responsible for training the staff on how to respond in the event of a student emergency
  - Determine process for these staff members to access stored student medicines in the nurse's office before/after school when the nurse is not present
- Determine if state statute or school policy indicates how often the training needs to be provided
  - For example: [Section 167.625, RSMo](#) requires seizure emergency response training to be provided every 2 years
- If individuals responsible to respond in the event of a student emergency do not have proper education and training or the documentation of their education and training is not available, re-educate and train the individuals
- Determine when last emergency drill (i.e., health-related emergency such as anaphylaxis, seizure, or cardiac arrest) was conducted
- Consider scheduling an emergency drill (it is recommended that emergency drills be conducted twice per year)
- Resources:
  - See the Documentation and Emergency Preparedness sections on the following Show Me School Health pages: [Anaphylaxis](#), [Asthma](#), [Diabetes](#), [Epilepsy](#)
  - Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: Health Office Management:
    - [Emergency Preparedness](#)
    - [SN CHAT: School Nurse Chronic Health Assessment Tool](#)
  - National Association of School Nurses:
    - [Asthma](#)
    - [Diabetes](#)

- [Disaster Preparedness](#)
- [Epilepsy](#)

### Evaluations

- Determine who is responsible for evaluating the school nurse
- Determine what criteria is used to evaluate the school nurse
- Determine how often the evaluation occurs
- Determine if the school nurse is responsible for evaluating other's performance (i.e., UAP)
  - Determine what criteria is used to evaluate the individual's practice

### Field Trips

- Determine the current process to notify the school nurse of upcoming field trips
- Determine the current process for documentation of medications administered or procedures performed on field trips
- Resources:
  - [Show Me School Health](#) School Nurse Considerations for Field Trips continuing education module
  - See the [Show Me School Health](#) website for field trip planning resources for various chronic health conditions
  - National Association of School Nurses:
    - [School Nursing Evidence-based Clinical Practice Guideline: Medication Administration in Schools Implementation Toolkit](#): See the Emergency Medication Field Trip Checklist
    - [School Nursing Evidence-based Clinical Practice Guideline: Medication Administration in Schools Implementation Toolkit](#)- See Medication Field Trip Checklist
    - [Position Statement-School-sponsored Trips - The Role of the School Nurse](#)
    - [Position Statement-School-sponsored Before, After, and Extended School Year/Out of School Time Programs](#)
    - [School Nursing Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline: Students with Seizures and Epilepsy CPG Implementation Toolkit](#)-See Field Trips and Extracurricular Activities Checklist

### First Aid

- Determine what set of consistent first aid protocols your school district follows
  - Does your Medical Advisor determine what first aid protocols are being used?
  - Does your school use protocols from the American Heart or other provider-based organization?
- Determine if there are written protocols for all school staff to use or just health office staff
- Determine who is responsible for training school staff who require first aid training
- Determine who is responsible for training coaches, bus drivers, before/after school programming staff on first aid

- Determine if teachers are expected to know first aid
- Identify what supplies are available for first aid implementation
  - (See page 81 of [Emergency Guidelines for Schools and Childcare Facilities](#) for list of recommended supplies)
- Determine the process for purchasing additional supplies
- Resources:
  - Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: [Emergency Guidelines for Schools and Childcare Facilities](#)

### Forms

- Determine what health-related forms are being utilized
- Review health services authorization form templates to ensure it captures all the necessary information:
  - Medication administration
    - Health care provider order
    - Parent/guardian authorization
  - Nursing procedures
    - Health care provider order
    - Parent/guardian authorization
  - Authorization for disclosure of health information between school nurse and health care provider(s) (FERPA/HIPAA form)
  - Student self-possess and self-administer medication
  - Health screening authorization
- Make any necessary changes to health-related form templates

### Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCP)

- Identify which students currently have IHCPs
- Determine if additional students would benefit from an IHCP, prioritizing students with chronic health conditions who require daily interventions
- Develop IHCPs as needed
- Review/update IHCPs at least annually and/or if there is a change in the student's health status
- Resources:
  - IHCP continuing education module on [Show Me School Health](#) website
  - National Association of School Nurses:
    - Position Statement: [Use of Individualized Healthcare Plans to Support School Health Services](#)
    - School Nursing Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline: [Students with Seizures and Epilepsy CPG Implementation Toolkit](#) contains sample IHCP for students with epilepsy
    - [Allergy and Anaphylaxis Toolkit](#) contains sample IHCP for students with anaphylaxis

### Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Determine who are the staff persons responsible for IEPs
- Identify which students have related services (i.e., school health services and school nurse services) included in their IEP
- Validate that the related services indicated are being provided
- Determine what documentation is required for the IEPs
- Validate that the required documentation is being completed

### **Infection Control**

- Determine who is responsible for monitoring [student immunization records](#) compliance
- Review school policy to determine if/what Blood Borne Pathogen Training is required
- Review Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services [Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases](#)
- Review Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services [Blood-Borne Pathogens-Guidelines for Exposure Control Plan and Staff Inservice](#)

### **Job Descriptions**

- Review school nurse job description to identify:
  - Who school nurse reports to
  - Specific expectations of the position
  - Any specific restrictions of the position
- Review job descriptions of any unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) that work with school nurse, if applicable
  - Determine who is responsible for supervising the UAPs
  - Determine who is responsible for evaluating UAPs

### **Medical Advisor**

- Identify if the school has a medical advisor
- Identify the role and responsibilities of the Medical Advisor
  - Review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Contract, as applicable
- Schedule introductory meeting with Medical Advisor

### **Medications**

- Review school district policies related to medication administration
- Review medication administration procedures and protocols
- Determine what authorizations are required for over-the-counter (OTC) medications and prescription medications
- Determine the process for parents/guardians to bring a student's medications to school
- Determine the process to return students' medications at the end of the school year
- Determine if school policy allows students to self-carry and self-administer medications
- Determine how medication administration is documented
- Determine how medications administered on field trips are documented
- Determine process for reporting medication errors
- Determine procedure for medication disposal
- Determine if the school has any stock OTC and/or emergency medications

- Note: [Section 167.630, RSMo](#) allows for stock epinephrine, [Section 167.635, RSMo](#) allows stock “asthma-related” rescue medications, and [Section 195.206, RSMo](#) allows stock naloxone
- If school has stock emergency medications:
  - Identify where medications are stored
  - Review emergency medication policies, procedures, and protocols
  - Determine if stock emergency medications are available during before/after school programming
  - Determine if stock emergency medication are brought on field trips
  - Develop a process to periodically and systematically check expiration dates of emergency medications
  - Identify what funding is used to purchase additional stock emergency medications
- Resources:
  - Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services:
    - [Medication Administration in Missouri Schools](#)
    - [Naloxone Toolkit](#)
  - National Association of School Nurses:
    - [School Nursing Evidence-based Clinical Practice Guideline: Medication Administration in Schools Implementation Toolkit](#)
    - [Emergency Medication Administration Toolkit](#)

### Meetings:

- Confirm dates of school staff meetings
- Ascertain whether school health staff regularly meet
- Discuss a meeting schedule with supervisor
- Identify other stakeholders that it may be beneficial to meet with:
  - Superintendent
  - Principal
  - Parent/Teacher Organization

### Policy

- Review school district policies to identify which policies may impact the school nurse’s practice. Recommended policies to review include:
  - School Wellness Policy
  - Confidentiality
  - Care of Illness and Injury
  - Child Abuse and Neglect
  - Screening and Referral Programs
  - Special Health Care Needs
  - Do Not Resuscitate/Do Not Attempt Resuscitate (DNA/DNAR) Orders
  - Head Lice
  - Communicable Disease Control
  - Administration of Medications in Schools

- Resources:
  - [Show Me School Health](#) Policy, Procedure, and Protocol: The School Nurse's Role in Development and Review continuing education module
  - Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: [Food Allergy Information](#)

### Procedures

- What nursing procedures might be needed in a step-by-step written form (other than first aid) including, but not limited to:
  - Diabetic care
  - Dressing changes
  - Gastrostomy tube feedings and procedures
  - Urinary catheterization
- Determine who is responsible for determining if a procedure can be delegated (i.e., the school nurse or the school nurse in consultation with the school administrator)
- Determine how it is determined who performs certain procedures
  - Is it in their job description?
  - Can the procedure be delegated?
  - What is the process for documenting training?
  - How will competency validation be documented? (See **Delegation** for more information)
- Determine how performed procedures are documented
- Determine how procedures performed on field trips are documented
- Resources:
  - See the Procedure Resources on the [Show Me School Health](#) pages

### School Health Advisory Council

- Determine if the school has a school health advisory council
- If the school has a school health advisory council, determine the school nurse's involvement on the council
- Resources:
  - National Association of School Nurses: [School Wellness](#)
  - Missouri Coordinated School Health Coalition: [School Health Advisory Council Guide](#)

### Screenings

- Determine if any health screenings are required by school policy
- Determine what health screenings are currently performed each year
- Determine what processes are established for health screenings
- Identify what parent/guardian authorization or opt-out forms are being used
- Review Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services [Guidelines for Hearing Screenings in the School Setting](#)
- Review Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services [Guidelines for Vision Screening in Missouri Schools](#)

- Develop a schedule to perform the necessary health screenings
- Resources:
  - National Association of School Nurses: [Vision and Eye Health](#)

### Section 504 Plans

- Identify the 504 Coordinator
- Determine which students have a 504 Plan
- Validate that the health-related accommodations indicated in the Section 504 Plan are being provided
- Determine the documentation required for the 504 Plans
- Validate that the documentation is being completed
- Resources:
  - [Show Me School Health](#) 504 Plans: What the School Nurse Needs to Know continuing education module
  - National Association of School Nurses- [Position Statement- IDEIA and Section 504 Teams - The School Nurse as an Essential Team Member](#)

### State Statutes and Rules

- Identify and review state statutes and rules that impact school nurse practice
  - [Missouri Nurse Practice Act](#)
  - [Section 167.181, RSMo](#), Immunization of School Children
  - [Section 167.191, RSMo](#), Exclusion of children with communicable diseases
  - [Section 167.208, RSMo](#), requires each school district to adopt a policy on allergy prevention and response with priority given to addressing potentially deadly food-borne allergies; the policy and procedure must be in place by July 1, 2011
  - [Section 167.621, RSMo](#), addresses the authorization of medications in schools.
  - [Section 167.625, RSMo](#), "Will's Law", ensures school nurses have plans in place to respond to students with epilepsy and other seizure disorders and requiring school personnel to complete seizure-response training every two years.
  - [Section 167.627, RSMo](#), addresses possession and self-administration of medications in school
  - [Section 167.630, RSMo](#), this act authorizes school contracted agents trained by a nurse to administer an epinephrine auto-syringe on any student who is having a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction.
  - [Section 167.635, RSMo](#), enacted August 2012, permits school districts in Missouri to maintain a stock supply of "asthma-related rescue medications" for use in the care of any student who is having a life-threatening asthma episode.
  - [Section 167.803, RSMo](#), requirements for schools related to students with diabetes.
  - [Section 167.806, RSMo](#), Plan to be submitted by parent or guardian of student with diabetes--review by school.
  - [Section 167.809.1, RSMo](#), Diabetic care may be provided to students, when, trained personnel to be on site.

- [Section 167.812.1, RSMo](#), Diabetic care, not practice of nursing, when--health care professionals may provide training.
- [Section 167.818, RSMo](#), Student may perform certain diabetic care for self.
- [Section 167.821, RSMo](#), Immunity from liability.
- [Section 170.310 RSMo](#), Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Instruction
- [Section 190.092, RSMo](#), Defibrillators, use authorized when, conditions, notice--good faith immunity from civil liability, when.
- [Section 190.255, RSMo](#), Any qualified first responder may obtain and administer naloxone to a person suffering from an apparent narcotic or opiate-related overdose in or to revive a person.
- [Section 190.603, RSMo](#), Outside the hospital do-not-resuscitate order may be executed
- [Section 191.640, RSMo](#), Blood-Borne Pathogen Standard governing public employers with employees at occupational risk
- [Section 191.656 RSMo](#), HIV Confidentiality
- [Section 195.205 RSMo](#), allows pharmacists to dispense Naloxone without a prescription under a statewide Standing Order issued by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services or by protocol with a licensed physician. Schools are able to establish policies on stocking Naloxone within their district.
- [Section 195.206, RSMo](#), allows any person to possess an opioid antagonist or an addiction mitigation medication.
- [Section 210.003, RSMo](#), Immunization of Children in Day Care Settings
- [Section 431.061, RSMo](#), minor consent for treatment, care of pregnancy, venereal disease, drug, or substance use without parental consent
- [Section 336.210, RSMo](#), recommending services of a professional
- [Chapter 334](#), Missouri Medical Practice Act (physician delegation to nurses)
- [Chapter 210](#), Child Protection and Reformation (child abuse and neglect, reporting system)
- [Chapter 160](#), Schools (general provisions)