



THE BOWER
FOUNDATION



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

School Nurse Assessment

February 2008

The following information was compiled through information submitted through the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) and through telephone interviews with school district personnel. Information has been considered for all school districts.

Legislation

During the 2007 Regular Session, the Mississippi Legislature passed the “Mary Kirkpatrick Haskell – Mary Sprayberry Public School Nurse Act of 2007.” This Act designated the Department of Education as the state agency responsible for the administration and supervision of the school nurse program in the public schools of the State of Mississippi. The Department of Education, through the Office of Healthy Schools, was tasked with the following:

- Develop standards, procedures and criteria for the public school nurse programs in Kindergarten through Grade 12;
- Administer the School Nurse Intervention Program (formerly administered by the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi and the State Department of Health);
- Provide resources to all public school nurses;
- Develop criteria to measure the effectiveness of a school nurse;
- Develop a recommended salary structure for school districts to use when hiring a school nurse; and
- Report to the Senate and House Public Health and Welfare and Education Committees’ Chairmen annually on the number of public school nurses, in which schools they are employed, and results of their work in relations to the measures established.

Action

The following documents cleared the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process and were approved by the State Board of Education September 21, 2007:

- *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures & Standards of Care* [a separate document available as a resource]
- Criteria for School Nurse (including performance measures for evaluation) [Tab 2]
- Recommended Non-Binding Mississippi School Nurse Salary Schedule [Tab 3]

The Department of Education, through the Office of Healthy Schools, is administering the School Nurse Intervention Program (including distributing legislatively appropriated funds), providing training and resources for these nurses, and collecting data on a monthly basis of the performance measures detailed in the criteria. Statewide data from these nurses, in both numerical and graphical format, is detailed behind Tab 4.

The following resources have been provided and/or made available to public school nurses statewide:

- *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures & Standards of Care*
- Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework (T.E.A.C.H. Manual)
- Mississippi Comprehensive Physical Education Framework
- Wellness Policy Guidelines
- Communicable Disease Policy Guidelines

School Nurses

For the period defined as the 2007-2008 school year, the Department of Education reports 419 school nurses statewide. 94% of these nurses are Registered Nurses (RN), and 6% are Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN). An LPN must be supervised by an RN to meet *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures & Standards of Care* guidelines. In addition, there are 2 Nurse Practitioners, and 10 Certified Nurse Assistants.

A detailed listing of the public school nurses in Mississippi (by school district) can be found behind Tab 5.

Overall, the average across the state was 2.7 school nurses per district. We estimate a nurse to student ratio of 1:1174 – a number well above the National School Nurse Association's recommendation of 1:750 for general student population or 1:225 when students with special health needs are mainstreamed with other students. The nurse-to-student ratios by district are included in the information behind Tabs 4 and 5.

School Districts Without a School Nurse

We identified 20 school districts with no school nurse on staff.

County	District
Benton	Benton County School District
Bolivar	Benoit School District
Bolivar	Cleveland School District
Bolivar	North Bolivar School District
Bolivar	Shaw School District
Chickasaw	Chickasaw County School District
Choctaw	Choctaw County School District
Claiborne	Claiborne County School District
Clarke	Enterprise School District
Clay	Clay County School District
Forrest	Forrest County AHS
Hinds	Hinds County AHS
Holmes	Durant Public School District
Prentiss	Booneville School District
Quitman	Quitman County School District
Scott	Forest Municipal School District
Smith	Smith County School District
Sunflower	Drew School District
Wilkinson	Wilkinson County School District
Yazoo	Yazoo City Municipal School District

Funding

We have identified the following funding sources for school nurses:

- District funding/MAEP funding
- Federal funding
 - Title programs
 - IDEA
- Medicaid reimbursement
 - EPSDT (Mississippi Cool Kids)
 - School-Based Administrative Claiming (SBAC)
- School Nurse Intervention Program
- Other grants
 - The Bower Foundation
 - Abstinence
- Hospital/local clinic/Regional Mental Health funding
- Head Start funding