

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND
VERMONT AGENCY OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

I. PURPOSE

School health services play a vital role in the health outcomes of children. Well trained, supervised and supported school nurses are vital partners in our efforts to optimize health and academic outcomes for children. Continuously updated, evidence-based standards of practice for school nurses are a foundation for school health services. The current scope of practice for school nurses is outlined in the *Vermont Standards of Practice: School Health Services Manual* (the Manual), a publication which in recent years, is prepared and revised by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH).

II. TERMS AND AGREEMENTS

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) seeks to link, and to optimize the efficiency of, the efforts of the VDH and the AOE in providing school health services. With these shared goals in mind, the VDH and the AOE agree to the following:

The AOE will continue, through the State Board of Education and/or the Standards Board for Professional Educators (as their respective authorities are defined in law), to promulgate administrative regulations in areas which include, but are not limited to, education quality standards, school nurse licensing, and school health services. The AOE shall have continuing responsibility for the administration of school nurse licensing requirements.

In July of 2014, the School Nurse Advisory Committee (the Committee) was instituted under the auspices of the VDH. The Committee is made up of five practicing school nurses, one of whom will be the President of the Vermont State School Nurses' Association (VSSNA), and one AOE professional appointee. The VDH Maternal and Child Health Division Director and the Child Health Prevention Coordinator are ad hoc members. The Committee is chaired by the VDH State School Nurse Consultant. This Committee has three responsibilities:

1. Maintenance and revision of the Manual
2. Maintenance and revision of the *New School Nurse Orientation* (the Orientation)
3. School nursing workforce development. This includes promotion of the School Nurse Leader model, as referenced in the 2014 Education Quality Standards:
[http://healthvermont.gov/local/school/documents/school health services delivery model .pdf](http://healthvermont.gov/local/school/documents/school_health_services_delivery_model.pdf)

The Manual and the Orientation shall be prepared, and continuously revised by the Committee in coordination and consultation with the VDH and the AOE, as appropriate, and in a manner which is consistent with current State and Federal law. The Committee shall access professional programmatic staff at the AOE and the VDH for subject matter expertise and advice. The Committee shall also access content experts as needed from community partners including, but not limited to, institutions of higher education, the Vermont State Board of Nursing, the Vermont Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Vermont Academy of Family Physicians, the VSSNA, the Vermont Principals' Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, the Vermont School Boards Association, and the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program. Committee meetings will address school health issues, and will foster accurate and evidence-based practices in the school setting.

The Committee will provide recommendations on topics including, but not limited to:

1. Education Quality Standards
2. Supervision of school nurses by non-medical personnel
3. Educational opportunities for both new and current school nurses
4. Support for these highly skilled professionals
5. Information technology
6. School Nurse Professional Learning Collaboratives

Recommendations for changes or additions to the Manual, the Orientation, or school nurse workforce development will be made by the Committee. Responsibility for the ultimate approval of those recommendations shall rest with the Commissioner of the VDH and the Secretary of the AOE.

Professional staff at the AOE and the VDH shall cooperate on the implementation of this MOU. Evidence-based/informed research will guide activities within this MOU.

III. INTENTION OF THE PARTIES

This MOU is not intended to replace or supersede any other existing interagency agreements or MOUs between the AOE and the VDH. In the event of any actual or perceived inconsistency between this MOU and any other existing interagency agreement or MOU between AOE and VDH, the earlier interagency agreement or MOU shall control, absent an express written agreement to the contrary.

In the event of any actual or perceived inconsistency between this MOU and State or Federal statutes, or regulations, the State or Federal statutes, or regulations shall supersede this MOU.

Nothing within this MOU shall be construed as requiring either party to provide funding for any purpose which is not otherwise required by law.

IV. CHANGES OR AMENDMENTS TO THIS MOU

Any changes to the Memorandum of Understanding may be made only by the mutual written agreement of the parties.

V. TERMINATION

The parties agree that each has the right to terminate the relationship within 30 days of sending a written notice to the other parties.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be in effect upon signing and will expire four years from the date of signing.

Harry Chen, M.D.



Commissioner
Vermont Department of Health

Date: 5/11/2015

Rebecca Holcombe



Secretary
Vermont Agency of Education

Date: 5/12/2015

