

September 21, 2010
Senate Committee on Education

Testimony of Deputy State Superintendent Mike Thompson
Clearinghouse Rule 10-058
School Nurse Certification

Thank you to Chairperson Lehman and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of Clearinghouse Rule 10-058 on the qualifications to be a school nurse.

The rule requires that to be a school nurse an individual must be a licensed registered nurse and have completed a bachelor's or master's degree from a nursing program that is approved by the board of nursing or accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and that includes preparation in public health nursing or community health nursing. The rule also grandfathered in all individuals currently employed as a school nurse.

School nursing is a specialized area of nursing practice that is focused on the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of the students. This specialized area of nursing practice is a marriage of providing acute and preventive health care and public health nursing care in the school setting.

Two-year nursing programs lack the public health nursing curriculum found in a four year program. A Bachelor of Science Nurse (BSN) receives additional education and training in public health curriculum including: public health curriculum in epidemiology, emergency preparedness and management, disease prevention and promotion, communicable disease and immunization management. These competencies are not found in the curriculum of a 2-year or Associate Degree Nurse (ADN) program. Armed with this educational preparation, school nurses recognize disease trends such as the H1N1 pandemic, initiate wellness programs for students and staff, and assess the needs for health accommodations in school so students can learn.

Often, the school nurse is the lone health care provider in the school setting. Consequently, the school nurse needs to be an independent practitioner without immediate access to a medical provider down the hall or available by phone. The school nurse needs to be well grounded in the critical thinking and decision-making skills offered in a four-year degree nursing program to make safe, urgent, and emergency decisions.

The school nurse is the health care leader in the school. Leadership skills are needed to implement the health mandates that are unique to nursing practice in the school setting. The initiation of health programs such as the growth screening program to identify student in need of weight referrals, fluoride rinse campaign for dental decay prevention, or organization of school based flu shot clinics, require leadership skills embedded in a four-year degree nursing program.

Some people will argue that a nurse is a nurse, with two- and four-year registered nurses passing the same licensing exam. However, the nursing exam focuses on the minimum nursing standard for an entry level nursing position without testing the public health knowledge needed for a school nursing position. For this reason, a four year degree has long been the minimum

state requirement to practice public health nursing. We should not ask any less of those practicing public health in a school setting.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and National Association of School Nurses recommends school nurses have a four-year degree. Many Wisconsin schools have heeded this recommendation with 92% of our hired or contracted school nurses having a bachelor's degree or higher.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



6117 Monona Drive • Suite 1 • Madison, Wisconsin 53716-3995 • (608) 221-0383 • FAX (608) 221-2788
info@wisconsinnurses.org • www.wisconsinnurses.org

TO: Senator John Lehman, Chairperson and member of the Senate Education Committee
FROM: Gina Dennik-Champion, RN, MSN, MSHA
DATE: September 21, 2010
RE: Support of Clearinghouse Rule 10-058 Relating to School Nurse Certification

Good morning Chairperson Lehman and members of the Senate Education Committee. Thank you for conducting a hearing on CR 10-058. My name is Gina Dennik-Champion, I am a RN and I am here today representing the Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA). As the professional nursing association for any RN in Wisconsin, WNA is pleased to share our reasons for why we support the proposed permanent rule amending Chapter PI 34, relating to School Nurse Certification.

According to the National Association of School Nurses and the American Nurses Association, "The school nurse's primary role is to support student learning by acting as an advocate and liaison between home, the school, and medical community regarding concerns that may affect a student's ability to learn" [NASN 1999b] (2005). More simply, the role and responsibility of the school nurse is tri-fold: one, is the direct care provider to the student; two, is the coordinator of the health promotion and prevention services targeted toward the student population and, third; is the communicable disease "epidemiologist" which includes serving as the monitor and reporter of emerging disease patterns within the school(s). School nurses are asked to perform and demonstrate a variety of high-level nursing-related skills and competencies within our educational environments that include the following health conditions: child abuse and neglect, domestic and school violence, child and adolescent obesity and inactivity, suicide, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, adolescent pregnancy and parenting, environmental health, physical and emotional disabilities and their consequences, mental health, children with complex physical needs and last but not least, the uninsured child.

WNA supports the proposed amendment in Section 1. PI 34.01 (52m) that defines the school nurse as a person who is licensed as a registered nurse and who holds a baccalaureate degree from a nursing program that is approved by Wisconsin's Board of Nursing or accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Accreditation is contingent upon preparation in public or community health nursing. We support this amendment because of the current realities occurring in our schools that are dynamic and consistently changing. The complexity of a school nurse's "patient population" requires a scope of nursing practice which as stated before,

needs to include the ability/competency to identify and address the intersection and overlap of direct patient care, community and public health.

WNA also supports the “grandmothering” for those RNs that do not hold a bachelors degree in nursing but are currently employed as a school nurse.

Thank you for allowing WNA to provide testimony at this public hearing. We ask that the Education Committee approve and implement this rule change without delay.

Western Technical College

THE ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

304 6TH STREET NORTH LA CROSSE, WI 54601 (608) 785-9085

Resolution 2010-1-1

A resolution opposing the Department of Instruction to bar nursing graduates with a two year degree from becoming school nurses in the state of Wisconsin.

- 1 Whereas the Western Student Government represents over 22,000 students in its district, and
- 2 Whereas, Western Student Government is the official voice for these students, and
- 3 Whereas the Wisconsin Technical College System is a gateway to higher education for minority and low
- 4 income students, and,
- 5 Whereas, over 700 students are preparing for to enroll into Western Technical Colleges Associate
- 6 Degree Nursing Program, and,
- 7 Whereas, over 75 students each year graduate from Western Technical Colleges Associate Degree
- 8 Nursing Program, and
- 9 Whereas, the Department of Instruction has proposed a rule to bar Associate Degree nursing graduates
- 10 from becoming school nurses in the State of Wisconsin, and,
- 11 Whereas, students who graduate from the Wisconsin Technical College System typically score better
- 12 than those who have a four year degree on the National Council Licensure Examinations (NCLEX) exam,
- 13 and,
- 14 Whereas, Western Technical College Students have the second best NCLEX pass rate in the state
- 15 including all public and private community colleges AND four year colleges in the state, while taking
- 16 comparable exams, and,
- 17 Whereas, this new policy would create an unfair hiring practices for Associates Degree nurses, and,
- 18 Whereas, the DPI has not responded to requests for supporting documentation of the proposed rule
- 19 change as requested from Western's Student Government,
- 20 Be it resolved Western Students oppose any language by the Department of Public Instructions that uses
- 21 "Bachelor's required" for hiring practices for nurses.
- 22 Be it resolved Western Students ask the State Senate Committee on Education, and State Assembly
- 23 Committee on Education to oppose such language as well.
- 24 Be it resolved Western Students ask all legislators from Western Technical College's District to oppose
- 25 such language as well.

Madison College student Senate

Resolution

No. 001

The following resolution was passed by the Madison College Student Senate on 9/16/10 and is herewith submitted by the president to the Administration for his/her consideration.

Whereas: The Madison College Student Senate represents over 46,000 students attending Madison College in the district.

Whereas: The Madison College Student Senate is the official elected voice of the students.

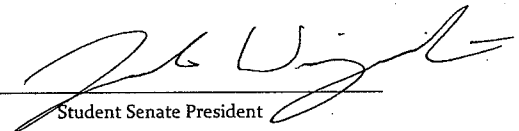
Whereas: The Department of Instruction has proposed a rule to bar Associate Degree nursing graduates from becoming school nurses in the State of Wisconsin,

Whereas: Students who graduate from the Wisconsin Technical College System typically score better than those who have a four year degree on the NCLEX exam.

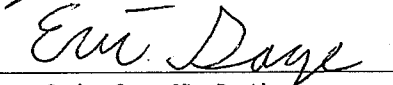
Resolved: Madison College Students oppose any language by the Department of Instruction that segregates "Associates Degrees" from "Bachelors Degree" in their hiring practices, and

Resolved: Madison College students ask all legislators from Madison College's district to oppose such language as well.

Resolved: Madison College students ask the State Senate Committee on Education, and State Assembly Committee on Education to oppose such language as well.



Student Senate President



Student Senate Vice-President

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing faculty members at Chippewa Valley Technical College, are writing in opposition to Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. There are four main reasons this ruling is not in the best interest of nurses, communities, or school children: the Associate Degree nursing program curriculum is rigorous, of high quality, and meets the health care needs of the community; this ruling lacks consideration of lifelong learning and professional commitment; there is no evidence that there exists a difference in the quality of care provided by the school nurse with an Associate Degree and the school nurse with a Baccalaureate Degree; it will restrict current and future nurses who are qualified and passionate about community and school children's health from practicing in their desired field and restricts school districts from hiring qualified Registered Nurses with an Associate Degree.

Health care is complex, experiences change frequently, and is in constant evolution. This is not unique to school nursing, but all nursing and health care. The Associate Degree curriculum offered by the Wisconsin Technical College System nursing programs evolves accordingly. The accreditation process is utilized as one means to demonstrate evidence of the quality of the nursing program. Accreditation by the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission, Inc. provides support that our nursing program curriculum is current, relevant, rigorous, prepares graduates to pass the licensure examination, and meets the needs of the community which we serve. All of the Associate Degree nursing programs in the WTCS are accredited.

The newly graduated nurse, whether from a BSN or ADN program is not uniquely qualified to practice in the school setting. While they are both adequately prepared for entry-level nursing practice, they would both require deliberate and extensive mentoring and orientation to this setting. More relevant is the professional commitment, lifelong learning, and passion for school health that would assist any nurse in being more qualified for this role. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree has learned the importance of lifelong learning and recognizes that this is required for any position in nursing. This learning can occur informally through reading journals and attending conferences, to formal education in the form of higher education coursework. A Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree who has a passion for school health and participated in activities to prepare him or herself for this setting would likely be qualified for and provide high quality care in this role. The DPI should not prevent this person from practicing in this field.

Nursing prides itself on being an evidenced-based profession. This means the decisions Registered Nurses make, the care they provide, and the advancement of their knowledge is based on data from research, best practices, and experience. There is no evidence that Registered Nurses with a Baccalaureate Degree practicing in the school setting provide better care than Registered Nurses with an Associate Degree. It is also important to mention that the ADN and BSN graduates must pass the same licensure examination in order to be eligible to practice as Registered Nurses. This licensure examination is evidence of a graduate nurse's knowledge and preparation for entry to practice, and in Wisconsin, the pass rate is very similar between the BSN and ADN programs.

A ruling requiring a BSN for eligibility of a school nurse position greatly impedes the potential for qualified, passionate, and capable Registered Nurses with Associate Degrees to practice in an area where they can provide quality care to the population they serve. Additionally, the WTCS serves a population of students that without access to an Associate Degree in Nursing, might not be able to achieve the dream of becoming a Registered Nurse. For example, approximately 50% of the student population at Chippewa Valley Technical College in particular is described as low income and almost 60% are described as academically challenged. The nursing program at CVTC provides an opportunity for these students to achieve their goal that they could not otherwise achieve if they were required to attend the University setting. During a period of nursing shortage, which Wisconsin encounters periodically, a ruling such as this puts additional strain on school districts to find qualified Registered Nurses. This is particularly challenging for rural and small communities.

In conclusion, we strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses and urge the DPI and Senate Education Committee to oppose this ruling as well.

Karen Taylor RN, MSN	Keri Gerald RN, MS	Ann W RN, MSN	Deborah RN, MSN	
Rosy Kincaid RN, MSN, CNE	Jeanne RN, BC, MS, OLS	Kim Eustace RN, MSN, ANP, BC	Shirley RN, CEN, MSN	
Kathleen Kuyron PhD, RN	Nancy RN, MSN	Dorothy Murphy RN, MS	Shirley RN, MSN	
Kathy Schindler RN, MSN	Kay Schan RN, MSN, EdS	Paula McDonald RN, MA		
Ann RN, MSN	Lisa Hogan RN, MSN	Renee Christensen RN, MS		



Eau Claire Campuses
Clairemont
West
Gateway

620 W. Clairemont Ave.
Eau Claire, WI 54701-6162
715-833-6200
Fax 715-833-6470
www.cvtc.edu

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

B. Thompson
Daniel A. Badger

An affirmative action employer
and educational institution.

Bruce A. Barker
President

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Christina D'Agostino
Heather Kats
Melby Anderson
Katie Trimble
Susan Belland
Saura Dutz
Heather Cook
Melissa Schumel
Kara Smith
Alex Taylor
Sarah Taylor
Julia Hoover
Patricia Knapp
Taylor Sepe
Christina Galt
Malkhub Lee
Jack Scott
Kari L. Serunian
Michelle R. Johnson
Eindrye

An affirmative action employer
 and educational institution.
 Bruce A. Barker
 President

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Shashi Miller, Student Nurse

Vanessa Dreyer, Student Nurse

[Signature]

Amanda Kuper, Student Nurse

Jennifer Heldebrandt Student Nurse

Gwendolene Kuen Student nurse

Melissa Trecko Student nurse

Holly W. [Signature]

[Signature] Student nurse

Beth [Signature] Student nurse

[Signature] Student nurse

Stacy [Signature] Student nurse

[Signature] Student Nurse

Rosalyn [Signature] Student Nurse

Kim R Mattison, Student Nurse

Kimberly [Signature] student nurse

Katu Young, student nurse

Anne [Signature] Student Nurse

Jeffe [Signature] Student nurse

Dana [Signature] student nurse

Sarah [Signature] student nurse

TARA [Signature] student nurse

Jennifer [Signature] student nurse

Rachel [Signature] Student Nurse

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Margaret A. Siller
 Kristina Sullotta
 Dawn Anderson
 Jessica Pullman
 Kerry C. Nutting
 Meagan J. Fetzer

Justine Wingard
 Nicole Hamilton
 Whitney Diers
 Sarah Adair
 Carly DeFries
 Emily Mangaul

Jennifer
 Kari Bergman
 Chelsea Waple
 Jessica Spina
 Rachel Fisher
 Kelli Moring
 Jennifer Swanger
 Jessica Beaupre
 Meagan Amundson
 Jennifer Myler
 Doreen
 Nadene VanVonderen
 Jenna Sieg
 Samantha Woltz
 Heather Steele

Dominic
 Michael
 Amy J. Drees
 Ade Sautt
 Anna Dreyer
 Terri Bree
 Lisa Decker

An affirmative action employer
 and educational institution.

Bruce A. Barker
 President

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Karen Keenlyne
Shannon Bickel
Stephanie Bol
Amy Des
Raquel Durigon
T. Jensen
L. Asph
Shawo Mohammed
R. O.
Amy Wilmer
Nicola M. Mataska
Karin Huston
Angela Orr
Lisa Hays
Angela Gray

Alice Urban
Marie Lamb
V. J. H.
Kim M.
Amanda Stalberg
Angelita Bolton
Kariisa Dougherty
Janet L. Hoffman
Christina Li

Mike Goodken
Jennifer Hager

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Julie Nelson

Holly DeMarce

[Signature]

Christina Thomas

Angie Franette

Ashley Dale

[Signature]

matia cup

Susan Branch

Brittany Hughes

Jessica Radle

Michelle Eves

Jared Kuhl

Paula Brown

[Signature]

Norma Sardin

Deborah Hackett

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

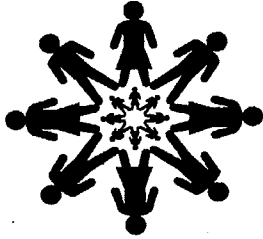
Jane Phillips
Sara J. Simurright
Shayla Abel
Nathaniel
Laura Vogel
Christi Spica
Courtney Stansbury
Megan
John
Hannah
Megan
Jan K. MacLis
Dacia Sullivan
Katie
Jessica
Becky

Kennedy
Kari Groves
Alicia Henck
Amy Larson
Jane Buchholz
Michelle Hincheliff

Senate Education Committee:

We, the undersigned nursing students at Chippewa Valley Technical College strongly oppose the Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, Requirements for School Nurses. This rule would restrict the practice of nursing when there is no evidence that the Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is any less qualified than one with a Baccalaureate Degree. A student who graduates with an Associate Degree takes the same licensure exam as the student who graduates with a Baccalaureate Degree. Both graduates are well prepared for an entry level position in nursing. A Registered Nurse may be employed in a wide variety of settings: hospital, nursing home, assisted living home, clinic, home care agency, school, and day care. The Registered Nurse with an Associate Degree is qualified to practice in each of these settings as well. The Registered Nurse also understands the importance of lifelong learning and career enhancement activities. The Registered Nurse, regardless of entry to practice degree, would need to participate in additional learning activities to be prepared and qualified to practice in a new setting. This ruling would prevent Registered Nurses who are qualified to work in the school setting from doing so. We oppose a ruling that restricts the practice of professional nursing solely based on degree earned.

Anne Dafflin, ADN
Theresa Collins, ADN
Melody Leiby, ADN
Rebecca Johnson, ADN
Jenny Fournier, ADN



WASN

Wisconsin Association of School Nurses

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education in Favor of Clearinghouse Rule 10-058

M. Kathleen Murphy, DNP, RN, FNP-BC

September 21, 2010

Good morning Chair Lehman and committee members. My name is Dr. Kathleen Murphy. I am a registered nurse, I serve on the Board of Directors of the National Association of School Nurses, the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses, and I am the Health Services Coordinator for Milwaukee Public Schools. I am testifying today on behalf of the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses in favor of Clearinghouse Rule 10-058, an important rule to ensure student health and safety, through the provision that defines a school nurse as:

“a person who is a registered nurse ... and has a bachelor’s or master’s degree from a nursing program that is approved by the board of nursing or accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and that includes preparation in public health nursing or community health nursing.”

Requiring the BSN as the minimum entry to practice for school nursing is consistent with the National Association of School Nurses and the American Nurses Association policy statements regarding registered nurse educational preparation, as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement on the role of the school nurse and school health services.

I am a proud associate degree-nursing graduate of Moraine Park Technical College in West Bend. My education prepared me well to pass the state licensure exam and to care for individuals, families and groups within the context of a hospital, skilled nursing facility, medical clinic and other health care venues. As wonderful as that education was, it prepared me for practice within those parameters, not the broader context of community and public health.

For nurses, the minimal level of education for preparation in independent practice, leadership/management, and community health nursing—the cornerstone of school nursing—is the baccalaureate degree. Baccalaureate nursing preparation adds the components of community and population based nursing that prepare the nurse to care for a broad range of communities and vulnerable populations in a variety of settings, most notably those outside traditional health care venues. School nursing is a very independent practice. The school nurse is often the only health care provider in the school building and does not have the ability to quickly consult a colleague down the hall or in another room when

confronted with a clinical dilemma. The specialty of school nursing demands proficiency in the independent practice, leadership and management areas of nursing typically acquired through baccalaureate preparation.

The Wisconsin Technical College System Associate Degree Nursing (WTCS-ADN) statewide curriculum does have a community and mental health component, but it addresses these constructs from "the social, emotional, physical, cultural and environmental influences that affect individuals, families and groups. The nurse manages care in the *context* (emphasis added) of community" rather than managing the actual care of a specific community or population. The WTCS does have a collaborative nursing agreement that facilitates the transition of ADN graduates into BSN programs, and I applaud all strategies that ease the path for nurses to advance their education in preparation for new nursing roles.

As a nurse, I took the long path. I began my nursing career as a certified nursing assistant, and over many years became an associate degree nurse, a baccalaureate prepared nurse, a master's prepared nurse and eventually a doctor of nursing practice. Each level was valuable and prepared me for a specific type of nursing practice. To ensure that level of proficiency in school nursing, I urge you to retain the provision requiring the BSN as the minimum entry to practice for school nursing.

Thank you.



September 21, 2010

Regarding: Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Proposed Administrative
Rule: A.D.N.-B.S.N. Debate

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns about the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) proposed administrative rule that would require a minimum of bachelor's degree for a registered nurse to be employed as a public school nurse in Wisconsin.

As Dean of the Center for Health and Safety Education at Madison Area Technical College I would like to make it very clear that I am opposed to this proposed administrative rule.

The Registered Nurse (R.N.) credential for nurses is widely recognized and is held by individuals completing either the Associate Degree in Nursing (A.D.N.) or the Bachelors Degree in Nursing (B.S.N.). Both paths to achieve the R.N. credential are recognized and accepted and there is no empirical evidence that demonstrates differences between the two relative to the quality of patient care and professionalism.

Individuals completing the A.D.N. and the B.S.N. must pass the same national examination in order to become a registered nurse in the state of Wisconsin.

An examination of the pass rates for our A.D.N. graduates reveals that the vast majority exceed the national average and score at higher rates than those testing from a B.S.N. program.

As an administrator for many years in health occupations in both the private and public sectors I struggle to find the rationale behind this proposed rule.

Madison Area Technical College offers over 63 courses in sciences and nursing in a two-year period. Madison Area Technical College's A.D.N. program has a statewide approved curriculum that provides students with training, skills and technical competence in nursing. Students may sit for the national R.N. exam for licensure upon completion of the program.

In closing I would again like to clearly state my opposition to this potential administrative rule. I do not believe that DPI has presented empirical evidence proving that A.D.N. registered nurses are any less qualified than B.S.N. registered nurses.

I wholeheartedly stand by our programs and the success our graduates have had serving the community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Lausch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Lausch, Ed.D., MPH, CHES
Dean, Center for Health and Safety Education
Madison Area Technical College