

# **School Nurse Advisory Council**

## **Meeting Minutes**

August 15, 2013

### **Meeting Location**

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown.

### **Opening**

The first School Nurse Advisory Council (SNAC) meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. on August 15, 2013 by facilitator Stephanie Knutson

### **Present**

Donna Kosioroski, Gary Maynard, Gayle Pagoni (non-voting), Leah Hendriks, Marie Burlette, Stephanie Knutson (non-voting), Steve Updegrave (via conference call), Verna Bernard Jones, Patrice McCarthy (representing Gary Brochu).

### **Approval of Minutes**

Preliminary meeting, no minutes for approval.

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Stephanie Knutson distributed the sign in sheet, agenda, statutory requirements for advisory council and advisory council member contact information. Council members introduced themselves.

### **Overview of Council Responsibilities**

Stephanie Knutson reviewed the council's statutory responsibilities.

Per PA 13-187, first SNAC report is due on February 1, 2014 and not less than annually thereafter with recommendations to the Commissioners of Education and Public Health and the joint standing committees of the CGA. The report shall include recommendations on school nurse professional development, staffing levels and delivery of health care services, protocols for emergency medication administration, and protocols for evaluating certain temporary medical conditions that may be symptomatic of more serious illnesses or injuries. Discussion followed on how to best meet this charge.

### **Election of Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary**

There were seven voting members present. A majority of voting council members shall constitute a quorum. The council was informed that chair, co-chair and secretary positions must be filled by school nurses (SNs)

Donna Kosiorowski, RN, representing the Connecticut Nurses Association was elected unanimously as council chair. Verna Bernard-Jones, RN, representing the American Federation of Teachers, was elected unanimously as co-chair and Marie Burlette, RN,

representing District 1199 Service Employees International Union, NE, was unanimously elected as secretary.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

Council members unanimously voted to hold meetings on the last Wednesday of each month from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the SDE building in Middletown. Council members may also attend by conference call.

### **Discussion on Meeting the Council's Charge**

Chair, Donna Kosiorowski, lead the discussion to determine priority topics for the development of recommendations.

Following discussion the following priorities for recommendations were identified:

1. Qualifications of SNs. The DPH last updated school nursing qualifications in the 1980s, qualifications must be updated.
2. SN Staffing levels. Staffing recommendations should be determined by a needs based assessment, rather than a prescribed number of nurses per school or district.
3. SN Certification and hiring practices. Currently, SNs are not certified by the SDE. Hiring practices are not consistent between districts.
4. Professional Development (PD) for SNs. Considerations: pre-service requirements (currently none), many districts don't have a SN PD line item,
5. Children with Special Health Care Needs. Focus should be on safety, process and procedure. State statutes are putting increasing medical responsibility on teachers. This responsibility needs to lie with professional school nurses and a balance achieved between resources, needs and mandates.
6. Qualifications of School Medical Advisors (SMA). Not all districts have access to a qualified school medical advisor. There is work underway in the SDE to identify and elaborate on SMA qualifications. Suggested that council review this work and formulate recommendations.
7. Long Term Costs of not having a Qualified School Nurse (QSN). Long term costs of not having an adequate number of QSNs must be examined. Benefits include keeping students in class and learning, support for students without medical insurance and many more.
8. Keeping Children in School versus Appropriate Exclusion. This addresses the topics of mandated physical exams, screenings and immunizations and accountability for and support of exclusion and other measures by school and district administrators.
9. SN Access to Databases for the purposes of Required Reporting. This refers to the Connecticut Immunization Registration and Tracking System (CIRTS) and the state lead database system.
10. Guidance for meeting the health needs of students in Early Childhood Education Programs (Pre-K programs).

**Next Steps**

1. Donna will email the group with the 1982 Qualifications of School Nurses for the council to review at the next meeting
2. Stephanie will email the group with the SDEs recommendations for qualifications for SMAs
3. Stephanie will email the group with the current statutory requirements for SN continuing education (CE) requirements.
4. Steve will follow up on CIRTs and lead databases

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on September 25, 2013 from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. at CSDE, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown.

Minutes submitted by: Marie Burlette