

Immunization Program Provider Spotlight December 2024

Kathy Neelon, RN

Improving children's health is no easy task, but Kathy Neelon has been up for the challenge in Wallingford Public Schools (WPS) for the last 20 years. Neelon served as School Nurse Supervisor and Coordinator for WPS, where she oversaw all school nurses within the Wallingford school district. In addition to serving as a resource and supervisor for 21 nurses and 8 supporting staff, Kathy also served as a health advisor for the school district, further demonstrating her dedication to the health of the children in Wallingford.

Kathy has a Masters in Healthcare Administration, which she credits with helping her to improve and streamline the school health system. In her time with WPS, she worked hard to develop processes to organize the response to health issues within a school setting by developing protocols and standard operating procedures for the nurses to follow.

Throughout her career, Kathy stayed dedicated to protecting the health of children. Kathy stressed the importance of immunizations in schools, and our collective responsibility to protect students and staff from preventable illnesses. During her time at the school district, she worked collaboratively with school administrators to reinforce the importance of immunization requirements, stressing that preventable illness affects attendance and ultimately school performance. Kathy also worked with students in difficult situations, including those who were unstably housed and those who recently immigrated to the United States, to protect their health by getting them up-to-date on their immunizations.

While maintaining students' immunization records to ensure they were accurate and compliant with state requirements was one of Kathy's many responsibilities, it is one she was highly passionate about, which led Wallingford Public Schools to be among the first school districts to use CT WiZ for tracking students' immunization records. Kathy credits CT WiZ with being one of the best things they have used in the last 20 years, emphasizing that CT WiZ saved her hours of work every week.

Kathy credits collaboration with others as being a great driver of success. Kathy's advice for others would be to listen and collaborate with others, to have a good sense of humor, and to be flexible! We wish her a happy retirement and thank her for an incredible 20 years of service!

