



NASN Position Statement: School-Sponsored Trips - Equitably Addressing Student Health Needs

SUPPLEMENTED WITH WASHINGTON STATE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Summary of the National Association of School Nurses School-Sponsored Trips - Equitably Addressing Student Health Needs Position Statement

The position statement for school-sponsored trips, equitably addressing student health needs was adopted by the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) in 2019 and revised in January 2024. This is the first position statement regarding school-sponsored trips by the School Nurse Organization of Washington (SNOW).

It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) to actively support and protect the right of all students, including those with healthcare needs or disabilities, to participate in school-sponsored trips, in accordance with federal regulations (USDOE/OCR, 2020). The registered professional school nurse (hereinafter referred to as school nurse) has the expertise necessary to prepare, plan, educate, and coordinate with staff, families, students, and other healthcare professionals in arranging equitable, inclusive, and appropriate care for all students to be able to attend school-sponsored trips.

The full NASN position statement: **School-sponsored Trips - Equitably Addressing Student Health Needs** can be found using this link: <https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/professional-practice-documents/position-statements>

Supplementary Information Specific to Washington State

Standards for safe medication administration do not change when students participate in field trips, school sponsored events, or summer school. This includes appropriate training, delegation, and supervision of the unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) by a RN. The goal of school districts should be to facilitate all students' participation in all school activities. It is especially important to plan for any student with a chronic or life-threatening health condition who may participate in an overnight field trip. The student may need medication that they normally take only at home. All the requirements of the medication statutes [RCW 28A.210.260](#) and [RCW 28A.210.270](#) and school district policies and procedures must be met.

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The following guidance outlines the unique responsibilities and contributions of Washington State School Nurses during all school-sponsored trips (OSPI, 2022).

- 1. Compliance with State Regulations:** Washington State School Nurses adhere to state regulations governing student health and safety. Their presence during school-sponsored trips ensures compliance with these regulations, including the administration of medications, maintenance of health records, and adherence to individualized health plans.
- 2. Health Assessments and Pre-trip Planning:** Prior to any school-sponsored trip, Washington State School Nurses collaborate closely with trip organizers, teachers, and parents to conduct thorough health assessments of participating students. This involves reviewing medical histories, identifying potential health risks, and developing comprehensive health plans tailored to each student's needs.
- 3. Medication Management:** Managing and administering medications is a key responsibility of Washington State School Nurses during school-sponsored trips. They ensure that students receive their prescribed medications on schedule, monitor for potential side effects, and maintain accurate documentation to meet state requirements.
- 4. Emergency Preparedness:** Washington State School Nurses are well-versed in emergency response protocols. Their presence on school-sponsored trips enhances overall emergency preparedness, allowing them to provide immediate and effective care in the event of medical emergencies. This includes collaboration with local emergency services when necessary.
- 5. Health Education and Promotion:** Beyond immediate health concerns, Washington State School Nurses contribute to health education and promotion during school-sponsored trips. They conduct trainings or informational sessions on topics such as hygiene, nutrition, and general wellness, fostering a culture of health and well-being among students.
- 6. Collaboration with Other Staff:** Washington State School Nurses recognize the importance of collaboration with teachers, administrators, and other staff members involved in school-sponsored trips. Effective communication and coordination are essential for seamless integration of health services into the overall planning and execution of these activities.
- 7. Advocacy for Student Health:** Washington State School Nurses serve as advocates for the overall health and safety of students. Their expertise and commitment to

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promoting a healthy school environment extend to the realm of school-sponsored trips, ensuring that students' health needs are prioritized and addressed.

Field Trips Out of State and Out of Country:

School districts should have policies and procedures for out of state and country trips. If these do not exist, the school RN should work with district administration and legal counsel to address how the medication/treatment needs of students will be addressed. Washington state joined the [Nurse Licensure Compact \(NLC\) as of July 24, 2023](#). Under the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC), nurses can practice in Washington state and other NLC states and territories, without obtaining additional licenses. For states not in the compact, the nurse must contact the boards of nursing in the appropriate state for guidance and permission to practice (including delegation to school staff) in that state or determine if the state grants visiting privileges. The nurse may be required to obtain licensure in another state to be able to administer medication/treatments to students or to be able to delegate administration of medication/treatments to school staff if delegation is permissible in that state. For trips outside the country, the school nurse must contact the visiting country for guidance and permission. It is best to get guidance in writing and have these documents readily available (OSPI, 2022).

SUMMARY

It is the position of SNOW, that the registered professional school nurse is the expert healthcare provider in the school setting who can support and guide students and staff in facilitating the healthcare needs of students both at school and on school-sponsored trips such as extracurricular activities, field trips, intramural athletic events, and interscholastic athletic events (NASN, 2016). In Washington State, the school nurse will facilitate the collection and preparation of all needed authorization forms, orders, and medications according to state law and school district policy and procedures. The school nurse will provide all training and delegation to UAP if needed, according to Washington state medication statutes [RCW28A.210.260](#) and [RCW 28A.210.270](#).

REFERENCES/RESOURCES

National Association of School Nurses (2024). School-Sponsored Trips - Equitably Addressing Student Health Needs (Position Statement). Author. Retrieved from: <https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/professional-practice-documents/position-statements>

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Washington State School Nurse Corps (2023). School health services and the systems necessary to promote healthy student outcomes. School sponsored events, field trips, and summer school. Pages 111-116. Retrieved from: <https://www.esd105.org/student-support/health-services-school-nurse-corps/2023-school-health-services-guidebook>

Author/s: Rebecca Baldwin, BSN, RN

Adopted: October 11, 2024

Revised:

Suggested Citation: School Nurse Organization of Washington (2024). School-Sponsored Trips - Equitably Addressing Student Health Needs (Position Statement). Author.