

To: Maine School Nurses
Date: August 5, 2014
RE: Welcome to the 2014/2015 school year!

I hope this letter finds you all enjoying the beautiful Maine summer and that you have found time to connect with family and friends and more importantly that you have found time for self-care activities.

The summer has been busy for MASN. In June, six school nurses and Nancy Dube, our school nurse consultant, headed to Texas for the annual NASN conference and we were not disappointed! From the leadership academy to sessions about advocacy, delegation, IHP's, case management, and the art of "Prezentation", there were plenty of sessions to assist in the process of school nurse practice improvement.

In July the MASN board of directors, worked on our planning for the annual summer retreat meeting for the MASN board members. At the retreat we worked on our strategic planning revisions where our association goals will focus on leadership, membership, communication, advocacy and evaluation. We are in the process of typing the plan revisions and when they are complete we will post them on the MASN website. Please be aware that any school nurse is welcome to attend a board meeting or executive committee meeting of the MASN board at any time. We post our meetings on the MASN website. If you have topics you would like us to focus on, please contact me and I will add it to our meeting agenda.

The School Nurse Summer Institute was a success with over 150 nurses across the state attending. This year at Bates College, we heard speakers about leadership, the changing health care environment, diabetes, tick-borne diseases, rashes, pediatric assessment, coordination and oversight, and suicide prevention. We had a full agenda of choices and hopefully all attendees felt their time at Bates was valuable.

There are 2 important work groups needed to focus on the Epipen legislation protocol development and a work group to focus on Infinite Campus data entry and data collection. If you are interested in being a part of a few meetings focusing on these two tasks please notify Nancy Dube (624-6688). A third focus group will be continuing their meetings with the Board of Nursing regarding coordination and oversight.

I bring your attention now to some back to school toolkits located on our MASN webpage, produced by NASN. There is a checklist for school nurses, one for parents, and a school nurse resource list. These lists can be nicely summarized in a letter to welcome your students and parents back to school or used for bulletin board topics. displayed during your fall open house.

This year there will be a voluntary national data collection, a combined effort from the National School Nurse Consultants and the NASN. There will be a series of webinars regarding the data collection. A uniform data set will collect information regarding chronic health conditions, school staffing, and health office visits.

Are you providing flu vaccine at your school? Your students and staff will be healthier with your efforts to provide this service. If you have not provided school located flu vaccine clinic (SLVC) and are interested in hearing more, please contact Nancy Dube. There are many community based partners willing to help you and this year there are several school nurses who have signed on to be a mentor for nurses who are organizing flu clinics for the first time. The Maine CDC will post a toolkit for school nurses and SLVC very soon.

The MASN board of directors is in need of nurses willing to volunteer a few hours of their time. If you aren't ready to be a chair of a committee, consider becoming a helper. There are many tasks available that are one time in nature or smaller projects. We currently have need for an education co-chair (help to plan conferences), a research chair (help to research articles), membership help, and New England conference chair. Please contact me if you would like to join or help the board in anyway.

In the last few weeks of summer think about small steps you can take to improve your practice, to make more time for self-care activities, or to connect with someone in your district to make them more aware of the role of their school nurse. We do not practice alone. We are a vital part of a team who meets the needs of our students everyday and we are the only professional who can directly plan for the health of our students. I wish you all a warm welcome, back to school and a safe and healthy year with all your students and staff.

Sincerely,

Teresa M. Merrill, R.N. B.S.

MASN President

Gorham Middle School Nurse
222-1224
106 Weeks Road
Gorham, Maine 04038