THE Pulse of ASNC



Paula M. Feyerharm, MA, RN
President of Association of School Nurses of Connecticut (ASNC)

A Letter from the President:

After a cool fall and winter in Connecticut we have made it to spring. The turkeys are trotting, the bears are back to foraging, the pollen has been riding the wind and soon we will see the bees buzzing about.

I ask you to think about the honeybee- Not as the pollinator who can bring fear into the minds of the allergic, but rather the honeybee who lives a very active and social life. The bee lives its life as part of a collective: the hive mindset. It allows a large group of bees to act as one coordinated entity for the survival of the colony. Survival requires the communication and collective decision making of the group.

Now, I ask that you begin to act like the honeybee; communicate to your colleagues within your district and in surrounding districts the importance of becoming a member of The Association of School Nurses Connecticut. Communicate with your district leaders what support you need for your health room. Communicate the important development opportunities that your professional organization gives you. It is with this collective decision making and amazing communication network that we will be able to not only survive, but to THRIVE as school nurses.

ASNC is ending the 2025-2026 school year strong: increased membership activity, incremental increases in direct membership, a new strategic plan; a focus on education and support, and a plan for the future. The board works as a collective and we want to bring all of CT school nurses along with us. The only way our voices will be heard is when we are a collective voice; the coordinated hive is more powerful than the solitary bee.

Many do not stop to think about how much power the single bee has, but everyone knows how much our global food system would be impacted without the bee. The single bee is an essential part of the hive, just as you the school nurse are an essential part of your community. School nurses are the reason our state is the nationwide leader in childhood vaccination rates.
We keep our entire communities safe through our constant daily vigilance, education, and communication. Let's show our communities just how strong CT School Nurses are. We want the buzz to be about us.

Happy Trails to you until the Fall!

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Lynn Nelson MSN, RN, NCSN
President National Association of School Nurses (NASN)

Every School Nurse Is a Leader: Taking Your Place at the Table

At NASN, we know school nursing is so much more than a job description or a school-day schedule. It is a leadership role rooted in courage, purpose, and service, with the power to influence the health and well-being of students, families, and entire communities. Whether you are new to the profession or have served for many years, your voice matters, your perspective matters, and your leadership matters.

Leadership in school nursing begins with knowing why we do this work and recognizing the unique value we bring to student health. School nurses lead far beyond the health room—in schools, districts, communities, and in the conversations that shape policy and practice across the country. Through NASN, school nurses have opportunities to grow as advocates, collaborators, and leaders while helping advance the profession and strengthen school health nationwide.

That is why continuous learning, advocacy, and connection matter so deeply. Effective leadership grows through compassion, collaboration, resilience, inclusivity, and a commitment to ongoing growth. NASN provides a professional home where school nurses can strengthen their voice, expand their influence, and help shape healthier school communities. Together, we can advocate for students, for equitable systems, and for a future where every school nurse is empowered to lead.

No matter your title, degree, or path into school nursing, you can make a meaningful difference. Through shared leadership and collective advocacy, NASN invites every school nurse to step forward, speak up, and take their place at the table. Our students, schools, and communities need school nurses who are ready to lead with courage, compassion, and purpose

Lynn Nelson MSN, RN, NCSN
President
National Association of School Nurses (NASN)



Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, MSN, RN
Education Manager for School Nursing and Family Support Services, Connecticut State Department of Education

Dear School Nurses,

Spring has officially arrived in Connecticut- bringing sunshine, blooming flowers, freezing temperatures and high heat all in one day, and yes, pollen season. I am sure you are all helping your scholars cope with itchy eyes, headaches, and nasal congestion and educating students and staff regarding best practice for managing these symptoms. Spring allergies are right up there with flu season in my book!

As we move closer and closer to the celebration of School Nurse Day and the finish line for this school year I would like to take a moment to reflect on this past year and celebrate some of the bright highlights that have occurred.

Thriving Together: Community of Practice Success

One of the brightest highlights this year has been the incredible success of our monthly Community of Practice meetings. I wish to thank Christin Kondash as Co-Facilitator. Her commitment to the monthly meeting has been a tremendous help.

These gatherings have become so much more than meetings—they're spaces for:

- Meaningful networking (because sometimes you just need to ask, "Are you seeing this too?!")
- Engaging professional presentations on topics that truly matter in school nursing
- Real-time sharing of strategies, challenges, and wins.
- The collaboration, openness, and collective wisdom you bring each month is inspiring , relatable, and relevant.

Stronger Together with ASNC

The partnership with the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut has been amazing. Together, we are building stronger connections, elevating professional practice, and ensuring school nurses across Connecticut feel supported and empowered. This collaboration continues to grow, and it's making a real difference in the strength of our community. Paula Feyerharm and the Board are nothing short of amazing. I encourage everyone to consider becoming a board member.

Advocacy in Action for School Nurses

As we move into spring, we also enter an important time of year in Connecticut—the legislative session. This period is a critical opportunity for school nurses to stay informed, engaged, and actively involved in shaping the policies that impact our daily practice and the health of our students.

Staying updated during the legislative session is more than just awareness—it is an essential act of advocacy for the school nurse profession. The laws and policies governing school health should be informed by the voices and expertise of those who understand them best: school nurses. Your insight from the field brings real-world perspective to decision-makers and helps ensure that legislation is both practical and effective.

…Continued from page 3

Why Your Voice Matters

School nurses play a vital role in student health, safety, and academic success. By engaging in advocacy, you help ensure that:

- Policies reflect current school health realities
- Resources are appropriately allocated
- Student needs remain at the forefront of decision-making

Tips for Effective Lobbying and Advocacy

- Research Your Legislators
  Learn about your members of the Connecticut General Assembly. Understand their priorities, committee assignments, and past positions on education and health issues.

- Build Relationships Early
  Don't wait until an issue arises. Establish connections with legislators and their staff ahead of time so you are a trusted resource when questions come up.

- Set Clear Priorities
  Focus on the most important issues affecting school nursing. Being concise and organized increases your impact.

- Share Real-Life Experiences
  Personal stories from your work are powerful. They provide context and illustrate how policies directly affect students and school communities.

- Keep It Short and Focused
  Legislators are busy—communicate your message clearly and efficiently.

- Stay Positive and Professional
  While issues may be challenging, maintain a respectful and constructive tone. Building goodwill goes a long way.

- Express Gratitude
  Always thank legislators for their time, attention, and any support they provide. Appreciation helps strengthen ongoing relationships.

Moving Forward Together

Advocacy is not an added task—it is part of our professional responsibility. By staying informed and engaged during the legislative session, school nurses can influence meaningful change and ensure that our profession continues to grow and effectively serve students across Connecticut.

A Message from Me to You
Please remember—I am here as a resource for each of you. Whether you need guidance, support, or simply someone to talk through a challenging situation, I am just a call or email away. I am proud to be a strong advocate for school nurses and for the critical role you play every day in your schools. Supporting you is at the heart of my work.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude for all that you do to support the health and safety of your students, staff, and community.

I wish you all a very Happy Summer Break !

Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, MSN, RN
Email: chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov

ASNC Executive Board Contacts:

President:	Paula Feyerharm MA, RN	pfeyerharm@ewct.org
Past President:	Donna Kosiorowski MS, RN, NCSN (retired)	
President Elect:	Currently Vacant	
Treasurer:	Melanie Griffin	MKelleyrn@sbcglobal.net
Technology Co-Chair:	Sara Paine, MSN, RN, NCSN	spaine@fairfieldct.org
Recording Secretary:	Janene Batten EdD, MLS	janene.batten@yale.edu
Corresponding Secretary:	Christine Thibodeau BSN, RN NCSN.	cthibodeau@berlinschools.org
NESNC Liaison & Education Chair:	Pamela Neleber MSN, RN, NCSN	pneleber@branfordschools.org
NASN Director:	Verna Bernard-Jones MS, RN, NCSN	vbjones3@gmail.com
Newsletter:	Shreeja Baidya, BSN,BA, RN	shreejabaidya@gmail.com
Program Chair:	Megan Hodge ADN, RN	hodgem@region-12.org
Govt.Relations/Recognitions Chairs:	Christin Kondash BSN, RN, NCSN	ckondash@learn.k12.ct.us
Membership	Maria Martinez MPH, BSN, RN	**mariav.martinez@yahoo.com**



Do you want to make a difference?
Are you a leader?
Do you want to be a voice for all School Nurses?

IF the answer is **Yes,** We want you to apply for the Vacant position of **Next President of ASNC** and be our Leader.

To Contact ASNC:

Email:
asnc01ne@gmail.com

Mailing Address:
The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut
P.O. Box 156
Bloomfield, CT 06002

To submit articles, photographs, or have any comments, questions regarding the newsletter, please contact me @ shreejabaidya@gmail.com

47th Annual Marty Sklaire

Critical Issues in School Health Conference





47th Annual Marty Sklaire Critical Issues in School Health Conference 2026 was held on March 19, 2026, at the Courtyard by Marriott in Cromwell, CT.

The educational and interactive conference covered topics like Smart phones, social media and its impact in youth, Common pediatric dermatological conditions, Legal Developments affecting K-12 Public School Health, Vaccines and Children, Evaluation and Management of Common Pediatric Injuries and Medical Emergencies and Universal Suicide Screening Program for Youth and Lessons Learned From Over 100,000 Screens.



Mick Bolduc, the Epidemiologist and Immunization Program Coordinator for the Connecticut Vaccine Program (CVP) was awarded **Martin Sklaire School Health Service Award** during the event for his advocacy to improve Connecticut's immunization standards, by managing universal vaccine distribution to children regardless of their insurance status, and providing evidence-based strategies to increase immunization coverage across CT. CT has the highest estimated rate in the country of Kindergarten MMR coverage of 98.2% coverage, higher than the national average of 92.5%

Connecticut Nurses Day at the Capitol 2026



On April 29th, 2026, Association of School Nurses of Connecticut President Paula Feyerharm, MA, RN, Connecticut Nurses Association Executive Director Kimberly Clear-Sandor along with other CT nurses attended the Legislative Breakfast wearing red to meet the legislatures and connect with other nurses from different fields in solidarity to advocate and make positive legislative changes for all nurses in Connecticut.





2026 New England School Nurse Conference

This year the New England School Nurse Conference (NESNC), was held at World Class Ski Alpine resort, The Lodge at Spruce Peak from May 1st to May 3rd. NESNC's theme this year was, **"School Nurses: Elevating Excellence".** University of Vermont/Larner College of Medicine provided up to 9 total nursing hours.



On Friday, the conference started with 3.5 mile walk near the resort grounds overlooking the snow capped Mount Mansfield. After registering, the nurses enjoyed each other's company and networked over delicious appetizers at the Tipsy Trout restaurant. Then the participants attended interactive SNAP session. The first night ended with the fun swim party at the heated outdoor pool overlooking the majestic snow capped Mt. Mansfield.



Saturday started with early morning group exercises, breakfast and vendor time. Saturday's keynote speaker was renowned public speaker **Principal Gerry Brooks** who has been entertaining and capturing the Hearts of everyone with his personal humorous take on school climate and culture. Saturday's breakout sessions were excellent and informative. The Saturday breakout sessions included: **The Road to Positive Personal Climate and Culture, From Flavored Vapes, Steroids and Supplements, Leadership Lessons from the Garden, Ears, Nose & Throat: Hands-On Otoscope Workshop, Finding your North Star, Leadership Lessons from Ted Lasso, Teamwork is the dreamwork: Leveraging a Bidirectional Consent Process to Spark Partnership with Medical Homes, The healing Power of Humor, Your Great Untapped Potential: Practical Strategies for Primary Prevention, Beyond Charting: Unlocking the Full Potential of your EHR, and Leading your Journey through life long learning.**



The Keynote speakers for Sunday included our **ASNC Past President Michael Corjulo, APRN, CPNP, AE-C, PMHS** who spoke about Therapeutic Boundaries, Compassion Fatigue, and the Pros & Cons of Caring. The Second Keynote Speaker was **National Association of School Nurses 2025-2026 President Lynn Nelson, MSN, RN, MCSN** who spoke about Leadership:Taking Your Place at the Table.

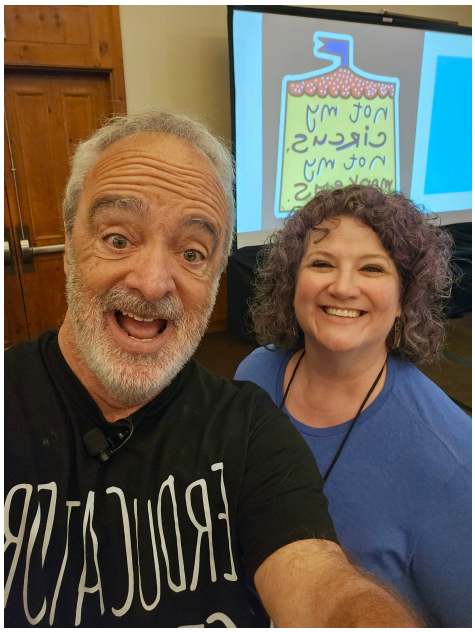
2026 NESNC Stowe Vermont was a great success. The meticulously planned and organized event made all the School Nurses' weekend trip fun, informative and a great learning experience to take back to our school districts.





Highlights from NESNC 2026 : Stowe Vermont





NESNC Key Note Speaker Principal Gerry Brooks had everyone hooked with his positive personal Climate and Culture and how it's up to nurses to connect and be a part of school culture and community.



Connecticut School Nurses at New England School Nurse Conference

Governor Ned Lamont's Official Statement proclaiming May 6th, 2026 as School Nurse Day

State of Connecticut

QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET

By His Excellency Ned Lamont, Governor: an

Official Statement

WHEREAS, through their skill and expertise, our Nation's school nurses help to foster a healthy, nurturing community in which our children can learn and grow; and

WHEREAS, very often, school nurses are the first – and sometimes the only – line of defense against the illnesses and conditions our students face, making their contributions to the education and welfare of the student population invaluable; and

WHEREAS, the nature of their professional setting calls on the ability of school nurses to take on additional roles – often acting also as teachers, confidantes, mentors, and friends to the students of Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, today's society presents students with a confluence of physical, social, and mental challenges – and school nurses have become an essential component of effective health programs, both inside and outside of the classroom; and

WHEREAS, the critical supports provided by school nurses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have ensured that our schools are a safe place to learn and educate – now, more than ever; and

WHEREAS, the unwavering dedication school nurses show to their profession and to the children for whom they care stands as a genuine testament to their commitment to the success and wellness of Connecticut's future generations; now

THEREFORE, I, Ned Lamont, Governor of the State of Connecticut – in honor of the many outstanding contributions made by school nurses to our shared community – do hereby officially proclaim May 6th, 2026, to be

SCHOOL NURSE DAY

in the State of Connecticut. I urge all residents to support and commemorate the contributions of Connecticut's school nurses, and to dedicate our own efforts to improving the health and welfare of our state's many students.

Ned Lamont

GOVERNOR

ASNC SPRING DINNER MEETING

National School Nurse Day - Celebrating Connecticut's School Nurses





On May 6th, 2026, at Testa's Banquet Facility, Southington, National School Nurse Day was celebrated with a warm welcome from **ASNC President Paula Feyerharm MA, RN.**

During the event's award show, **Shreeja Baidya, BSN, BA, RN** was awarded the School Nurse Of The Year, NURSE Advocate OF THE YEAR award was won by **Barbara Ziogas, MD, FAAP** and School Nurse Supervisor Of The Year: **Kim Velazquez, RN.**



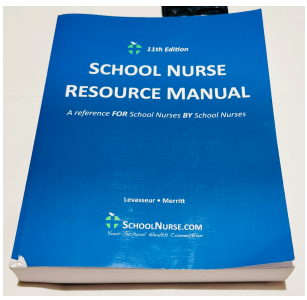
Speaker for the event, **Ian Gragnolati, PA-C** from Connecticut Asthma and Allergy Center, presented on Allergy and Asthma management in the school setting .

During the Food Allergy Review, Ian spoke about various food allergies, anaphylaxis, and new emerging management options.

Ian also reviewed Asthma, its prevalence among pediatric patients, symptoms, risk factors, and various asthma medications and therapies.

1 Nursing Contact Hour was given for attendance.





ASNC Past President Suzanne Levasseur and **Emily Merritt** co-authored the 11th Edition of S**chool Nurse Resource Manual: A Reference For School Nurses by School Nurses.** It is a must for every school nurse to use as a quick reference guide for more than 140+ school health concerns. During the dinner a copy was raffled off to a lucky winner.

SCHOOL NURSE OF THE YEAR:
Shreeja Baidya, BSN, BA, RN
Hartford Public Schools: SAND Elementary



With 16 years of dedicated service with K-8, and PK3-5th grade students, Shreeja exemplifies compassion, professionalism, and exceptional clinical skills. She is a trusted mentor to new and experienced school nurses, a strong advocate for student health, and a steady, reassuring presence in every situation.

Her mentorship fosters confidence, strengthens clinical practice, and helps build a supportive, cohesive nursing team. She leads by example, with professionalism, kindness, and a genuine desire to help others succeed.



Shreeja brings exceptional patience, warmth and expertise to her role as a school nurse. She understands the unique developmental needs of young learners and meets each child with empathy and reassurance.

Her commitment to service is equally evident in her volunteer works with the Kensington-Berlin Rotary, the Bushnell, and the Honor Guard, as well as her leadership as Past President of Kensington-Berlin Rotary, and Chair of the Annual First Responder Breakfast. She is also Paul Harris Award Winner.

Beyond Shreeja's medical duties, Shreeja is a champion for the "whole child." Recognizing that health is often tied to environment and opportunity, she takes the lead in fundraising for school activities and the community.





The above excerpt was taken from the nominating letter in support of Shreeja Baidya, BSN, BA, RN

NURSE ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR:
Barbara Ziogas, MD, FAAP
President, CT Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Dr. Ziogas is the current President of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and a Fellow of the AAP, a current practicing pediatrician with Farmington Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, which she founded. She is also the, Medical Director for the CREC schools, , Canton, , Simsbury, and Farmington Public Schools,, and the American School for the Deaf in West Hartford.



She has received honors for humanism in medicine. Dr. Ziogas is a standing committee member representing AAP school medical advisors on the School Nurse Advisory Council; listening to the requests of school nurses and working with the council to provide valuable input on the direction of legislative recommendations the council submits each legislative session to enhance the work of school nurses in Connecticut.

Barbara was instrumental in forging connections for school nurses and school health professionals with legislators and members of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Connecticut. She actively lobbied for and testified to the importance of the school nurse with the goal of professional equality.





The above excerpt was taken from the nominating letter in support of Barbara Ziogas, MD, FAAP

Congratulations!!! School Nurse Supervisor Of The Year:
Kim Velazquez, RN
Stratford Public Schools Nurse Supervisor



Kim brings strong clinical expertise, sound judgment and most importantly a genuine care for students. She manages complex health needs with professionalism and calm and is a trusted partner to families, staff, and administrators. At the district level, she provides steady leadership and helps ensure consistent, high-quality nursing practices across schools. Kim has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills.

Kim approaches her responsibilities with an impressive combination of in-depth knowledge, clinical expertise, and a deep sense of empathy. Nurse Velasquez not only leads by example, but she also fosters a collaborative environment where her team feels valued and supported. For nearly two decades, Kim has dedicated herself to ensuring that every student in Stratford receives equitable, high-quality health services.



She oversees and mentors the district's entire team of school nurses, providing not only professional supervision but also the kind of steady, compassionate guidance that inspires trust and confidence. Kim approaches challenges as opportunities, always solution-oriented, resourceful, and deeply committed to the well-being of both students and staff. Kim's leadership extends beyond daily supervision. She has built a strong infrastructure for health services in our schools by:

- **Developing policy and practice**
- **Championing compliance and advocacy**
- **Investing in professional growth**
- **Managing complex systems with grace**
- **Building trust with families**



The above excerpt was taken from the nominating letter inn support of Kim Velazquez,

COLLAGE OF ASNC SCHOOL NURSE DAY CELEBRATION
























CHANGE
the SCRIPT














ASNC
Supporting
YOU!





ASNC would like to thank our amazing vendors: Change the Script, CodeOne Solutions, CT Dental Health Partnership, Delta T Group, Yale Project Adam and 11th Edition of School Nurse Resource Manual for making our 2026 Spring Dinner meeting a success. ASNC would also like to thank Nick Ruggiero for volunteering to entertain ASNC Dinner guests with his melodious music for the past several years.















All Of US At ASNC, Wish Everyone A Relaxing, Rejuvenating And Fun Summer !

