



**Testimony**  
**Before the Assembly Education Committee**  
**On**  
**School Nurse Certification (A-1256)**  
**February 8, 2016**

Thank you for the opportunity to share the thoughts of the NJ Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA) and its statewide membership on A-1256 (Caride / Singleton / Jasey) which would require State Board of Education regulations regarding school nurse certification to include certain minimum eligibility requirements.

NJPSA is proud to support efforts to ensure school professionals, including our school nurses, are fully trained and prepared as they enter the school nursing profession, regardless of whether they serve in an instructional or non-instructional role.

**Re-Upping the Course Requirement**

Several years ago, the State Board of Education, in an attempt to streamline regulations that govern the school nurse certificate, *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.3* and *13.4*, and speed the timeline within which school nurses become certificated, modified the process and timing by which school nurses receive training on such topics as adolescent growth and development, substance abuse, among other changes. Rather than receive course work on these critical subjects while still in college, the Department shifted these items to professional development after a school nurse is employed.

**NJPSA believes that aspiring nurses, like aspiring teachers, should have access, and complete all developmental, clinical and educational requirements prior to entering the profession. Ensuring that aspiring nurses are fully prepared is essential to guaranteeing that our nursing staff is ready to serve our students as they enter our school buildings. With childhood health needs a critical item within a school environment, having fully prepared staff on-hand to provide assistance must be a requirement.**

**A Need for Practicum**

As critical, the regulatory change removed the practicum requirement for aspiring nurses who seek an instructional nursing certificate. Practicum serves as ‘on-the-job’ exposure for aspiring nurses – providing them an equivalent experience to student teaching. **NJPSA believes that aspiring nurses, like educators, should be exposed to the school environment prior to entering the profession. Like aspiring teachers, ensuring adequate clinical experiences matter to the future success of a school nurse on the job.**

Given this, we are pleased to support A-1256 (Caride / Singleton / Jasey) as it seeks to return these course and practicum requirements to pre-employment status. We look forward to working with the sponsors on important issue.