

Department of Workforce Development School Health Services - Nursing Grant - FAQ

Q: What is the purpose of the funding?

A: These are federal dollars to help improve school nursing services that were spotlighted by the state during the peak of COVID-19. There is a need to recruit more nursing services for students in schools, but it is also important to retain the nursing services districts are currently providing.

Q: How do I receive the funding?

A: The DHS is contracting with Wisconsin CESAs to distribute awards to districts. The CESAs will provide a Notification of Funding Availability to districts and outline the budgeting process. Once a budget has been approved with the point of contact at the CESA, claims can be submitted to the CESA.

Q: How was the dollar amount determined in my LEA?

A: Local awards were calculated based on a formula including school student:nurse ratios, CDC community social vulnerability index, rate of students with disabilities, rate of economic disadvantages, and USDA rural rating.

Q: Is there a specific project code that should be used?

A: There is not a project code that needs to be created. LEA business officials should use a local project code as they see fit to track expenses associated with the grant for ease of claims.

Q: Since these are one time dollars, will there be dollars in the future for nursing services?

A: At this time there are no dollars guaranteed for future expenses. COVID-19 challenged school nursing services and continues to do so. These dollars are intended to provide additional dollars for any activities that result in new nursing or additional services to students as well as maintain and retain existing services.

Q: May we use these dollars in recruitment efforts of nursing staff such as advertisement or related costs with hiring staff?

A: Yes.

Q: May we use dollars for new positions that are only part-time?

A: Yes, you may use these dollars to increase any level of FTEs that were new after July 1, 2022.

Q: We hired a nurse for the 2022-23 school year, may these dollars be used for those expenses?

A: Yes, dollars for new nurses after July 1, 2022 or the costs associated with increasing the FTEs with an existing nurse can be claimed through the grant.

Q: During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, we were able to increase our nursing services using ESSR funding. Now that we are no longer covering the increases with ESSR funding, may we use the

nursing grant dollars to off-set those costs if we retained and replaced the increased cost in 2022-23 with local dollars?

A: Yes, if these are new local expenses (Fund 10 or Fund 27), you may claim those costs for the grant for the local expense portion that was increased.

Q: Can a bonus be provided to staff at schools that have supported health related activities?

A: This would be an allowable activity under the grant, especially if the school does not have sufficient funds to contract a school nurse and wants to maintain the health support staff, they currently have.

Q: In an effort to retain trained health services staff, may we provide retention bonuses to support personnel who are essential to providing services to students? Yes, school districts rely on a variety of health professionals including health aides, CNAs, and nursing paraprofessionals, and others to provide health services to students. Losing those individuals reduces the level and quality of services to students. Additionally, at the peak of COVID-19 they were tasked with many responsibilities outside of the scope of their duties.

A: Retention bonuses are allowed to retain health aides, as services to students would diminish with their departure. Everyone understands the amount of responsibility placed on registered nurses and health-related personnel to ensure the safety and wellness of students in schools. Each LEA has the flexibility to determine a reasonable retention bonus to RSN and nursing support staff.

Q: Our LEA would like to add days to our nurse to develop wellness programs for students, may we claim expenses for the grant for these additional costs?

A: Yes, any nursing time that increases as a result of local projects that promotes healthier students can be budgeted and claimed.

Q: Can the funding be used to supplant current health budgets?

A: Unfortunately, this is not an allowable activity as designated in the statement of work. This funding is intended to support existing budgets by awarding funding or retention activities to existing school health workforce.

Q: What are examples of activities that cannot be budgeted?

A: These dollars cannot be used to supplant local expenses that were in place in 2021-22. *For example*, if the total package of a nurse was \$75,000 in 21-22 and now the district has a local award through the nursing grant of \$10,000. Now in 2022-23, the same nurse has the same total package of \$75,000, the grant cannot be used to reduce the local costs to \$65,000 by applying the \$10,000 nursing grant.

Other unallowable expenses include:

Funding or bonuses for positions unrelated to supporting or providing school health services

Personal use of goods and services

Research

Reimbursement of pre-award costs
Funding advocacy or lobbying efforts
Administration of clinical care, to include vaccine administration

Q: Our school board authorized increased wages and additional benefit costs for the 2022-23 school year for our nurse in order to retain the individual, can the award be used to cover the increased costs for retention?

A: Yes, any new costs that are incurred to districts for the purpose of retaining nurses as compared to the 2021-22 are allowable costs in the grant.

Q: Our district would like to increase health services that are different from the concrete examples provided and it will increase health, wellness, and/or safety to students. Can the costs associated with the project be claimed?

A: Likely Yes. Wisconsin is blessed with many creative leaders who have the health, wellness, and safety of students in mind. The examples were meant to help districts generalize activities that could be beneficial at the local level. If there are other ideas that are more likely to happen as a result of the award, we would love to hear about it to spread the word to other educational leaders.

Q: Our district received an award for strategy 2 to be used for nurse wellness and education, what are recommended uses for these dollars?

A: School nurses are essential to the operation of schools. Their education and wellness are critical in providing high quality efforts to students. Examples of efforts to enhance school nurse wellness are provided and comprise state park passes, fitness courses etc. The activity should support physical wellness and should not be among the unallowable activities listed.

Professional development training has been specified to vision and hearing screening, health equity, narcan training as specified in the grant are specific to those courses and Wisconsin School Nurse Association Memberships.

Any efforts increasing the skills and wellness of the school nurse except those outlined as unallowable are allowed.

Q: Our district received an award for strategy 2 to be used for nurse wellness and education, what are some examples of what cannot be used with this portion of the award?

A: Reimbursement of pre-award costs
Funding advocacy or lobbying efforts
Administration of clinical care, to include vaccine administration
Research
Currency exchange fees
Health spa treatments and products
Cell phone, tablet, iPad, ThinkPad
Hydrostatic testing

Vitamins and supplements
 Medical services, supplies, or equipment
 Exercise attire or sports attire
 Sunglasses
 Video games (e.g., PlayStation, PS3, Xbox, Kinect, or other video game console systems)
 Furniture and home appliances
 Physiotherapy and chiropractors

Q: How are strategy 2 funds allocated within CESAs. Claims are submitted through a certain timeframe and a portion of costs are covered based on the pool of funds and submitted claims? (For example, money was awarded based on number of nurse FTE but now schools have added nursing positions)

A: Funding for wellness activities have been budgeted at \$500 per FTE school nurse.

FTE school nurses have been allocated funding according to the dollar amounts projected for each training activity. These activities and cost breakdown are detailed below:

Professional Development	Cost
WASN/NASN Membership	\$160
Narcan Training *	\$50
Health Equity Training *	\$80
Vision and Hearing Screening Testing	\$90

Professional Development activities designated with an asterisk (*) are provided free of charge by WASN/NASN simply by being a member. However, this funding will provide funding incentives as indicated to schools who can demonstrate completion of these activities.

Q: What happens if our LEA does not use any or all of the funding?

A: The CESA has the authority to redistribute dollars to member LEAs or provide regional training in the spirit of increasing or improving health, nursing, and wellness services.

Q: What positions are exempt from being funded with these funds (ie, District Administrators)?

A: Positions not associated with the provision of health services such as janitorial staff, teachers, other student support and administrative positions.

Q: Can the strategy 1 funding be used for professional development like the WASN conference?

A: Yes, this would qualify as a retention activity and can be used to support this effort.

Q: Can schools, partner, and pool funding together to pay for nursing services?

A: Yes, this activity is allowable and positively increases the number of contact hours pupils have to school health services.

Q: Is the Teacher's Union aware of this funding?

A: Yes, early in the process of developing the grant, the union was engaged to make them available for this funding opportunity to mitigate any issues the union may have with nurses that may be on the same union contract.