



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Juliana T. Dean, LL.M.  
Proxy for Alabama State Board  
of Education and General Counsel

April 11, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** City and County Superintendents of Education

**FROM:** Sherrill W. Parris  
Senior Deputy State Superintendent of Education

**RE:** School Nurse Legislation (Act 2009-280)

Several questions have arisen related to school nurse legislation and career and technical education (CTE) health science teachers. In response to these questions, the Alabama State Department of Education, Prevention and Support Services and Career and Technical Education/Workforce Development Sections, have provided the following direction and guidance to lead nurses and administrators:

1. Must each school system employ a school nurse in the system?  
Yes. The *School Nurse Act* (Act 2009-280) states that “The State Department of Education and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind shall require the employment of school nurses in each local school system.”
2. Must each school system employ a designated (lead or supervising) registered nurse?  
Yes. The law (Act 2009-280) states “Each local school superintendent shall designate one registered nurse for the entire school system whose responsibilities shall include annually providing a full and comprehensive assessment of all student health needs within that system.” Based upon the assessment findings, the designated nurse shall make a recommendation to the local school superintendent concerning the implementation and coordination of student health needs.
3. Can the school nurse staffing of the school system be changed annually?  
Yes. The school nurse staffing should be reflective of the designated registered nurses assessment of all student health needs and acuity of care within the system, as stated in Question #2.
4. Can a nurse be employed in a teaching position and function in the capacity of a school nurse?  
No. Licensed nurses who are employed in teaching positions may not perform **routine** duties of a licensed nurse in a school nurse position. The nurse employed is restricted to

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the activities described in the job description of that specific position. In an emergency, all licensed nurses shall respond and provide care to the highest level of licensure held. Therefore, coverage of emergency drugs may be acceptable in some incidences when determined by the lead nurse and administrator to be safe and appropriate.

I hope this provides clarity to the questions posed. If you have any further questions, please contact Ms. Jennifer Ventress, Nurse Administrator, at 334-242-8174 or e-mail at [jventress@alsde.edu](mailto:jventress@alsde.edu), or Mrs. Collie Wells, Education Administrator, at 334-242-9113 or e-mail at [cwells@alsde.edu](mailto:cwells@alsde.edu).

SWP/JV/SF

cc: City and County Career and Technical Education Directors  
Lead Nurses  
Health Care Supervisors  
High School Principals  
Dr. Philip C. Cleveland  
Mrs. Collie Wells

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