



Reflection on School Nurse Leadership

Martha Dewey Bergren concludes her article¹ with the following:

In order for nurses to be seen as leaders, they must see themselves as leaders (IOM, 2011). Nurses must see policy as something they can shape rather than something that happens to them, whether within the school, in the community, or at the state or national level (Shalala, 2014)...[S]chool nurses must now and in the future accept the challenge to change health systems and health policies to improve child, family, and community health.

She suggests that school nurses can achieve this goal by joining a board of directors (public health department, hospitals, non-profits, schools).

As a new school nurse, you may not yet feel prepared to become a member of a board, but there are many steps you can take toward providing leadership in your school, district, and community. Some examples:

- Join your professional nursing organizations (e.g., MA and National School Nurse and Public Health Nurse Associations, American Nurses Association)
- Volunteer to participate in school/district committees and advisory boards (e.g., health and wellness committee, curriculum review committees, building representative)
- Attend and present at Parent Teacher Organization meetings
- Attend and present at School Committee meetings
- Join the Local Board of Health and/or attend their meetings
- Join and volunteer for local community organizations (e.g., food bank, service clubs)

Take a few minutes to reflect on the following and write down your answers:

1. What skills do you need to build to effectively meet School Nurse Practice Leadership Standard (#11)? How will you work toward building those skills?

2. During your first three years as a school nurse, what steps will you take to establish yourself as a leader in your school and district?

¹ Bergren, M. D. (September 30, 2017). School Nursing and Population Health: Past, Present, and Future. *OJIN The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 22(3) Manuscript 3. DOI: 10.3912/OJIN.Vol22No03Man03.