



School Health Services in Portland Public Schools

2016-17

Portland Public Schools and Multnomah Education Service District are making changes in the way school health services are delivered. Following is information for principals and schools:

Why is PPS partnering with MESD to change the way school health services are delivered to meet the needs of students in Portland schools?

Portland Public Schools in partnership with Multnomah Education Service District is implementing Phase 2 of a planned investment in the health of students by placing trained MESD school health assistants (SHAs) in schools. Oversight of the school health assistants will be provided by MESD registered nurses.

The school health assistant program model was piloted in 2015-16 in the Madison cluster schools. The pilot was well received by school staff, building administrators, and families. Evidence supports that having a consistent point of contact in the health room increases student participation and attendance. In 2016-17, the program will roll out in the Franklin, Jefferson and Roosevelt clusters and is expected to expand to the remaining clusters in future years.

How were these clusters chosen?

Clusters with traditionally high numbers of underserved students were chosen for the phase 1 expansion. The program is expected to expand to remaining clusters in future years.

What will the model look like?

The model will allow registered nurses to practice at the highest level of their professional licenses, providing case management, health education, and training and consultation to the school community. One RN will provide oversight for five health assistants in five schools. RNs will have the opportunity to be more involved in school safety and wellness activities, which principals have long requested. MESD administrators will oversee the administrative aspects of the program. Individuals with questions can contact:

- PPS Student Services at phone: 503.916.5460 email: studentservices@pps.net
- MESD School Health Services (SHS) at phone 503. 257-1732

How often will the SHA be at the school?

The health assistants will be working five days a week in K5, K8 and middle schools. This ensures that students and families have a consistent point of contact at school for health related needs.

What will happen to our K5, K8, and middle school nurse?

In clusters with SHAs, one RN will provide oversight to five SHAs in five schools in the K5, K8, and middle schools. In clusters without SHAs, nurse staffing is unchanged.

What will happen to our high school nurse?

In clusters with SHAs, MESD nurses will be onsite at the high school providing care to students five days per week. In clusters without SHAs, the nurse will be onsite at the high school providing care to students four days per week. On Wednesdays the high school nurse will provide care at an assigned grade school, as they did during the 2015-2016 school year.

What will the SHA be doing?

The SHA provides daily care in the health room, including:

- Responding to illness and injuries
- Providing First-Aid
- Administering prescribed medication
- Carrying out procedures developed and written by the registered nurse (such as plans to manage student with diabetes, serious allergies, asthma, ADHD and chronic health conditions)
- Helping schools to track immunization records to reduce the number of students excluded.

How will health assistants be trained?

MESD will train health assistants in First Aid and CPR/AED, Healthroom Management, Medication Administration, Severe Allergic Reaction (and Epinephrine Administration), Glucagon Administration, and management of students with diabetes.

Will the SHA be making healthcare decisions for students?

No. The SHA will follow specific protocols in consultation with the registered nurse; the nurse will provide written procedures and directions.

Will the SHA be providing delegated health care to students?

Yes. Under the Oregon Nurse Practice Act, a nurse may delegate nursing tasks to an unlicensed person such as a SHA. This is called “delegation.” The SHA will be specifically trained and receive written instructions by the RN if they are to provide delegated care.

What will be the role of the registered nurse?

The registered nurse will practice at the highest level of their professional licenses. Registered nursing responsibilities include: providing case management, assessing serious student health conditions, developing individualized health plans for students, providing health education and training to SHAs and school staff, and consulting with families and the school community.

One RN will provide oversight for five health assistants at five schools. RNs will have the opportunity to be involved in school safety and wellness activities, which principals have long requested.

What level of oversight do principals have for health assistants?

The registered nurse provides oversight for the SHA; the MESD nursing supervisor provides supervision. If principals have questions about their SHA or RN they should contact the MESD nursing supervisor by calling MESD School Health Services at 503.257-1732.

Can the Principal give direction to the SHA?

The SHA takes direction from the MESD assigned building nurse and the MESD nursing supervisor. If principals have questions they can contact the MESD nursing supervisor at 503-257-1732 or contact PPS Student Services at 503.916.5460.

What happens when the SHA is absent?

The school nurse will assure that a backup caregiver is trained in each building to provide care in the event that the SHA is absent. The PPS principal should consult with the MESD nurse and then the PPS principal will identify and direct who will respond to injuries and illnesses in the health room, and who the backup caregivers will be.

What have been findings from the pilot in the Madison cluster?

School staff, health assistants, RNs and students described high satisfaction with this new model. School staff expressed an increased sense of safety as the health room has a consistent caregiver each day. Fewer students are sent home when there is a consistent caregiver in the health room. This promotes improved student attendance and supports student achievement goals.

When will I know who the SHA for my school is?

MESD began recruitment in May 2016. MESD SHS will provide building principals with the SHA name and schedule, and the nurse name and schedule, in a letter sent to the schools in early August 2016.

Who do parents contact during the summer to plan for the support of their student's health needs during the school year?

Parents may contact the MESD nurse supervisor at 503-257-1732.

Will schools without a SHA still have a school nurse?

Yes. Your services will look similar to those during the 2015-2016 school year. Each building principal will be sent a letter to in August with the assigned nurse name and schedule.