



Department of Health

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, Director

April 2020

Dear Superintendent:

The World Health Organization has declared 2020 the Year of the Nurse and Midwife (<https://www.who.int/news-room/campaigns/year-of-the-nurse-and-the-midwife-2020>). Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the critical role played by nurses.

The National Association of School Nurses has designated Wednesday, May 6, 2020 as **National School Nurse Day**. This day is set aside to celebrate the specialty practice of school nursing and recognize the contributions school nurses make every day to improve the safety, health and academic success of all students.

If your school is fortunate enough to have a School Nurse, please take this opportunity to tell them how much you appreciate their valuable contribution to the health of your students, staff, school and community. You may find some resources to help you do this at <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/school-nurse-day> .

When the time comes to prepare for resume typical learning activities in your school buildings, please include your School Nurse in this planning. The School Nurse can provide insight into best methods to clean the building, screen students and staff for illness, respond to the needs of families that have been impacted by the pandemic, partner with teachers and behavioral health experts, and much more.

The Ohio Department of Health School Nursing program provides continuing education opportunities to support the ongoing professional development of nurses. In addition to the annual *Orientation for Nurses New to Ohio Schools*, three *Regional School Nurse Conferences* and online, independent study courses, ODH staff provide technical assistance by phone or email. We will host a conference on **July 14** on the topic of **Homelessness**. Specifics about the format for this conference will be announced later. Please encourage your nurses to take advantage of these professional development offerings and other resources found at <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/school-nursing-program/conferences-trainings/> .

In closing, thank you for taking time out on May 6 to join people around the nation to recognize the profession of school nursing and the individuals who provide health care services in Ohio schools every day.

Sincerely,

Amy Acton, MD, MPH
Director