Dear Superintendent:

The National Association of School Nurses has designated Wednesday, May 10, 2017 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. I encourage you to recognize the school nurses in your district.

As you are likely aware, there have been a number of pieces of legislation in the last several years addressing Ohio schools. For instance, Senate Bill 319 allows schools to stock and administer naloxone to individuals suspected of an opioid overdose; the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3313.6021 requires high school students to be taught CPR/AED skills; ORC 3313.6023 requires school employees to be trained in the use of AEDs; and Lindsay’s Law (Senate Bill 252) requires training of student athletes, their parents and coaches about the risks of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Your School Nurse is an excellent resource to help you implement these new requirements and opportunities in your schools.

In addition, the importance of school health services such as school nursing are highlighted in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and in Ohio’s State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP-available online at http://www.odh.ohio.gov/en/odhprograms/chss/HealthPolicy/ship/State-Health-Improvement-Plan). Both of these important documents emphasize the vital link between health, education and success as an adult. Your School Nurse can contribute to the development and implementation of policies, plans, training and activities to improve student success.

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, live webcasts and online, independent study courses, ODH staff provide technical assistance by phone or e-mail. Please encourage your nurses to take advantage of these professional development offerings and other resources found at http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/chss/schnurs/schnurs_1.aspx.

In closing, thank you for taking time out on May 10 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,

Richard Hodges, MPA
Director