

# 2008

## SCHOOL NURSE SURVEY FACT SHEET



The School Nursing program at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) conducts periodic surveys of Ohio schools related to their provision of nursing and health services. The purposes of the 2008 survey were to (1) describe health care services available in Ohio schools, (2) collect information for development of effective programs for schools nurses and (3) develop state-level recommendations to support school nursing services.

## THE NURSES

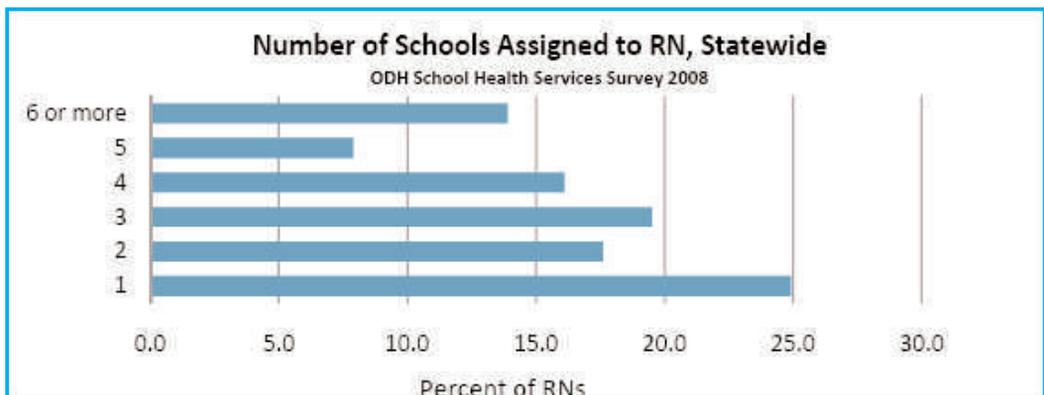
There are an estimated 1,517 full-time-equivalent (FTE) registered nurses (RNs) employed in Ohio schools. With 1,964,441 students enrolled in Ohio schools, this creates an FTE RN-to-student ratio of 1: 1,295.

The majority (85 percent) of RNs working in Ohio schools have a bachelor's degree or higher.

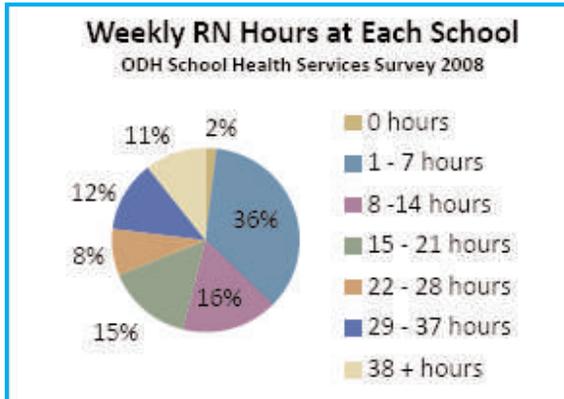
Of RNs working in Ohio schools, 69 percent have a school nurse license from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). RNs working in non-public schools are less likely to have an ODE school nurse license.

More than half (58 percent) of the RNs have worked in schools for five to 15 years, while 20 percent have worked in schools fewer than five years.

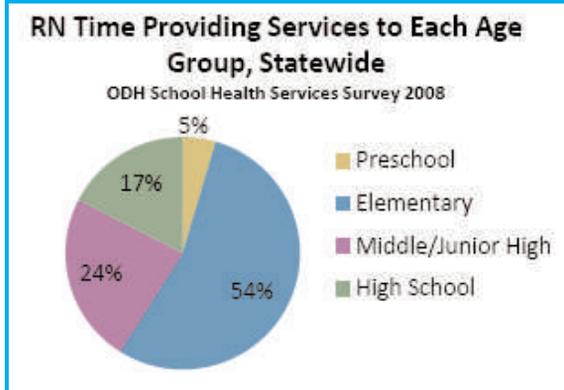
Of the RNs responding to the survey, nearly one-fourth statewide are assigned to work at one school building. However, 13.9 percent of RNs serve six or more buildings. In non-public schools, 53.8 percent of RNs are assigned to just one school building.



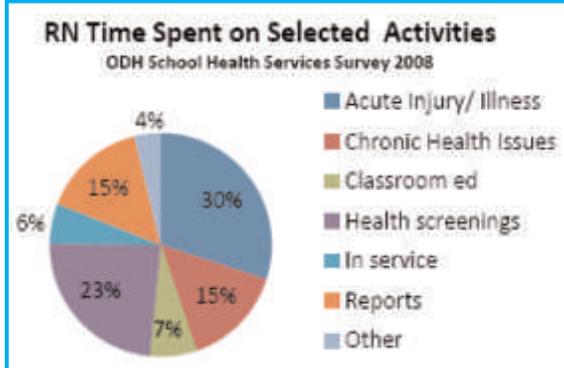
While one-quarter of the RNs work at one building, this does not mean that the building has the services of a full-time RN. As seen in this chart, only 23 percent of school buildings have the services of an RN for 29 hours or more per week.



Elementary schools require the services of school nurses more often than other grade levels. In non-public schools, more RN time is spent with preschoolers and less with high school students when compared to RNs in public schools.



Of the time spent with these age groups, the RN spends 30 percent of his/her time managing acute injuries and illnesses and 23 percent conducting health screenings. In addition, 15 percent of RN time is spent managing chronic health issues and completing reports.



Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of RNs working in Ohio schools are employed by the local board of education, with the local health department being the second-most common employer (13 percent). RNs working in non-public schools are more likely than those in public schools to be employed by a contract agency (19.5 percent) or educational service center (10.1 percent).

## THE STUDENTS

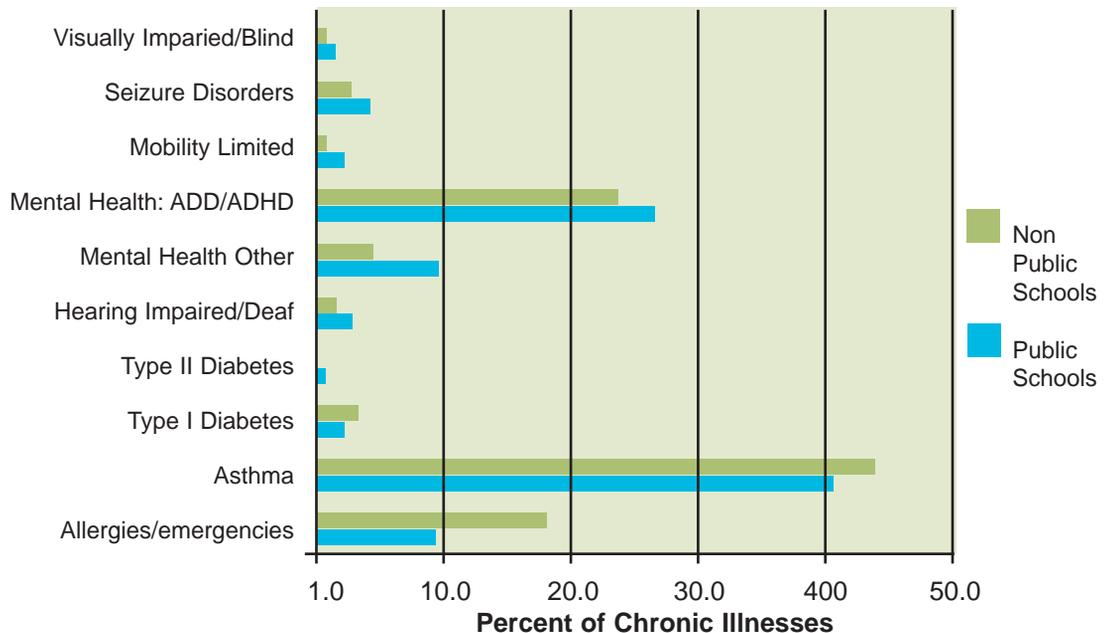
ODE reports an enrollment of 1,964,441 students in Ohio schools during the 2007-2008 school year.

Statewide, 80 percent of Ohio schools report having at least one student requiring daily skilled nursing care; 62.7 percent of non-public schools report the same.

Schools were provided a list of chronic illnesses and asked to report the total number of students known to have a diagnosis. The illness reported most often statewide was asthma (41 percent of chronic illnesses), ADD/ADHD (26 percent), allergies (11 percent) and mental health concerns other than ADD/ADHD (9 percent). There are statistically significant differences between chronic illnesses reported in public and non-public schools.

### Chronic Illness Reported in Public and Non-public Schools

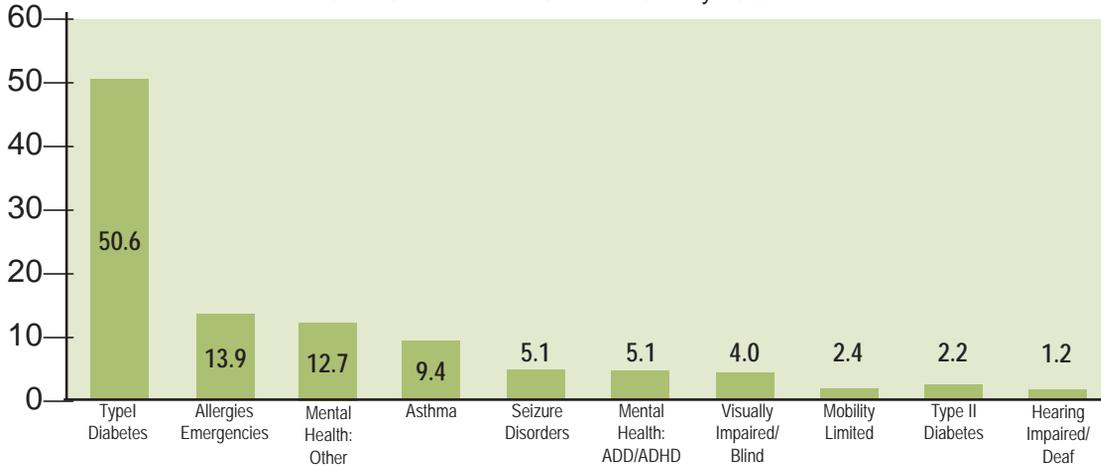
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While asthma is noted to be the most commonly recognized chronic illness in Ohio schools, schools reported that type 1 diabetes is the most difficult to manage in the school setting. Type 1 diabetes is followed in the ranking by allergies, mental health other than ADD/ADHD and asthma.

**Percent of Schools Identifying a Chronic Illness as Most Difficult to Manage**

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Students receive medications at school on a daily or as-needed basis. Medications can be administered by a variety of routes in the school setting.

**Percent of Medications Administered in Ohio Schools**

Medication Route	Daily	As needed
Oral	66.8%	41.1%
Inhaled	14.8%	41.5%
Injectable	12.4%	11.6%
Topical	4.3%	3.8%
GI Tube	1.3%	0.4%
IV	0.2%	0.1%
Rectal	0.1%	1.5%

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## THE SCHOOLS

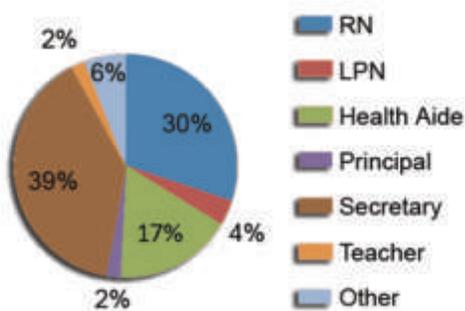
As noted previously, less than one-quarter of schools have the services of an RN on a full-time basis. In the absence of an RN, health care services are provided by other school staff.

Only 10.3 percent of public schools (41.3 percent of non-public schools) report administering no daily medications. Statewide, the secretary is the school employee most likely to administer medications. In the absence of a school nurse, the secretary is the school employee most likely to administer first aid and care for ill students.

In addition, 72 percent of schools statewide employ health aides to provide health care services. Non-public schools are more likely to employ a health aide (82.6 percent).

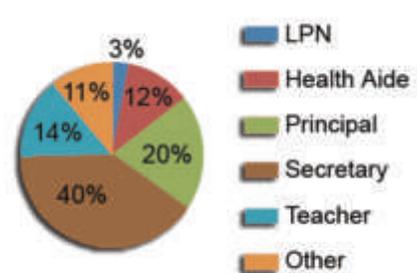
### Employee Most Frequently Administering Medication

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### Employee Most Frequently Administering First Aid

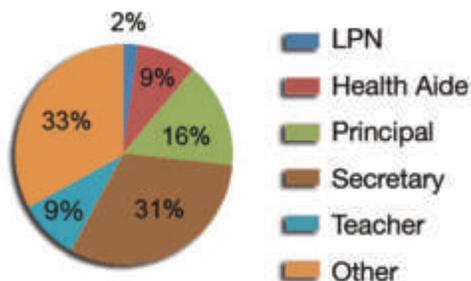
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As students are identified with health concerns, schools must address their needs in the school setting. The nationally recognized gold standard for the provision of health care services in schools is for school districts to employ licensed school nurses in a ratio of one nurse to 750 well students. This fact sheet describes some of the methods used by Ohio schools in 2008 to provide for the health needs of their students. The full report of the Ohio Department of Health Survey of Health Care Services in Ohio Schools 2008 may be found online at the ODH School Nursing Program Web site at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/chss/schnurs/schnurs1.aspx>

### Employee Most Likely Administering to Care for Ill Students

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