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Virginia School Nurses Continue Fighting COVID-19 While Schools are Closed

RICHMOND — Schools are closed, but many Virginia school nurses are observing National School Nurse Day today on the job on the front lines in the commonwealth's battle to slow the spread of the COVID-19.

School nurses are supporting local health departments by triaging patients, staffing call centers and assisting with contact tracing. Hundreds of school nurses are volunteering with the Virginia Department of Health's Medical Reserve Corps and assisting with COVID-19 testing.

"School nurses continue to play a critical role in the commonwealth's effort to 'flatten the curve' and slow the spread of COVID-19," Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane said. "And I believe Virginia is in a much better place today because of their efforts before schools closed to educate students and families about personal hygiene and preventative practices, including social distancing."

Virginia school nurses are involved in coordinating emergency childcare for medical personnel and first responders, and in assisting with food distribution to students and families. Nurses are also providing guidance to administrators and teachers on the use of personal protection equipment, and on the cleaning and safe handling of tablets, laptops and materials collected from students.

"Present circumstances may prevent in-person recognitions but I invite everyone in our school communities to find a way to thank school nurses for their extraordinary efforts and dedication to the health and wellbeing of students," Lane said.

Lane shared [a video on social media](#) today thanking school nurses, and congratulated the following nurses recognized this week by the [Virginia Association of School Nurses](#):

- School Nurse of the Year — Lindsey Poore, Cosby High School, Chesterfield County Public Schools
- School Nurse Administrator of the Year — Patricia Knox, Bedford County Public Schools
- Private School Nurse of the Year — Elizabeth Looney, Norfolk Academy and Saint Gregory the Great Catholic School

"I congratulate each of these school health professionals, and I want to thank all of our school nurses in advance for the important role they will play in the coming weeks and months as the commonwealth's school divisions — in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education — develop guidance on safely reopening schools while protecting students, families and employees from infection."

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