

**CAREER ASSISTANCE FOR REGISTERED NURSES IN EDUCATION (CARE)  
POLICY GUIDE**

The Career Assistance for Registered Nurses in Education (CARE) career ladder aims to assist current classified employees in becoming credentialed school nurses in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Participants in the CARE program will receive individualized mentoring and support, financial assistance in the form of reimbursement for partial tuition, textbooks, equipment and technology, guidance on pre-licensure nursing programs, and advisement on the employment process for school nursing. Program participants agree to an employment commitment of two full academic years with LAUSD as a credentialed school nurse in exchange for the support provided by the CARE program.

### **1. CARE Pathways**

The pathway to becoming a credentialed school nurse is unique for each member and is based on his or her educational background and current licensure. Upon admission into the CARE program, each member will have an intake meeting with a CARE mentor to review their individual profile and establish an Individual Mentorship Plan (IMP) and school nurse pathway starting point. Illustrated below are potential points of entry to the various pathways to become a credentialed school nurse. The foundation of the pathway is a survey of school nursing practice, which includes a series of activities designed to expose the member to the field of school nursing.

Progression in the program will be monitored by a CARE mentor. Members are expected to meet the following criteria on a yearly basis:

- A. Educational benchmarks based primarily on the number of college/university units
- B. Completion of an assigned survey of a school nursing practice
- C. Review of short- and long-term goals to obtain RN licensure and a School Nurse Services Credential

Participants must demonstrate yearly progress and attainment of academic goals to remain in the program. Members must complete a minimum of one School Nurse Survey per year until all four School Nurse Survey experiences are completed.

## CAREER LADDER

- Each member's pathway is different based on educational background and current licensure
- Completion timeline may range from 2 – 6 years



### HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

#### Student Pathway

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
Prepare for classified position in LAUSD
- Option 2:  
LVN Program  
LAUSD Career Education

### EXTERNAL EMPLOYEE

#### Requires District Employment

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
Enroll BSN Program
- Option 2:  
Complete BA/BS + RN
- Option 3:  
ADN + BSN Program
- + PASS NCLEX

### CLASSIFIED STAFF

#### Needs BA/BS Needs RN License

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
Associates Degree in Nursing (AND) concurrent with BSN program
- Option 2:  
Complete BA/BS+ADN
- Option 3:  
BSN Program
- + PASS NCLEX

### LAUSD LVN

#### Needs BA/BS Needs RN License

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
LVN-RN with concurrent BSN program
- Option 2:  
Complete BA/BS + LVN non-degree program
- + PASS NCLEX

### CLASSIFIED STAFF

#### Has BA/BS Needs RN License

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
Complete Associates Degree in Nursing (ADN)
- + PASS NCLEX



### LAUSD LVN

#### Has BA/BS Needs RN License

##### REQUIRED:

- Option 1:  
Complete LVN - RN degree program
- Option 2:  
Complete LVN non-degree program
- + PASS NCLEX



##### REQUIRED:

- Enroll and complete Clear Credential **within 5 years** of becoming a school nurse
- Commitment to LA Unified for **two full years** as School Nurse with Clear Credential



## SURVEY OF SCHOOL NURSE PRACTICE

- First Aid ● Emergency Care ● Communicable Disease Control ● Community/Public Health ● Immunization assessment and follow up ● Suspected Child Abuse Reporting ● Vision screening ● Individual Education Plans ● Health assessments ● Care Coordination ● Health teaching ● Hearing screening ● Health counseling
- Nutrition counseling ● Health office referrals and follow up ● Care coordination with providers ● Medication administration ● Blood borne pathogens ● Diabetic Care
- Leadership ● Training and Supervision of Specialized Health Care Procedures ● Welligent Documentation ● Carlson Home Hospital ● CPR-Special Education

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**Sample School Nurse Pathways:**

**Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) with a Bachelor's Degree**

Steps	Educational Benchmark	Credential/ Test Requirements	Sample School Nurse Survey Experience
4	Complete School Nurse Services Credential Program (12 units)	Clear preliminary Credential	Survey #4: Health Teaching Experience
3	Complete LVN- RN program Or LVN non-degree program (30 units)	Registered Nurse License Pass NCLEX	Survey #3 School Nurse and the IEP process
2	Complete Prerequisites for LVN- RN program or LVN non-degree program and enroll in appropriate program (approx. 9-15 units)	Passage of TEAS (Test of Essential Academic skills) or HESI (Health Education System) for some programs	Survey #2 School Nurse Mandates
1	CARE Mentor Meeting and Education Goal Planning	Program Entrance Requirements/Policy Guide Review/Online profile	Survey #1 Communicable Disease Control

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**Classified Staff without a Bachelor's Degree**

Steps	Educational Benchmarks	Credential/Test Requirements	Sample School Nurse Survey Experience
6	Complete School Nurse Services Credential Program (12 units)	Clear preliminary Credential	Survey #4: Health Teaching Experience
5	Complete Bachelor's of Science (BSN) or Arts (BA) 1. Concurrent enrollment with RN (ADN) program 2. After RN licensure 3. In current major 4. BSN program	Registered Nurse License Pass NCLEX	Survey #3: School Nurse and the IEP Process
4	Complete Associate Degree Nursing (ADN)	Registered Nurse License Pass NCLEX	
3	Complete Prerequisite Courses and Enroll in ADN program  Or	Passage of TEAS (Test of Essential Skills) or HESI (Health Education Systems) Exam for some programs	Survey #2: School Nurse Mandates
2	Enroll in BSN program	Passage of ACT/SAT Or College Entrance Exams	
1	CARE Mentor Meeting and Education Goal Planning	Program Entrance Requirements/Policy Guide Review/Online profile	Survey #1: Health Office Experience

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### **2. Responsibilities of the Member**

The minimum requirements to maintain good standing as a CARE member are listed below. Members must be in good standing to be eligible for any financial support.

- a. Remain employed in a qualifying job classification with the Los Angeles Unified School District.
- b. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.7 or the GPA required for continuous enrollment in a nursing program.
- c. Make annual academic progress as outlined in their Individualized Mentorship Plan (IMP).
- d. Completion of a Survey of School Nurse Practice on an annual basis.
- e. Receive the endorsement of your principal or nursing administrator on an annual basis.
- f. If on a granted leave of absence from the District to pursue a program of study in an institution of higher learning, a yearly endorsement will be requested from an individual from that program of study as determined by your CARE mentor.
- g. Maintain a minimum of ninety-six percent (96%) attendance rate.
- h. Attend a minimum of one Individual Mentorship Plan (IMP) meeting and two LAUSD Career Ladder Forums each year.
- i. Obtain the selected credential or license in the time frame determined by the member and the CARE mentor at the initial IMP meeting. This time frame may be adjusted as deemed necessary during yearly meetings with the CARE mentor, but is not to exceed 10 years in length.

### **3. Financial Assistance**

Active CARE members in good standing may receive up to \$8,000 per academic year to cover expenses for courses completed at a regionally accredited college or university for a baccalaureate degree and/or courses required to complete a pre-licensure nursing program approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

#### **3.1 Partial Tuition Reimbursement**

- a. CARE members qualify for partial tuition for courses in which they receive a grade of “B-” or better and they have paid for with personal funds and/or a student loan.
- b. Education expenses covered by fee waivers, scholarships, grants, or other financial aid that does not need to be repaid by the Member cannot be reimbursed.
- c. All coursework must be completed at a regionally accredited college or university and must be required to complete a baccalaureate degree and /or pre-licensure nursing program approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

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d. Tuition reimbursement rates are based on the type of college/university program enrolled as follows:

Type of enrollment	Reimbursement Per Semester Unit
Community college	\$40
4-year college or university	\$300

e. Requests for tuition reimbursement must be made by submitting a completed reimbursement request form accompanied by a grade report/transcripts and financial statement from the institution showing both cost AND proof of payment. All required documentation must be submitted within 3 months of course completion.

f. All reimbursements are dispersed on the participant's pay warrant as an educational reimbursement.

### **3.2 Other Education Expenses**

In addition to the partial tuition reimbursement, CARE members in good standing may also request reimbursement for the educational expenses below by submitting a completed reimbursement request form, receipt of payment, and required documents within 3 months of the payment/purchase.

Qualifying Educational Expense	Required documentation for reimbursement
Textbooks (may include textbook rentals and electronic textbooks) and course supplies/equipment	Itemized receipt for payment, proof of course enrollment and course syllabus with proof of requirement for course
Materials/Lab fees	Receipt of payment and course enrollment
Non-Tuition University fees	Receipt of payment and financial statement itemizing cost
Parking permit	Receipt of payment and enrollment for semester
Nursing Uniform/ Equipment	Receipt of payment and proof of course requirement
Foreign Transcript Evaluation (Must use a Commission approved vendor and request course detailed transcription)	Receipt of payment and copy of transcript received



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Application fee for RN Licensure NCLEX examination fee NCLEX Test Prep course/materials fee Nursing School Entrance Examination Fees Nursing School Entrance Exam Prep course/materials fee	Receipt of payment and proof of course requirement
Fingerprinting/Live Scan costs for Application of Licensure	Receipt of payment and copy of license application
Public Transportation/Metro Pass	Receipt of payment and enrollment for semester

### **3.3 Financial Assistance for Licensure Testing**

- CARE members in good standing are eligible for financial assistance to cover the costs of the application for RN licensure and the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) examination fee.
- Members may pay for these expenses upfront and request reimbursement within 3 months of completing the examination.
- The value of these expenses will be deducted from the member's annual allowance and will be included when totaling the amount of financial assistance received from repayment calculations, if necessary.
- Only regular registration costs are covered; any late or emergency registration or cancellation/rescheduling fees are at the member's expense.

### **3.4 Test Prep Course Enrollment**

- CARE members may enroll in any test preparation course or purchase preparation materials as desired or recommended by the college or university of study by paying costs upfront and requesting reimbursement afterward.
- A formal preparation program must administer preparation courses; verify with the Career Ladder office that the course will qualify for reimbursement before enrollment.
- Test preparation materials (i.e., study guides) must be test specific and state the test's name in the description.
- To request reimbursements, CARE members must submit a completed reimbursement request form and proof of payment and verification of completion of the course
- Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 3 months of the purchase or completion of the course/test.
- The cost of the course will be deducted from the CARE member's allowance regardless of attendance/participation in the course.

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- g. It is the member's responsibility to properly withdraw or cancel participation before the start of the course with the Career Ladder office to determine if the value of the class may be "refunded" to the member's available allowance.
- h. Passage of an examination is not required for reimbursement.
- i. CARE members must be in good standing to receive financial assistance for examinations.

**3.5 Technology Reimbursement**

- a. CARE members in good standing may request reimbursement up to \$500 annually for the purpose of purchasing technology.
- b. Technology may be hardware (CPU, laptop, printer, keyboard, camera, etc.) or software (Adobe, Microsoft Office, etc.) that is primarily used for college course work to complete academic goals as outlined in the members IMP.
- c. To request this reimbursement, members must submit a completed reimbursement request form, proof of payment, and justification of how the technology will be used to benefit/assist in the completion of a School Nurse Services Credential.

**4. Survey of School Nurse Practice**

**School nurses strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children and by identification and assistance in the removal or modification of health-related barriers to learning in individual children. The major focus of school health services is the prevention of illness and disability and the early detection and correction of health problems. The school nurse is specially prepared and uniquely qualified in preventive health, health assessment, and referral procedures. *California Education Code 49426***

- a. School nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances students' well-being, academic success, and lifelong achievement and health.
- b. Surveys of School Nurse Practice are activities designed to provide participants exposure to school nursing mandates per the CA Education Code and the scope and standards of nursing practice aligned with the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model that calls for a collaborative approach to learning and health.
- c. Completing the Surveys of School Nursing Practice helps provide a more comprehensive understanding of school nursing, generate enthusiasm for the specialty, and facilitate understanding of a school nurse's practical daily experience and responsibilities. This survey will complement the myriad of experiences CARE members will have while pursuing their nursing degree.
- d. Survey experiences are for the member's growth and development, are not an evaluation of job performance, and are not intended to be used for evaluation purposes.
- e. There are four survey experiences, each focusing on one or more school nurse mandates or activities related to a standard of school nurse practice.



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- f. Each survey will be conducted with, or based on observation, of a school-based nurse and assigned yearly by a CARE mentor.
- g. Once completed, surveys must be submitted to the CARE office for final review. Members should receive a letter of approval within two weeks (except during holidays and unassigned times).
- h. Incomplete or ineffective surveys will be returned for revisions.
- i. CARE members must complete all applicable surveys to be in good standing and receive financial assistance.

**5. Mentoring and Hiring Assistance**

- a. CARE Mentors will meet with admitted members to create an Individualized Mentorship Plan (IMP) to become a credentialed school nurse.
- b. The IMP will create educational goals, credential benchmarks, and School Nurse Survey assignments.
- c. CARE member progress will be monitored and updated annually.
- d. CARE members, after receipt of an RN license and bachelor's degree, will receive hiring assistance in the form of individual guidance through the certificated eligibility process.
- e. CARE members must complete the certificated full-time pre-employment eligibility process to accept an offer of a full-time contracted position with the district.
- f. CARE participation is not a guarantee of eligibility and is not a guarantee or an offer of a school nurse position with LAUSD.

**6. CARE Commitment**

- a. Upon completion of a School Nurse Services Credential, CARE members who receive reimbursement are required to serve LAUSD students as an employee with a clear School Nurse Services Credential for two full academic years.
- b. Those participants who do not meet the program's annual requirements or do not complete the commitment of work for any reason will be required to reimburse the District for all financial assistance received throughout the program.
- c. If LAUSD does not deem the CARE member eligible for employment or does not have a position to offer them, the member is not required to reimburse the District for funds received during membership in the CARE program.

**7. Leave of Absence for Educational Purposes**

- a. CARE members who are eligible and able to take a leave of absence to complete their pre-licensure nursing program may request reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred during the leave of absence.

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**CARE Commitment and Agreement**

CARE members who receive reimbursement are required to serve LAUSD students as a credentialed (clear credential) school nurse for two full academic years. Those participants who do not meet the annual requirements of the program, do not earn the goal credential, or do not complete the commitment of work for any reason will be required to reimburse the District for all financial assistance received throughout the program.

**CARE Member Agreement**

I have read and understood the policies and requirements of the Career Assistance for Registered Nurses in Education (CARE) Program.

I agree to abide by the policy guide in order to receive the benefits as a member of CARE.

I also understand that if I do not for any reason:

- Fulfill my responsibilities to remain an active member;
- Complete the requirements for my designated credential or license in a timely fashion;
- And
- Complete the commitment to work with LAUSD as a certificated full-time contracted school nurse with a clear credential for two full academic years;

I will be required to repay the amount of financial assistance received through this program to the Los Angeles Unified School District.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

A signed policy guide must be on file to receive Career Ladder assistance.

Return completed packet by uploading all pages to <http://bit.ly/LAUSDCAREDocs>

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