

**SCHOOL NURSES IN TEXAS K-12 PUBLIC & CHARTER SCHOOLS**

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), there were 6,242 school nurses working at Texas K-12 public and charter schools in the 2019-2020 school year. The TEA data on school nurses, which comes from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), contains the demographic information of school nurses as well as information on where each individual school nurse works. These individuals were matched with their 2019 licensure data from the Texas Board of Nursing to determine licensure type and status. Student enrollment information also comes from the PEIMS.

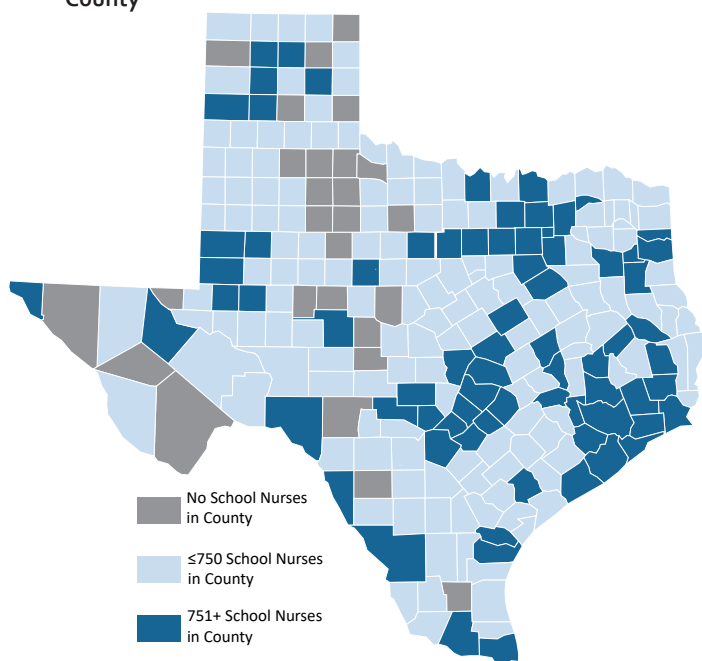
**Geographic Location of School Nurses in Texas**

Figure 1 illustrates the ratio of enrolled students in each county per one school nurse working in that county.<sup>1</sup>

- Out of the 254 total counties in Texas, 27 did not have a school nurse employed in a public or charter school.
- In Texas, the average number of students to one school nurse was 1,107 in the 2019-2020 school year.
- 78 counties exceeded a ratio of 750 students to one school nurse, including four counties that had a ratio exceeding 2,000 students to one school nurse.

Table 1 illustrates the number of school nurses and the ratio of students to one school nurse by Public Health Region.

**Figure 1. Ratio of Enrolled Students to One School Nurse by County**



**Table 1. Number of School Nurses and Ratio of Students Per One School Nurse by Public Health Region and Geographic Designation**

Public Health Region	Number of School Nurses	Average Number of Students Per One School Nurse
Panhandle	234	1,037
North Texas	2,008	1,016
East Texas	333	717
Gulf Coast	1,509	1,283
Central Texas	536	1,007
South Texas	621	1,029
West Texas	402	1,247
Rio Grande Valley	599	1,279
Geographic Designation	Number of School Nurses	Average Number of Students Per One School Nurse
Metro/Border	723	1,258
Metro/Non-Border	4,871	1,135
Non-Metro/Border	57	734
Non-Metro/Non-Border	591	713
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>6,242</b>	<b>1,107</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rather than adhering to a strict ratio of school nurses to students, the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) recommends considering a variety of factors such as “acuity, social needs of students, community/school infrastructure, and characteristics of nursing staff” (<https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-workload>). A ratio was used here as a way to compare the number of school nurses in counties across Texas.

- North Texas had the most school nurses while the Panhandle had the least. The Gulf Coast had the highest ratio of students per one school nurse and East Texas had the lowest.
- All Public Health Regions, except East Texas, exceeded the recommended 750 students to one school nurse.

Table 1 (page 1) also illustrates the number of school nurses and the ratio of students to one school nurse broken down by geographic designation.

- The metro/border counties had the highest ratio of students to one school nurse while the non-metro/non-border counties had the lowest ratio.

- While there were more school nurses in metro counties, the ratio of students to one school nurse exceeded the recommended ratio.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) describes district types in terms of geographic type, size, and location.<sup>2</sup>

- The majority of school nurses worked in Suburb-large (30.6%), City-large (28.6%), or City-midsize (9.5%) district types.
- Few school nurses worked in district types defined as Town-remote (2.7%), Suburb-midsize (2.4%), Rural-remote (1.9%), Town-fringe (1.9%), and Suburb-small (0.9%).

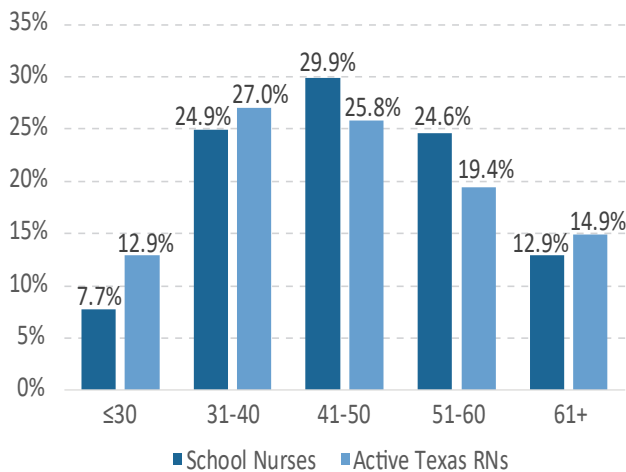
## Demographics of School Nurses in Texas

### Age

The mean age of all school nurses, during the 2019-2020 school year, was 46.6 years. The average age of school nurses with a Registered Nurse (RN) license was 46.8 years and with a Licensed Vocational Nurse license was 44.8 years. The mean age of active Texas RNs<sup>3</sup> was 45.4 years. Figure 2 shows the age categories of school nurses compared to those of active Texas RNs.

- There were a greater proportion of school nurses in the 51-60 age range, those approaching retirement age, than RNs in Texas.

**Figure 2. Age Categories Among School Nurses and Active Texas RNs**



### Sex

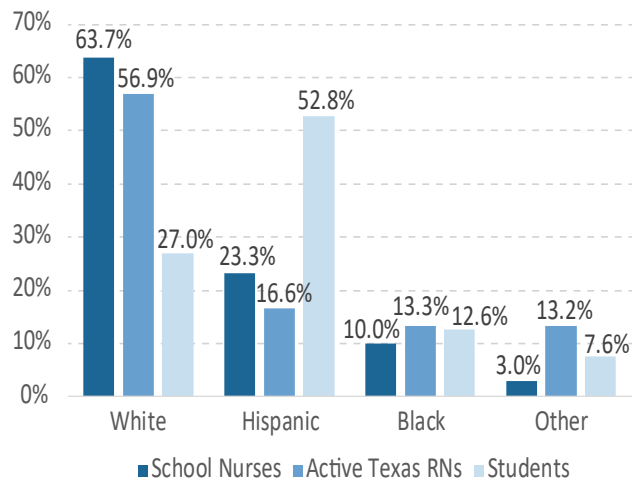
Of the school nurses in Texas, 98.3% were female and 1.7% were male. Among RNs in Texas, 87.2% were female and 12.3% were male.

### Race/Ethnicity

Figure 3 shows a comparison of the race/ethnicity distribution among school nurses, RNs, and students in Texas.

- Compared to school nurses and RNs, students had a greater proportion of a Hispanic population and a smaller White population.
- School nurses, RNs, and students in Texas had similar proportions of the Black race/ethnicity category.

**Figure 3. Race/Ethnicity Categories Among School Nurses, Active Texas RNs, and Students**



<sup>2</sup> For more information on the NCES district definitions, visit: <https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-data/campus-and-district-type-data-search>.

<sup>3</sup> Active Texas RNs are RNs with an active license who are working in a nursing position on a full-time or part-time basis in a Texas county.

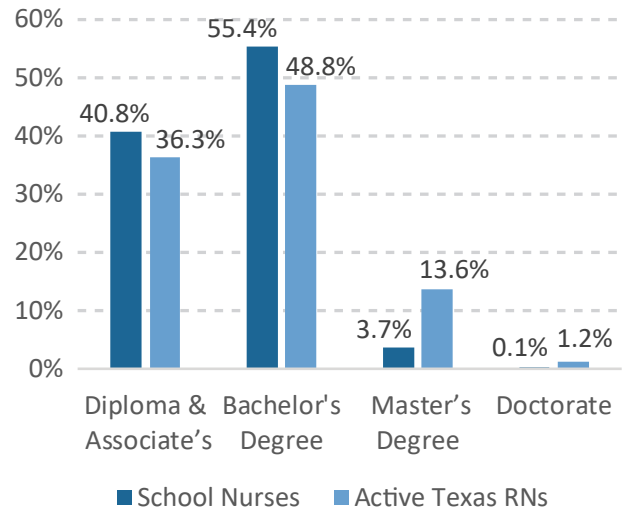


## Education

Figure 4 shows the highest nursing degree of school nurses compared to the highest nursing degree among RNs in Texas.

- Of those Texas school nurses who had less than a bachelor's degree, 3.9% had a diploma and 36.9% had an Associate Degree in Nursing.
- While it is recommended that school nurses have at least a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, 40.8% of school nurses had less than a bachelor's degree.
- Although the majority of school nurses had at least a bachelor's degree, a smaller proportion of school nurses had a graduate degree compared to RNs in Texas.

Figure 4. Highest Nursing Degree Among School Nurses and RNs in Texas



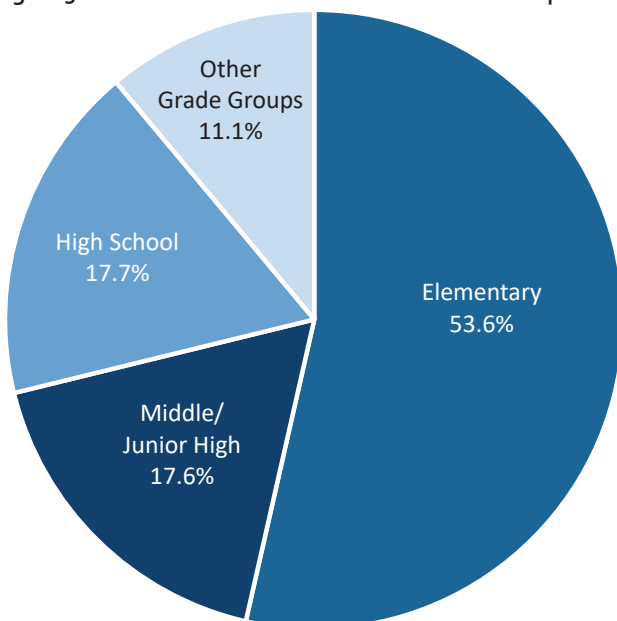
## Employment Information of School Nurses in Texas

### Grade Groups and Campuses

According to the TEA, there are 1,200 school districts and 9,000 campuses in Texas.<sup>4</sup> Only 824 districts and 4,893 campuses had school nurses listed by the TEA. Figure 5 shows which grade groups school nurses had at their campuses.

- The majority of school nurses worked with elementary grade groups (53.6%).
- 4.5% of school nurses worked at multiple campuses, including 2.8% at two campuses, 1.4% at three campuses, and 0.3% at four to eight campuses.

Figure 5. School Nurse Distribution Across Grade Groups<sup>5</sup>

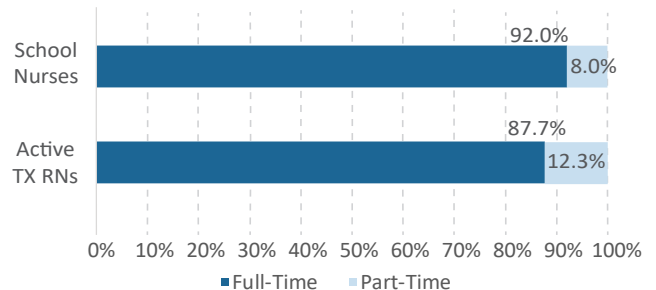


- The average number of students per school nurse working at multiple campuses ranged from 1,250 (two campuses) to 3,601 (at least four campuses).

Figure 6 shows the ratio of part-time and full-time school nurses compared to RNs in Texas.

- A higher proportion of school nurses had a full-time position compared to RNs in Texas.

Figure 6. Part-Time vs. Full-Time Employment Status of School Nurses and Active Texas RNs



### Other School Nurse Facts

- The mean years of experience for school nurses in Texas was 10.3 years.<sup>6</sup>
- The mean annual base pay for a school nurse in Texas was \$56,180.38 compared to the average Texas RN salary of \$76,800.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll\\_2019-20.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll_2019-20.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> "Other Grade Groups" includes campuses with a combination of grade levels, such as a campus with middle and high school grade levels.

<sup>6</sup> Years of experience is defined by the TEA as the number of years of "credible professional experience" and could include the number of years practicing as a nurse and/or the number of years practicing as a school nurse.

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_Texas.htm#29-0000](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_Texas.htm#29-0000).