



Public Interest in the Public School System

Many of us are taught that volunteers do the work of the angels. Never before has there been a need for work in this country's public school systems. [School nurse jobs](#), human services jobs, and [volunteer program manager jobs](#) are all too often left vacant. Those who are in these fields must be passionate and dedicated souls who have no shortage of energy and patience. Here, we'll discuss a few of these critical roles in today's society.

School nursing positions offer some of the most humorous moments in a nurse's life. Unfortunately, they can also present feelings of helplessness and heartbreak. Nurses are trained to recognize warning signs of abuse and other less-than-ideal home environments, only to be met with resistance from school officials and police or social services officials in acting upon those warning signs. It has less to do with those officials not wishing to act, but rather they must proceed with caution and certainty. Unfortunately, the little ones are the ones who must endure it until there is enough cause for authorities to move forward. Not surprisingly, those children who either confide in school nurses or who are comforted by them often put them on a pedestal. They may cling to the one person who has been kind and attentive. It can take a toll on the nurse and is often emotionally exhausting. Still, these school nurses come day after day and year after year. Most will tell you they can't imagine any other career, and believe it's a small price to pay for the contributions they're able to make throughout the school year.

Similar to the role of a nurse (in that patience and a nurturing temperament are required), [human services jobs](#) are filled by those who believe they can make a contribution to society. Just as with nurses, human services personnel must have a high tolerance for the less-than-ideal members of their communities. They're often confronted by angry parents who've lost their children due to negligence, abuse, or other dangerous situations in a home. They often must bite their tongues when these children are returned to their parents, only to watch the cycle repeat itself weeks later with the return of the child who'd already been removed from the home at one point. But those in this field knew they'd come full circle when presented with an out, an option to rescue themselves from the heartbreak associated with human services, and choose to stay despite the cost to their own psyches. They continue with careers that promise frustration, heartbreak, and long, exhausting days.

Volunteer program manager jobs are usually filled by current

volunteers who have shown commitment and stamina through the work they do. The high turnover rate is not surprising. Many discover the added stress of a management role is just too much and too overwhelming. As their volunteers attempt to help those who can't help themselves, program managers must find a way to help the volunteers while remaining vigilant regarding the signs of burnout. These are sometimes paid positions, but all too often they're rarely paid salaries that are commensurate with their work, if they receive salaries at all. Indeed, choosing to volunteer any of your time must be a labor of love.

Choosing such noble roles in your community is a commitment that mustn't be taken lightly. Understanding what to expect is key in making an informed decision before undertaking any role within your local school system as a volunteer or paid staff member. There is a continuing rise in the number of children who endure strained existences at home. Often, many kids simply try to blend into the background at home in their efforts to avoid being singled out by an abusive parent or one who is abusing drugs or alcohol. Sadly, these dynamics are only the tip of the iceberg, and negative home situations are often more horror-filled. Often, a school nurse is the first to recognize these cases.

Most school nurses are LPNs and account for around 11 percent of all licensed practical nurses. Nursing remains the fastest-growing industry, and the job market for both LPNs and RNs (registered nurses) is considered excellent. On average, LPNs across all sectors earn \$31,000 per year, although baseline salaries vary from region to region throughout the country. A degree is required prior to entering this field.

In comparison, those choosing human services, can expect to earn slightly higher incomes. Those in social services occupations have varying options when creating their own niche in this field. Some roles include substance abuse and behavioral counselors, mental health counselors, social



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workers, human services assistants, probation officers, and others. Unfortunately, many school systems faced with major cutbacks have had to sacrifice their district counselors and have instead opted to move the needs formerly met by these personnel to either guidance counselors or school nurses. The need for these human services continues to rise and is in direct correlation with the number of drug addicts, those who have mental issues, and those with poor family structures.

Some experts say this is the single biggest threat facing the country.

Clearly, these positions, both volunteer and paid, have no glamour associated with them. They're filled with stress and uncertainty for those who take them. Still, those who choose these occupations insist that the work is one of the most fulfilling aspects of their lives.

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