

March 2008

Our 2008 State Conference is over but the enthusiasm that was felt there is just beginning. As I looked out to those attending, I saw the faces of colleagues from all across the state. Here were professionals joining together at their organization's state conference to increase their knowledge and develop their skills as school nurses. I saw school nurses who care deeply about the students and the staff they serve.

I wondered, how many tens of thousands of students were impacted by the care of the school nurses just within that room? How much better are the lives and educational success of those students because their school nurse had the opportunity to learn and grow at an FASN conference. We step into people's lives and we **do** make a difference! What an incredible voice we can be for school nursing!

We must use that voice to tell our stories to others so they will realize what an awesome profession school nursing is. We must take the facts and figures that are a part of our daily work and give them a face. And we must give them a voice. **School nursing does not have a voice unless we give it one!**

Nursing has a reputation for eating its young and its brothers and sisters in other fields of nursing. This is a practice that has to stop. And it can stop in school nursing, right here, right now. We can become the organization that supports and encourages all school nurses -- whether we have one school or ten; whether we are hired by the school district or the health department or a hospital or a private foundation; whether we work for a public, private or charter school. We can and must remember that **what we have in common** far outweighs our differences.

As we continue to work together, encouraging and supporting each other, our list of accomplishments will continue to grow. The challenges will still be there, but people will look to us as the voice of school nursing. Each of us can become leaders within our profession, transforming the communities around us. We will become a wonderful, powerful voice of school nursing, changing lives, educating for life!