

EUNICE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



HEALTH SERVICES HANDBOOK

Revised and Board Approved April 2014

Student Health Services Policy

Eunice Public Schools aims to provide a comprehensive school health program that promotes the health, safety, wellness, and academic success of every student. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to help maintain the health and safety of our students.

Immunizations

New Mexico law requires that all students be immunized against certain communicable diseases. These requirements are determined by the NM Department of Health (NM DOH). For assessment of vaccination status, current official immunization schedules are released annually by NM DOH. A copy of the current immunization schedule can be found online at www.immunizenm.org, or you can obtain a copy through the school nurse.

In the school setting, the school nurse is usually the person best qualified to determine which children require vaccination, and will subsequently notify the parent/guardian. Eunice Public Schools will follow the current years New Mexico Childcare/Pre-school/School Entry Immunization requirements. The NM Immunization Program requires an annual immunization report from each school in the state for which forms are released to schools in the fall so that appropriate intervention in problematic school districts can take place.

Immunization Assessment

For a child who has begun the process of immunization and the process is being accomplished in accordance with the current NM immunization schedule, she/he may enroll in and attend school.

For a child who has no documentation and was formerly enrolled in a school in the US, a phone call requesting records to verify immunization status is sufficient to be considered in process. If the child was formerly enrolled in a school in another country and has no records, she/he must begin the recommended immunizations to be considered in process.

For a child whose immunizations are not up-to-date but who has received all immunizations permissible at the current date she/he is considered in process.

For a child who is attempting to reach compliance but is behind on a series, s/he is no longer considered in process. A scheduled appointment to receive immunizations is considered in process, and the child may register and attend school. If proof of immunization is not presented the first school day after this appointment, disenrollment procedure can begin. For any student kept out of school longer than five consecutive days for noncompliance, the local RHO should be notified (NMAC 7.5.2)

For children who are less than five years of age and who attend day care or early childhood programs on school grounds must have their immunization status verified. They are required to be up-to-date with the NM recommended immunization schedule.

Exemptions from Immunizations

A student in New Mexico may be exempt from NM Public Education Department (PED) immunization requirements to register and attend school upon providing to the school a CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM SCHOOL/DAYCARE IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS. A student must file with the Department of Health one of the following [New Mexico Immunization Exemption Law (24-5-3)]:

- (1) A certificate of a duly licensed physician stating that the physical condition of the child is such that immunization would seriously endanger the life or health of the child; or
- (2) Affidavits or written affirmation from an officer of a recognized religious denomination that such child's parents or guardians are bona fide members of a denomination whose religious teaching requires reliance upon prayer or spiritual means alone for healing;
- (3) Affidavits or written affirmation from his parent or legal guardian that his religious beliefs, held either individually or jointly with others, do not permit the administration of vaccine or other immunizing agent.

Any exemption from obtaining the required immunizations is valid for a period not to exceed nine (9) months and will not extend beyond the end of the school year in which it is submitted and approved. Exemptions must be renewed yearly.

Exemption forms may be downloaded from the New Mexico School Health Manual at the following: <http://www.nmschoolhealthmanual.org/forms/sectionIX/CertificateofExemption7-8-13.pdf>

- The form must be completed, then signed and notarized (must include notary commission expiration date and original notary seal). The original form must be filed with the NM Immunization Program. A copy of the approved form is then made available to the parent by the Immunization Program.
- Parent/Guardians are responsible for providing an approved copy of this Exemption Certificate to their child's school.
- Requests are subject to the approval of the New Mexico Department of Health
- IN ANY CASE OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OCCURS OR IS LIKELY TO OCCUR IN EUNICE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH MAY REQUIRE THE EXCLUSION OF INFECTED PERSONS AND NON-IMMUNIZED PERSONS.

Disenrollment

The school administrative authority shall commence disenrollment proceedings if satisfactory evidence of commencement and completion of immunizations or valid exemption is not provided by the student's parent/guardian, or if an exemption from immunization is subsequently determined to be invalid for any reason.

Communicable/Infectious Disease

Eunice Public Schools recognizes the importance of adhering to Public Health laws, as well as the responsibility of keeping all students and staff in a safe and healthy learning environment. In the event of an outbreak or possible exposure to a communicable disease, EPS will refer to NMAC 7.4.3.13, Notifiable Diseases or Conditions in New Mexico for guidance.

If a student is a carrier of, or is infected with, a chronic or acute communicable disease, it is highly recommended that the parent/guardian discloses this information to school nurse or school administrator as soon as he/she becomes aware of the condition. This is important so that appropriate accommodations can be made for the student, while also protecting the health and safety of students and staff.

Parents/guardians shall not allow their child(ren) to attend school with an acute communicable disease, or symptoms of an acute communicable disease. The NM DOH will recommend appropriate district response to students who have symptoms of an acute communicable disease [see NM School Health Manual, Section X (http://www.nmschoolhealthmanual.org/shm_10.pdf)].

Student Communicable Disease information will be kept confidential, and disclosed only to staff on a need-to-know basis.

Guidelines for Keeping a Student Home from School

It is not always easy deciding if a child is too sick to go to school. While it is important for students to attend school regularly, it is also important for a child who is truly sick to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and prevent spreading illness to others. These guidelines will assist you in deciding whether or not your child is well enough to come to school.

- **Fever of 100°F or more** – students should stay home until he/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Please do not give your child medication to treat a fever and then send him/her to school.
- **Sore Throat** – a student with a mild sore throat, no fever and otherwise feeling well may be fine to attend school. A severe sore throat could be a symptom of a more serious illness. If your child is diagnosed with a throat infection and antibiotics are prescribed, your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started, as long as they are not running fever.
- **Rashes** – a rash may be the first sign of a contagious childhood illness. Do not send a child to school with a rash until a medical provider has evaluated it and said it is safe to do so, especially if other symptoms accompany the rash, such as itching, fever or other signs of illness. Please bring a note from the doctor, verifying that it is safe for the student to return to school. Students who are diagnosed with scabies, ringworm, or impetigo can usually return to school after 24 hours of appropriate treatment. The affected area should be covered, especially if there is drainage present.
- **Cough** – a student with a mild cough, no fever or other symptoms of illness can usually remain at school. Students with a deep, uncontrollable or productive cough should stay at home, especially if the cough is accompanied by fever or other symptoms of illness.
- **Vomiting and/or Diarrhea** – students may return to school 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea, as long as they have no other symptoms of illness and it is not being controlled with medication. If your child is sent home from school for vomiting/diarrhea, please keep him/her home the following school day (per the 24 hour guideline).
- **Eye Inflammation or Discharge** – students whose eye is red with cloudy or yellow/green drainage; matted eyelids after sleep; eye pain; and/or redness should be kept at home and evaluated by a healthcare provider. If the child has been diagnosed with “pink eye”, he/she may return to school 24 hours after treatment begins.
- **Head Lice** – If you suspect or know that your child has head lice, please keep him/her at home. Students who are identified with nits (lice eggs) may stay at school until the end of the day, but if your child is found to have live lice, you will be asked to pick them up

immediately. Students with lice will need to be kept at home until appropriate treatment has been provided and all nits have been removed from the child's hair. Absences for head lice are only excused for a maximum of three school days.

Please keep the office up to date with current phone numbers so you or an alternate contact can be reached if your child becomes ill or injured at school. This is most easily accomplished by completing and returning the Emergency Medical Authorization Form you will receive at the time of registration.

Chronic Health Conditions

Responding to the needs of students with chronic health conditions (i.e. asthma, allergies, diabetes, cardiac disorders, epilepsy/seizure disorders, etc.) in the school setting requires a comprehensive, coordinated, and systematic approach. If their health needs are planned for and met, students with chronic conditions can function to their maximum potential. Eunice Public Schools will work in cooperation with parents, students, school staff, and healthcare providers to provide a safe and supportive educational environment for students with chronic illnesses to ensure their safety and educational success.

The parent/guardian will:

- Notify school authorities (principal/nurse/teacher) of the student's health management needs and diagnosis as early as possible after diagnosis or enrollment in school, and whenever the student's health needs change.
- Provide a written description of the student's health needs at school (i.e. Action Plan or Individualized Health Plan), including authorizations for medication administration, daily care and monitoring, and/or emergency response and treatment, signed by the student's healthcare provider and the parent/guardian prior to school attendance.
 - IHP's (Individualized Health Plans) and Action Plans are available for pick-up in the nurse's office, as well as medication authorization forms.
- Communicate significant changes in the student's needs or health status promptly to appropriate school staff.
- Update the written plan with appropriate signatures prior to the first day of school each and every school year as long as the condition persists. Treatment and Emergency plans, medication forms, and any subsequent updates are only good for one school year, including summer activities.
- Provide an adequate supply of the student's medication – in pharmacy-labeled containers, clearly labeled with appropriate name, medication, strength and frequency

of administration – as well as all other supplies necessary to manage the student’s care due to their specific chronic health condition.

- Replace all medications and supplies as needed, and
- Provide the school with back-up medication in the event the student has authorization to “self-carry” medications and supplies specific to asthma, diabetes and/or emergency anaphylaxis conditions.

The School will:

- Identify students with chronic conditions based on parent/guardian disclosure and/or by review of the Student Health History Form submitted every school year for every student.
- Establish and clarify roles and obligations of specific school staff who will care for a student with a chronic condition, and provide education and communication systems necessary to ensure that the student’s health and educational needs are met in a safe and coordinated manner.
- Communicate with families as needed, and as authorized, with the student’s health care providers.
- Ensure that student receives prescribed treatments and/or medications in a safe, reliable, and effective manner.
- Ensure that student has access to needed treatments and/or medications at all times during the school day.
- Be prepared to handle health needs and emergencies related to the student’s chronic health condition during the school day.
- Ensure that there is a staff member available who is properly trained to administer prescribed treatments, medications, and other immediate/emergent care during the school day.
- Ensure that all staff that interacts with the student on a regular basis receives appropriate guidance and training on routine needs, precautions, and emergency actions.
- Ensure proper record keeping, including measures to both protect confidentiality and to share information appropriately.
- Promote a supportive learning environment that views students with chronic health conditions/illnesses the same as other students, with the exception of health need response related to the specific condition.

Administration of Medication at School

Eunice Public Schools recognizes that many children are able to attend school because of the effectiveness of medications in the treatment of chronic disabilities and long-term illnesses. The schools have neither the responsibility nor the authority to dispense medication at school, and whenever possible, all medication should be given at home. To ensure that students who require medications during the school hours receive them with maximum protections to all involved, the following is required:

- A dated, complete Medication Authorization Form from the licensed medical provider is required for every medication, every school year (this form is available in the nurse's office or on the school website). The licensed medical provider's order shall be valid only for the current school year. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility for getting this form completed and delivered to the school along with the medication. **Medication sent to school with the student will not be acceptable.** Any change in the dosage or time of administration must be accompanied by written documentation from the health care provider.
- The parent/guardian authorization section of the Medication Authorization Form must be completed and signed for every medication, every school year. The medication CANNOT be administered if this section is left blank. In addition, parents/guardians should provide a telephone number through which a parent/guardian may be reached in the event of an adverse reaction to the medication.
- Medication order(s) must include the name of the student, name of the medication, dosage, route of administration, and time of administration.
- Prescription medication (including samples from the physician) shall be labeled by the physician or by a licensed pharmacist to include the student's name, name of prescribing physician, name of medication, dosage, and time of administration. Medication should be brought in the original container.
- Medication will be stored in a central location (i.e. the nurse's office) within a locked cabinet. Exceptions of this rule will be noted on the physician's order and medication authorization form, and will pertain to medication that must be stored in a refrigerator or those carried by the student. Keeping medications at the school is an accommodation to the student, and the district is not responsible for loss or damage resulting from theft.
- A parent/guardian must deliver the medication to the school, with the exception of students who have physician's authorization to self-carry asthma inhalers or diabetic medication and supplies.

- It shall be the student's responsibility to report to the school nurse's office or other designated area (to be determined by the school nurse and school principal) for his/her medication at the time it is to be administered. The child must be instructed by the parent or the physician on how to take his/her medication. Young children, handicapped, or intellectually disabled children should be taught according to their level of capability. It is the responsibility of the child to understand why he/she takes the medicine and to take it according to the prescribed schedule.
 - When a student comes to take his/her medication, the following 6 Rights of Medication Administration shall be followed by the nurse or trained designee:
 - Right Student
 - Right Medication
 - Right Dosage
 - Right Time
 - Right Route
 - Right Documentation
- A medication record shall be available in the nurse's office for every medication administered to the student that shall include the name of the student, name of medication, frequency of administration and dosage. This medication administration record shall be filed as permanent record.
- In the event the school nurse is unavailable to administer medication, a trained designee shall act in his/her stead or the parent/guardian may come to the school to administer the medication.
- The nurse (or district trained designee) is unable to administer missed home doses of medication at school without a physician's order. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to come to school to administer missed home medication doses.
- The school district, its employees or agents may confiscate a student's medication if the student's self-administration of the medication exceeds the student's prescribed dosage or if the student endangers others with his/her medication. Parents/guardians will be notified if confiscation occurs.

Students with Diabetes, Asthma, and Anaphylaxis

New Mexico law requires all schools, whether public or private, to grant to any student grades K-12 authorization to carry and self-administer provider prescribed asthma treatment medication, anaphylaxis emergency treatment medication, and diabetes treatment medication under specific conditions (NMAC 6.12.8.8). Those specific conditions include:

- Appropriate instruction has been given by the provider to the student in the correct and responsible use of the medication;

- The student has demonstrated adequate skill level to the school nurse to carry and self-administer identified medication;
- There is a written treatment plan on file with the school nurse;
- The school liability policy and the extent and duration of the authorization have been discussed with the parent/guardian.

Therefore, Eunice Public Schools will permit students to self-assess and carry, and self-administer prescribed medications under these specified conditions, as long as in doing so, he/she does not endanger his or her own person, or other persons through misuse of the medication.

Over-the-Counter Medications

Eunice Public Schools will follow guidelines set forth in the New Mexico School Health Manual, as well as state administrative regulations, regarding the administration of over-the-counter medications at school. Over-the-counter medication guidelines as described in this section shall also include natural remedies, herbal remedies and nutritional supplements.

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications that were once kept on campus (i.e. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antacids, hydrocortisone cream, antibiotic ointment, cough drops, etc.) will no longer be stocked by the school. OTC medications will only be administered if the following are met:

- Parents/guardians must provide written consent for administering OTC medication. Parental consent lasts until the end of the current school year.
- Parents/guardians who permit the school nurse to administer an OTC medication must supply an unopened bottle of the medication for which they are consenting to be given to their child. Please provide the smallest bottle possible, due to storage space considerations. The medication will be stored in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office.
- All medications should be labeled with the name and date of birth of the child for whom they are intended. If more than one child from a family is in the school, the names and dates of birth of all children may be placed on a single bottle of OTC medication.
- If OTC medication needs to be administered for more than 3 consecutive days, or more than 3 times a month, the student will be referred for medical evaluation and an order from the student's primary care provider will be required. *NOTE: An exception to the 3-day rule will be made for cough drops, providing that a parent/guardian brings the student's supply to the school and provides written permission for the cough drops to be given to their child on an as needed basis, following instructions on the product label.

When students present with symptoms of minor illness or injury, the use of non-pharmacologic comfort measures will be first implemented (i.e. rest, ice, elevation, warm/cold compress). The student will be assessed by the school's registered nurse prior to any OTC medication being administered. After an assessment is made, and it is determined that comfort measures are not providing relief, an OTC medication may then be given per the terms listed above. Medications will be administered according to the directions on the medication label, including age- or weight-based dosing. Use of OTC medication will be documented in the student's school health record.