

Medication at School Procedures

I. Definitions

- A. **Prescribed oral medication**, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray means all prescribed or over-the-counter oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray dispensed to students on a scheduled basis upon written authorization from a parent and accompanied by written instructions from a licensed physician or dentist.
- B. **Licensed professional** means a registered professional school nurse licensed pursuant to Chapter 18.88 RCW and employed by the district.
- C. **Designated personnel** means those district employees described in Section B below.
- D. **Parent** means parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal control over the student.

II. Designated Personnel

- A. The building principal shall annually designate staff to administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray if the nurse is not available. The names of the individuals shall be sent by the building principal to the head school nurse by August 15 preceding the school year during which the staff members will be dispensing medications.
- B. The principal may request that additional staff members be authorized to administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray. The request should be submitted in writing to the head school nurse and should include the names and positions of the staff members the principal wishes to designate, along with the reason for the request.
- C. In addition to those staff members authorized to administer prescribed oral medications, the building principal may request staff members generally be authorized to administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray in specific situations (e.g. on field trips). The request should be submitted in writing to the head school nurse and should include the names and positions of the staff members the principal would like to designate, along with the reason for the request.
- D. Staff designated to administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray in a specific situation may only administer

such medication within the specific situation. They may not administer medication to students at any other times.

- E. Only employees of the district may be designated to dispense medications.

III. Training and Supervision

- A. The district's school nurses shall train and supervise designated personnel in the proper administration of prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray. Only designated personnel who have received such training and licensed professionals shall administer prescribed medication. (See Medication Form #1).
- B. The training of designated personnel in the proper administration of prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray shall occur prior to the beginning of each school year.
- C. The district's school nurses shall also provide training and supervision to those staff authorized to administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray in specific situations. This training shall occur as requested by the building principal.
- D. The district's school nurses shall supervise designated personnel by conducting periodic review of medication administration procedures. (See Training Handout #1.)

IV. Parent/Legal Guardian and Physician/Dentist Requests and Instructions

- A. Designated personnel shall administer prescribed medications to students only when the district has received:
 - 1. Parent/legal guardian request and instructions.
 - a. Such request must be made in writing on the district medication form. (See Medication Form #3) the request must be current and unexpired.
 - b. The request must be signed by a parent.
 - 2. Physician/dentist requests and instructions:
 - a. The request must be made in writing by the student's physician/dentist on the district medication form. The request must be current and unexpired.
 - b. The request must be signed by the student's physician/dentist.
 - c. The request must state that a valid health reason exists which makes administration of the prescribed oral medication, topical medication,

eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray advisable during school hours or during such time that the student is under the supervision of school officials.

- d. Written, clear, legible, current, and unexpired instructions must be obtained from the student's current physician/dentist regarding the administration of prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray for students. These instructions must be non-discretionary. It is required that all instructions issued by a physician's assistant be countersigned by the student's physician.

B. Both the request for administration of medication as well as the written instructions from the physician/dentist must be received by the school **prior** to the delivery of medication.

1. Medication:

- a. The medication must be furnished in an original container from the pharmacy with the student's name, the name of medication, dosage, and the amount to be given.
- b. All medication must be in a form ready to be administered and must not require any preparation by the designated personnel.
- c. It is the parent's responsibility to deliver and maintain an adequate supply of the medication at school. The medication may not be delivered by the child or school bus driver.

2. Dosage changes:

- a. If there is a need to change the student's dosage and/or time of administration, the physician/dentist must submit a new request on a district medication form.
- b. If there is a dosage change, the medication must be provided in a newly labeled container from the pharmacy.

V. Procedures for Administration of Prescribed Medication

A. In addition to compliance with all other requirements set forth in this procedure, designated personnel shall:

1. Administer prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray in substantial compliance with the written instructions of the student's physician/dentist. This shall include, but not be limited to,

administration of medication no earlier than one-half hour before nor later than one-half hour after the time designated by the physician/dentist.

2. Examine the prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray before administration to determine if it appears to be in the original container and is properly labeled.
3. Keep an accurate record of all prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray using district recording forms. (See Medication Form #4.)
4. Follow hygienic practices when administering any medication (e.g., direct handling of oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray should be avoided.)
5. Destroy all medication left at the end of the school year which has not been picked up by the parent. The school nurse shall provide general direction to the designated personnel on the most appropriate way to destroy the medications. In every case, the oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray shall be:
 - a. Destroyed by one of the individuals authorized to administer oral medications.
 - b. Witnessed by another member of the building staff.
 - c. Documented on the Written Record for Dispensing ~~Oral~~ Medication form (Medication Form #4) which shall be maintained in the school office.

VI. Medication Error

- A. In the event a medication error should occur (e.g., an incorrect dosage or incorrect medication), the staff member who administered the medication shall immediately call the school nurse assigned to the building. They shall collaboratively decide what action shall be taken.
- B. Both the employee and the school nurse shall complete a Medication Incident Report (See Medication Form #9) documenting the error that occurred, the action taken by the school, the persons contacted, as well as recommendations to prevent such an error from occurring in the future. A copy of the report shall be kept in the building and a copy sent to the head school nurse.
- C. In every instance of medication error, the student's parents and the building administrator will be notified.

VII. Safekeeping of Prescribed Oral Medication, Topical Medication, Eye Drops, Ear Drops, or Nasal Spray

- A. Designated personnel shall assure safekeeping of prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray by:
 - 1. Keeping all medication in the original container.
 - 2. Storing the medication in an appropriately sized, secured, and locked cabinet located in the school office area.
 - 3. Keeping no more than one month supply of such medication at school at one time.
- B. Only designated personnel shall have access to the school's medicine storage cabinets.

VIII. Student Participation

- A. It is expected that students will cooperate with the district's designated personnel in administering prescribed oral medications, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray.
- B. Any student who repeatedly fails to cooperate will be subject to discontinuation of medication at school.

IX. Discontinuance of Medication

- A. All physician/dentist authorizations will automatically expire at the end of the school year and are subject to renewal in the succeeding year.
- B. The district is not required by RCW 23A.210.260 to administer oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray to students. If for any reason the building principal, school nurse, or staff with the responsibility for administration of medications believe that the school should discontinue administration of medication to a student, they shall:
 - 1. Convene a meeting which shall, at a minimum, include the building principal, school nurse, and staff member with the responsibility for administration of medications.
 - 2. Present the reason for their concern and what action(s) they have taken in response to the concern.
 - 3. Decide what action, if any, will be taken.
- C. If it is the committee's decision that the district should exercise its discretion and discontinue the administration of medication, the committee shall:

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1. Document their decision using a district Discontinuance of Administration of Medications at School form.
2. Notify the parent of the committee's decision in writing, assuring that the notification is in advance of the date of discontinuance.
3. Keep a copy of the form in the student's medical file. (See Medication Form #11).

X. Field Trips

- A. As a general rule, the district will not administer prescribed oral medications, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray during field trips. In those instances where medication **must** be administered, the parent shall make prior arrangements with the school at least 24 hours in advance of each field trip to assure that district procedures can be followed. Specifically, the following must be assured:
 1. Availability of designated personnel.
 2. Proper security and storage for medication.
 3. A copy of the physician/dentist directions.
 4. An appropriately labeled container.
 5. The appropriate dosage.
- B. In the event that prescribed oral medication, topical medication, eye drops, ear drops, or nasal spray are administered on a field trip, the designated personnel who administers the medication shall be responsible for completing a Documentation of Medication in a Specific Situation form for each medication. The form shall be attached to the student's permanent medication record at school. (See Medication Form #9.)

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