



5 things Michigan parents should know to ensure their child's health needs are safely managed at school.

Sometimes children have a health issue that requires their school to be involved in their care. Here are five things Michigan parents should know to make sure their child is safe and that the school is fully supporting their child's care.

- 1** Federal law requires schools to manage student health needs in such a way so that all students can receive a free and appropriate public education.
- 2** A partnership between parents, schools and physicians is the key to successfully managing your child's health needs. Working together maximizes children's safety, academic outcomes and opportunities to fully participate in their school experience.
- 3** Both the parent and physician signatures are required on any and all care that the physician prescribes.
- 4** Without written permission from the parent and physician, soap, water, ice, Band-Aids and comfort are the only things that school personnel can administer.
- 5** It is important to meet with your principal or other school administrator because he/she is responsible for **designating*** someone to handle students' health needs. **Here are some good questions to ask:**
 - **What does the school need from me, the parent?** For example, written documentation from the physician requesting that specific care be provided during the school day. This may or may not include medication.
 - **Can I see the district policy and/or guidelines for managing students' health needs?** A policy would cover such things as training, emergency procedures, storage of medications, documentation, errors in medication administration, student possession of medication and self-administration, privacy and confidentiality.
 - **Who has been designated to provide for students' health needs?** For example an administrator, teacher, or other school employee.
 - **Who is the delegating** registered nurse (RN) to provide training, supervision and evaluation of the designated personnel?**

Note: If the school district employs a professional School Nurse, the principal or other school administrator may refer you to the School Nurse to answer many of these questions.

* With regard to medication administration, Michigan Revised School Code (1976) protects school employees from liability if the employees are designated by a school administrator and other expectations are met.

** Michigan Public Health Code (1978) defines delegation as "authorization granted... to perform selected acts, tasks, or functions". Michigan Board of Nursing Administrative Rules stipulates that only a registered nurse may delegate nursing acts, functions, or tasks.

Source: Barb Flis, Founder of Parent Action for Healthy Kids and Terri Czerwinski, School Nurse, Public Awareness Co-chair of the Michigan School Nurse Task Force



Barb Flis, Founder of Parent Action for Healthy Kids, is an advocate for parents, and a published parenting and children's health expert. Her focus lies in connecting families, schools and communities for the purpose of promoting the well-being of children's social, emotional and physical health. Her "parent-to-parent" approach has garnered her much praise and national media attention. Visit www.ParentActionForHealthyKids.org for more information.