

Many children are able to attend school because of the effectiveness of medications in treating many chronic disabilities and long and short-term illnesses. If possible, all medications should be given at home. If medications must be given during school hours, they shall be administered in compliance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, New Mexico Nursing Practice Act, New Mexico School Health Manual Standards, and this Policy. This policy applies to both prescription and nonprescription (i.e., over-the-counter) medications. Medication shall be dispensed only according to this Policy, and the District shall not be liable for failure to properly dispense medication when the parent/guardian and/or student have not complied with this Policy. To insure maximum protection for all students – those who receive medications at school and those who do not – the following is required:

1. **Authorization Forms.** An authorization form to administer medications must be signed annually by a licensed health care practitioner with prescriptive rights and the parent/guardian. In addition, a new authorization form is required for each medication to be administered at school and each time changes occur in the medication or dosage, including the written request for discontinuation of medication by the parent/guardian. The Public Education Department licensed school nurse (“School Nurse”) shall review every authorization form for compliance with the form’s requirements.
2. **Method of Administering Medication.** It is essential that the School Nurse is involved in establishing the medication administration plan for each student who receives medication at school. Clear and explicit written communication between the prescribing health care practitioner, parent/guardian, and the School Nurse is essential for safe medication administration to occur in the school setting. In addition, the student shall be given written instructions from his/her prescribing health care practitioner regarding his/her own individual medication plan according to the student’s age and level of ability/understanding, and the School Nurse shall review these written instructions with the student and his/her parent/guardian. The following three options shall be considered by the Nurse Coordinator when developing procedures for obtaining signed authorization forms and administering medication at school:
 - A. **Administration of Medication by the School Nurse.** This Option, which requires the School Nurse to assist with or administer any and all medications, is the preferred option, except as provided under Options B and C, for the self-administration of medication by a student at school. If a student is either too young or incapable of administering his/her own medication, arrangements must be made with the School Nurse to administer the medication to the student.
 - B. **Supervised Self-Administration.** When the School Nurse cannot assist or administer a medication to a student who requires supervision when taking medication, an authorized person will give the proper container to the student and supervise the student’s self-administration of his/her medication at the specified time. The School Nurse shall review each plan of supervised self-administration of medication.
 - C. **Self-Administration.** A student may carry and self-administer in his/her discretion certain prescribed medications. In general, this provision applies only to, inhaled corticosteroids and auto-injectable epinephrine. However, the school nurse, in

cooperation with the student's prescribing health care practitioner and parent/guardian may authorize the self-administration of other medications when necessary. A student may carry and self-administer medication if the following conditions are met:

1. The student's health care practitioner has prescribed the medication for use by the student during school hours and has instructed the student in the correct and responsible use of the medication;
2. The student has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the medication and any device that is necessary to administer the medication to the student's health care practitioner and the school nurse or other school official who is a public education department licensed health care practitioner;
3. The school nurse, in cooperation with the health care practitioner, formulates a written treatment plan for managing the asthma or anaphylaxis episodes of the student and for medication use by the student during school hours; and
4. The parent/guardian has provided all required documentation to the school nurse, including, but not limited to, a signed Authorization to Administer Medication form and the health care practitioner's written instructions or treatment plan. At no time, however, students shall self-administer controlled substances, as the term is defined in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act.

The District (including its employees and agents) shall not incur any liability as a result of any injury arising from the student's transport and self-administration of medication and the parent/guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless the District (including its employees and agents) against any claim arising out of the student's transport and self-administration of medication.

3. **Field Trips.** If a student must receive medication while on a school-sponsored field trip, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the School Nurse and the student's teacher that the student will require medication during the field trip. The School Nurse should work with the student's teacher and parent/guardian to develop a plan for administering the medication.
4. **Nonprescription Medication.** Students may receive nonprescription medication, providing that the parent/guardian has submitted a signed authorization form for the administration of nonprescription medication and supplied the School Nurse with the medication in the manufacturer's original packaging. The Nurse Coordinator may develop procedures by which the School Nurse may administer nonprescription medication without a signed authorization if and only if (a) the School Nurse believes in his/her professional judgment that administering the nonprescription medication will alleviate the student's condition and (b) the School Nurse obtains telephonic permission from the parent/guardian prior to administering the medication. The telephonic permission must be witnessed by at least one other person, and all parties witness thereto must document that permission was given and sign the documentation form.

5. **Emergency Medications.** While schools are not expected to function as emergency care centers, there are students at high risk for life-threatening situations and for whom access to prescribed emergency medications may be life saving. The School Nurse shall develop an emergency medication plan to address the administration of emergency medications by the School Nurse or, in his/her absence, an authorized individual. The emergency medication plan shall be developed with consideration of the school's capability to administer emergency medication and the student's safety.

6. **Provision of Medication; Medication Storage.** The parent/guardian must provide medications to the School Nurse directly. A student is not permitted to transport prescription medications to school. For prescription medications, the parent/guardian must provide the School Nurse each medication in its own pharmacy-labeled container with the name of the medication, strength and current dosage, scheduled administration, name of the student and name of the prescribing health care practitioner. For non-prescription medications, the parent/guardian must provide the medication in the manufacturer's original packaging that contains the age/weight/dosage ratios and administering instructions. Medications shall be stored in a central location within a locked cabinet. The District is not responsible for loss or damage of medications due to theft. At the end of the school year, or at the time of a student's early withdrawal from school, the unused medication shall be returned to the parent/guardian or disposed of in accordance with the School Health Manual Procedures.

7. **Documentation and Record Keeping.** The School Nurse shall develop procedures pursuant to which the administration of medication shall be fully documented for each student who receives medication at school. Documentation shall be made in ink or electronically and signed by each person who administers or supervises the self-administration of medication. Procedures also shall be developed to address the documentation of medication errors, missed doses of medication, and the maintenance and administration of controlled substances, as the term is defined in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act. The medication log and accompanying documentation shall become a part of the student's permanent health record for the parent/guardian and health care practitioner, and shall be maintained in accordance with the confidentiality requirements of state and federal laws.