

Administration of Medications in Public Schools

All students who require that medication be given at school should have on file a "Health Care Action Plan." This is a document that identifies the student, the medication(s), the person(s) authorized to administer the medication, the schedule and time for the medication to be administered, the possible problems or side effects, and the procedures to be followed if the student shows signs of a reaction or other health problems.

Parents can greatly assist school personnel with the medication administration process by providing the following: a separate, properly labeled, i.e., labeled by the pharmacist, prescription bottle to be kept at school; written instructions from the physician regarding administration of the medication; written parent permission to administer the medication during school hours; and if the medication is being monitored or adjusted by a physician, the date of the student's next appointment.

Medication administration poses potential risk to the student and liability to the school district. Medication errors have occurred through pharmacy mislabeling, double dosing a student because of poor documentation, failure to administer medications, and administration of two separate medications too close in time, causing a drug interaction that endangered the student. Awareness of the procedures required for safe and legal administration of medications and adherence to those procedures can greatly reduce the risks for both students and schools.