
*Rescinds Policy Number: 6125**Issued: 12/06/2004, 11/21/2005*

Medication usage by students during school hours is discouraged and limited to those which are required to maintain and support the child's continued presence in school. Some medications may be required to maximize the child's classroom performance. Emergency medications may be administered in the event of an acute systemic allergic reaction, poisoning, or management of respiratory distress as specified in the procedure. Limited over-the-counter first aid medications may be administered as specified in the first aid medication procedure. All medications accepted by the school for administration must be evaluated by the school nurse and determined to meet procedure.

Parents/guardians may come to school and administer medications to their child. All medications administered by school personnel during school hours must be prescribed annually by a licensed health care provider. (G.S. 115C-307 & G.S. 115C-375.1) All medications administered by school personnel must have a written request/permission signed on an annual basis by the parent or guardian. (G.S. 115-375.1) Each medication shall have its own authorization documentation. Documents must be completed in a manner that ensures compliance with all information and signatures required to meet NC legal mandates. While the school nurse may help facilitate the process of obtaining documents, it is the parent/guardian's final responsibility to obtain and submit documents legally required for medication administration. Physician orders and parental/guardian consent shall be kept on file. Routine audits of medication records and subsequent reports will be performed by school nurses according to procedure.

Medications brought on school grounds shall be properly labeled and in approved containers. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to bring the medication in to the school and communicate any changes in the student's condition or medication with the school nurse. All new and re-filled medications shall be processed per approved procedure. All unused medication shall be removed from school when medications are discontinued or at the end of the school year.

All routine and emergency medications shall be administered and documented according to procedure. Routine medication administration shall occur in a manner that minimizes the student's loss of classroom time. Students shall have full access to educational programs supported by the school system, including school trips.

For medication administration to occur in a timely, safe, and consistent manner, several staff members at each school site will be trained by the school nurse. A variety of non-licensed personnel have been identified as capable of assisting students with their medications, such as teachers, school counselors, administrators, teacher assistants, school secretaries and paraprofessionals. School personnel administering medications shall receive support from site-administration so that this function can efficiently occur amongst the staff member's numerous other duties. Final determination of non-licensed personnel responsible for medication administration shall be made by the willing staff member (G.S. 115C-307), school nurse and principal. To ensure safe handling and administration of medications, all non-licensed persons administering medications shall successfully complete an approved medication training program.

School nurses are an essential part of safe medication administration. While nurses may delegate medication administration to non-licensed personnel, the nurse must maintain and exercise his/her legal duties. In the area of medication regimens, it is the responsibility of the school nurse to:

- ❖ Assess, record and report the student's physical and mental health, including their reaction to illness and treatment regimens.
- ❖ Plan, initiate, deliver, and evaluate appropriate nursing acts.
- ❖ Teach, assign, delegate to and supervise other personnel in implementing the treatment regimen. This includes providing ongoing technical assistance and oversight.
- ❖ Collaborate with other health care providers in determining the appropriate health care for the student, within legal scope of practice.
- ❖ Provide teaching and counseling to the student and family regarding their health and treatment regimen.

- ❖ Provide for the maintenance of safe and effective nursing care, whether rendered directly or indirectly. (NC Nurse Practice Act, July 2007)

The only responsibility or liability that can be assumed by the school system or its personnel for medication administration is to comply with the written instructions forwarded by the student's parents/guardians and physician. G.S. 115C-375.1 protects any public school employee, authorized by the board of education or its designee, in administering medications prescribed by a doctor upon written request of the parent/guardian or other first aid provided the individual is trained and acting in a safe and prudent manner.

As students mature, they are encouraged to learn about and take responsibility for their on-going health condition(s) and treatment regimen(s). Students are to be discouraged from self-medication during the school day except for those with asthma, allergies and chronic health conditions (i.e. diabetes). Students with ongoing health conditions whose parents/guardians, physicians, and school nurse assess that he/she has sufficient maturity and knowledge to use a medication in a safe and appropriate manner will be allowed to retain the medication in his/her possession. In turn, this student will be able to administer their own medication. Written consent by the parent/guardian, physician, and school nurse must be on file in the student's medical record. Assessment and consent of all overseeing adults must be given on an annual basis. Students must consistently demonstrate safe and prudent handling of this responsibility. The school nurse, in consultation with the principal, is the final judge of the student's compliance with these guidelines in the school. The only liability which the school can assume is to comply with the terms of this policy. The school can assume no liability for monitoring the self-administration, including the frequency and dose or failure to self-medicate when necessary. Families of students who self-medicate during the school day are held liable if another student erroneously takes the medication.

Medications on school grounds shall be handled, stored, and transported in a manner that is safe and appropriate. Staff shall comply with set standards on proper storage and handling. Routine and emergency medications shall be handled, stored, and transported in a manner that ensures availability both inside and outside the school building when the student is present during school hours. Continuity will occur when students move from one grade level to the next as well as to summer school programs. In the event of an unanticipated disaster or hardship event placed on the school and its occupants, every effort will be made to work with the community partners to ensure students and staff receive medically necessary medications.

Annually, the following information shall be shared with parents and students:

- ❖ Importance of not sharing personal medication with other students and possible consequences of infractions. (Student Code of Conduct; policy #4300)
- ❖ Medication policy and procedure

Legal References:

- ❖ G.S. 115C-307 Medical Care to Students; Duties of Teachers
- ❖ G.S. 115C-375.1 To Provide Some Medical Care to Students
- ❖ State of North Carolina Nursing Practice Act, July 2007
- ❖ OCS Policy #4300 Student Code of Conduct