

## Medication Administration Protocol for Field Trips

Medication given on field trips must be administered according to the same policies for administering medication in school. These include:

- 1) Verifying the required parental and physician authorizations.
- 2) Administering the medication according to physician authorizations.
- 3) Administering the medication from the original container or a correctly labeled container prepared in advance by the school nurse.

### Medication Preparation for Field Trips

- 1) At least one day prior to a field trip, the person who administers the medication should be made aware of the event so that arrangements can be made to meet the student's need for medication. A longer notice may be required if the school nurse is not in the school every day.
- 2) It is the responsibility of the appropriately trained school employee (e.g. school nurse, teacher, health assistant) to administer medication to students on field trips. That is, persons who are not employees (or contracted employees) who accompany students on field trips – such as parents and chaperones – should not administer medication to students, except where such persons administer medication to their own child.
- 3) Sharing information about the medical condition of children, without express written permission of their parents, with chaperones or other parents is a violation of student confidentiality. It may not be possible for the school division to know the professional background or qualifications of these chaperones for safely administering medications to students and they may not have received state-mandated training. In this situation, both the school division and the chaperone administering medications could be held liable for any harmful effects occurring as a result.
- 4) Children cannot be excluded from a field trip because of a disability or a medical need. Parents may be requested to attend the field trip to assist with student needs, but if unavailable, the school division must provide health care services at the same level the student required while in the school building.
- 5) It is generally not advisable to send an entire bottle of prescription medication on a field trip when only one day's dose will be administered. All medications must be kept secure throughout the field trip. Controlled substances such as Ritalin may require special handling because of their potential value as street drugs.
- 6) In Virginia, only licensed medical professionals, such as registered and licensed practical nurses, may repackage medications for a one-day field trip. Any packaging used in such advance preparation shall include the student's name and any other appropriate student identifier; physician's name; drug name and strength and quantity; and appropriate directions for administration. For any field trip which is longer than one day in length, a student's prescription should be provided by the student's parent or guardian in a properly labeled prescription vial which has been dispensed from a pharmacy and, for oral medications, which contains only the quantity needed for the duration of the field trip.

