

**2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR
HEALTH SERVICES INFORMATION**

LYNNE P. MEADOWS, MSN, BSN, RN, FNASN
DIRECTOR, DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICES
6201 Powers Ferry Road, NW
Atlanta, GA 30339
Phone: 470-254-2177 / Fax: 470-254-2172

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian:

As we welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year, Fulton County School System's Department of District Health Services has developed this letter to help families prepare their child(ren) for a safe and healthy school year. In collaboration with each school, District Health Services works to ensure students stay healthy, safe, and are ready to learn. Our licensed Registered School Nurses and Clinic Assistants work together as a team to manage health services at each school and serve as the key resource for all health-related matters. This letter will explain some of our health services policies, procedures, and guidelines. To be successful, we need your assistance and cooperation in preparing for the possibility that your child may become ill, sustain an injury during school, need assistance with a medical condition/illness or procedure, or require medication administration. Working together is critical so that we may provide the best care for your student(s).

EMERGENCY INFORMATION / HEALTH CONDITIONS / CHRONIC ILLNESSES / HEALTHCARE PLANS

Emergency contact and health information should be updated at the beginning of every school year by the parent or legal guardian, (or upon new enrollment in a Fulton County School) and if any information changes during the school year. Please list your best contact information (cell phone) and include relatives/friends as emergency contacts for your child in the event you cannot be contacted. Updated health information enables the school to contact you in case of an emergency, accident, or illness. **It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to keep the student's health and contact information (telephone numbers, address, care plans, etc.) updated.** The school should be notified if a child has a medical condition or chronic illness, or if a child requires assistance for any medical procedure or treatment. Healthcare Plans and the appropriate district Authorization Medication Forms (SHS-1 / SHS-2) are required for chronic illnesses and other conditions that necessitate care at school (i.e., diabetes, asthma, severe allergies, seizure disorder, etc.). The school should also be informed if a child takes daily medications, has a severe allergy, or if the child has a disability that requires a special diet. **For special diet requests, please contact School Nutrition at 470-254-8960.** In addition, **if your child rides the bus and carries any emergency medications (e.g., inhaler, epinephrine, Diastat, etc.) or has any serious health conditions that the bus driver should be aware of (i.e., diabetes, seizure disorder, asthma, allergies), please notify Transportation Services.** You can contact North Transportation Services at 470-254-2970, and South Transportation Services at 470-254-6060.

Please note, parents/guardians should give all medications and/or medical supplies directly to school personnel, not to the bus driver. In exceptional cases, and only due to extenuating circumstances will the driver be given permission to deliver medication or medical supplies to designated school personnel. The parent must contact the school and Transportation to arrange transport and must comply with all guidelines of District Health Services and Transportation Services.

STUDENT ILLNESS / INJURY

We will continue to take extra precautions to keep students and staff safe. We will maintain clinic guidelines and protocols to manage the care of students who present with flu-like illnesses and COVID-19 symptoms (which are similar). **Students who have these symptoms, who are ill, have a fever of 100.4°F or greater, have chronic diarrhea or vomiting, and/or may have a contagious illness (potential or actual) MUST NOT be sent to school and will not be permitted to remain in school.** To return to school, a student should be well (have improved symptoms) and they must be free of fever for more than 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin), diarrhea and vomiting. In some cases (i.e., contagious illnesses, respiratory illnesses, chronic diarrhea, or recurrent fever), students may be asked to obtain clearance from a healthcare provider before returning to school and a note must be provided. **When a student becomes ill at school, has a fever, or a potentially contagious/communicable illness the parent/legal guardian will be notified to pick up their child immediately. The parent/legal guardian MUST ARRANGE for the student to be taken home.** Again, a note from a healthcare provider may be requested by the school before your child can return to school. We are also implementing the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in our clinics for students who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.

In case of a serious accident, illness, or emergency at school, your child will be transported by ambulance to an emergency medical facility if deemed necessary by EMS. The parent/legal guardian is responsible for all expenses regarding such transportation.

MEDICATIONS

When possible, medication should be taken at home, including all non-essential medications such as vitamins, herbals, essential oils, and prescribed pain medications. However, if medication must be taken at school, on a field trip, or during a "before or after" school-chaperoned activity, parents must provide all medications (prescribed and over the counter) and the following policies and procedures apply (Note: Fulton County Schools reserves the right to decline administration of nonessential medications). Medications must be listed individually on the appropriate required district Authorization Form, and it is the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to send the appropriate form to the school.

1. **Authorization for Medication Form** – *The parent/legal guardian must complete an authorization and instruction form titled "AUTHORIZATION TO GIVE MEDICATION AT SCHOOL SHS-1 Form."* For all prescription medications, a healthcare provider must also sign the form. A faxed copy of the form from your doctor's office that also contains the parent/legal guardian's signature is acceptable. For your convenience, all schools have copies of the form on-site, or you can access the Student Health Services website. **The school cannot give medications without the authorization form. The same form is used for prescription and non-prescription medications.** Medication Authorization Forms are only valid for **one/current school year.** A separate form MUST be used for each medication.
2. The medication and the authorization form must be taken to the school clinic/office by the parent/legal guardian. However, if this is not possible, the student should be instructed to take the medication and the authorization form directly to the school office/clinic upon arrival at school. **Please instruct your child that under no circumstances should medication be shown to or shared with another student.**

It is essential for the parent/legal guardian to bring controlled substance medications to the school personally. Medications that are considered controlled substances by the State of Georgia (which includes medications for ADD/ADHD, prescribed pain medications, and psychotropic medications) must be appropriately stored in the school clinic.

NOTE: In High Schools, the Authorization for Medication Form must also be used when supervision, storage, or administration by the school is required. We encourage all medications to be kept in the clinic unless it is an approved emergency medication or over-the-counter medication, and the student has permission to carry the medication on his/her person during school hours (See paragraph below on “Authorization for Students to Carry Approved Emergency Medication or Other Approved Medication”).

3. Only medication in its **ORIGINAL** container from the store or pharmacy is accepted. Non-prescription medications in small-sized containers are preferred due to limited storage space. Both prescription and non-prescription medications sent to the school must have current labeling on the container. Medication in containers that have expired labeling **will not** be given to the student. **The medication in the container must MATCH the label. The label must MATCH the student and the instructions on the authorization form. The prescription label on the container must be CURRENT.** A new prescription container with correct labeling is required for any dosage change. **The school cannot alter dosages without a new authorization form from you and/or your doctor/healthcare provider.** At the designated time, the student will go to the clinic to take the medication. Assistance/supervision by the school clinic personnel will be given in accordance with the instructions on the authorization form. **Medication is a parental responsibility. Fulton County School System employees will not assume any liability for supervising or administering medication. Fulton County School System retains the privilege of refusing to supervise/assist in administering medication, except where otherwise required by law.**
4. Discontinued medication should be retrieved from the school office/clinic within one week after the medication is discontinued and any unused medication should be picked up by the end of the school year. Any discontinued, unused, or expired medication left in the clinic at the end of the school year will be discarded.

AUTHORIZATION FOR STUDENTS TO CARRY A PRESCRIPTION INHALER, EPIPEN, INSULIN, OR OTHER APPROVED MEDICATION SHS-2 FORM

If you have a child who has asthma, a severe allergy, or another health-related condition that requires self-administration of medication, or who needs to carry an emergency medication (epinephrine, Diastat, inhaler, Glucagon, etc.), or if a student has an approved legitimate reason to carry medication on his/her person, you must complete and submit to the school clinic an **Authorization for Students to Carry a Prescription Inhaler, Epinephrine, Insulin, or Other Approved Medication SHS-2 Form.** Fulton County School System retains the privilege of refusing certain medications to be carried, except where otherwise required by law. You may obtain a form from your child’s school. This form requires a physician, parent/legal guardian, and student signature if the medication is a *prescription* medication. Parents are **strongly encouraged** to keep a “backup” supply of any emergency medications such as an inhaler, epinephrine, Diastat, diabetes medication, etc. in the school clinic. For further instructions, please call or visit your school clinic. **Over-the-counter (OTC) medications have different requirements. Elementary school students** must store all OTC medications in the clinic and will only be administered with parental permission (SHS-1 Form); **Middle school students** may carry *Fulton County Schools approved medications* with them during the school day, on field trips, or during other school-related activities if parental permission is provided in advance on the district approved form (SHS-2 Form). **High school students** may carry *Fulton County Schools approved medications* with them during the school day, on field trips, or other school-related activities and **no form is necessary.** *Fulton County Schools approved medications include acetaminophen, antacids, aspirin, cough or throat lozenges, ibuprofen, Midol, and oral antihistamines (Please note – these medications also need to be in the original container and not expired).*

IMMUNIZATIONS

For enrollment in Fulton County Schools, all certificates of immunization must be marked “**Complete for Attendance**” or have a future expiration date. Expired certificates are unacceptable. **Effective July 1, 2021**, all students entering or transferring into the 11th grade will need proof of a meningococcal booster (MCV4), unless their first dose was received on or after their 16th birthday. We encourage you to not wait to have your student vaccinated. Georgia law allows for only two types of exemptions from immunization requirements: medical and religious. Every child must have one of the following items on file: either a valid Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) or a signed, notarized Department of Public Health Form 2208 – Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization. Please contact your healthcare provider or local health department if you have questions. A detailed description of the immunization schedule, policies, and changes can be found at <http://dph.georgia.gov/immunization-section> and also found on the Fulton County Schools website at www.fultonschools.org. **The parent/legal guardian is responsible for securing and maintaining a copy of the mandated Georgia Public Health 3231 Immunization Form, and the Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutritional Screening Form 3300. Students who are not compliant with Georgia’s immunization requirements will be excluded from school until the appropriate updated certificate/form is submitted as specified by law.**

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of an emergency, we want to ensure we are prepared to appropriately care for your child if we need to “*shelter-in-place*” or stay at school for an extended period of time. This is a precaution for keeping our students and staff safe during an emergency. If your child requires any medication, especially emergency medications, whether they are scheduled to take it during school hours or not, or if your child requires a special medical procedure, please alert the school clinic so we can plan accordingly. We certainly want to make sure we have an adequate supply of any ***emergency and/or required daily medication(s)*** that your child may need if they must *shelter-in-place*. Should the decision be made to shelter-in-place, information will be provided to you from your child’s school as well as the district and local authorities. It is important for you to follow instructions from the school district and local authorities so you will know what to do if we are advised to shelter-in-place. Feel free to visit Ready.gov for more information about emergency preparedness.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Student Accident Insurance can be purchased through K & K Insurance Group, Inc. The insurance provides protection against medical expenses resulting from accidental injury to all students during school, school-sponsored events, and for athletic participants. For those who have other insurance, this program will help you pay your deductibles and co-insurance. For those who have no other insurance, this coverage will provide needed benefits at a reasonable cost. For more information, contact the Risk Management Department at 470-254-20422, or K & K Insurance Group, Inc at 855-742-3135.

If you need this document/information in a different language, please send an email to districtlanguageassistance@fultonschools.org or call (470) 254-6827.

By working together, we can ensure the health and well-being of every student so that he/she benefits from the learning environment. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your Cluster School Nurse, Special Education Nurse, Clinic Assistant or call the Office of District Health Services at 470-254-2177. **Thank you.**