

General Information

Introduction

A student's mental and physical health can impact their ability to participate fully in school. Administrators and school health personnel should have current and complete information on each student's health status, along with any specific conditions which may interfere with the students ability to attend school and/or attend to instruction. It is particularly important for schools to have this information prior to school entrance for students with medical concerns, fragile medical conditions, or social-emotional issues that require routine or emergent care by school personnel.

Ideally, the student's primary health care provider (a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) should perform the health examination (aka physical examination). Knowledge of the student's family and home, previous illnesses and medical history, immunization status and other background factors assist in evaluating the total health status of the student. The primary health care provider is also in a position to institute any necessary therapeutic measures without delay.

Since this is not always feasible the district's director of school health services (commonly referred to as the district medical director) who is a physician or nurse practitioner is to perform a health examination on students who have not provided the school with a copy of the health examination (Education Law Article 19 section 904).

Legislative Background

Education Law Article 19 and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require physical examinations of public school students:

- Entering the school district for the first time, and in grades Pre-K or K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 and at any grade level by school administration, in their discretion to promote the educational interests of the student (8 NYCRR § 136.3[b]);
- to participate in strenuous physical activity, such as interscholastic athletics (8 NYCRR § 135.4(c)(7)(i)(e) and 136.3(a)(8));
- upon student's request for an employment certificate (Education Law §3217); and
- when conducting an initial evaluation or reevaluation of a student suspected of having a disability or a student with a disability (8 NYCRR § 200.4 [b]).

A health examination performed by a private health care provider is referred to as a health certificate in law and regulation. A health examination performed by the school medical director is a health appraisal. Each certificate or appraisal must be signed by a duly licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner, who is authorized by