

## Massachusetts State Mandated Screenings to begin in October

Beginning in October the nurses of Gateway will begin doing health screenings. These screenings are not diagnostic, but serve to identify students who may need further medical evaluation. We will only contact parents with results if they are outside of normal limits and need follow up for further evaluation. If you would prefer to have your child screened by their primary care provider please contact your school nurse to make arrangements to gather required documentation.



**Massachusetts Mandated School-Based Screenings Reference Tool**  
**Vision, Hearing, Height/Weight/BMI, Postural, and Substance Use**

	Vision			Hearing	Ht, Wt, BMI		Postural	SBIRT
	Distance Visual Acuity	Near Visual Acuity	Stereopsis	Pure Tones	Stadiometer & Scales			
	Monocular R and L	Binocular	Binocular					
PreK	✓*	✓*						
KG	✓*	✓*	✓*	✓	KG			
1st	✓	✓	✓	✓	1st	✓		
2nd	✓	✓	✓	✓	2nd			
3rd	✓	✓	✓	✓	3rd			
4th	✓				4th	✓		
5th	✓				5th		5th	✓
6th	✓			✓	6th		6th	✓
7th	Once in grades 6, 7, or 8			Once in grades 6, 7, or 8	7th	✓	7th	✓
8th					8th		8th	✓
9th	✓			✓	9th		9th	✓
10th	Once in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12			Once in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12	10th	✓	10th	
11th					11th		11th	
12th					12th		12th	

Note: For schools with ungraded classes, MDPH regulations 105 CMR 200:400 and 200:400 indicate specific age ranges for vision, hearing, and ht/wt/BMI screenings.

\*Note: When instrument-based screening is preformed (3-5 year olds) distance visual acuity and stereopsis can be omitted, HOWEVER near visual acuity screening must be performed.

\*\* Note: Districts typically choose grades based on a community needs assessment or youth risk behavior data. The recommended grade levels are grades 7 and 9. SBIRT screenings shall occur at 2 different grade levels as recommended by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education in conjunction with the Dept. of Public Health.

**Resources:**

MDPH School Health Unit: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/primarycare-healthaccess/school-health/school-health-screening.html>  
 BU SHIELD Resources: <https://cme.bu.edu/shield.bu.edu/health-screenings>

April 2022 SAT

## **Postural Screening**

In preparation for scoliosis screening, it is suggested to watch the video below with your child about scoliosis and the screening process.



[Catch the Curve Scoliosis Education Video](#)

Postural screening is not diagnostic, but a program to identify students who should have further medical evaluation. In Massachusetts, postural screenings are performed in school for children in grades 5 through 9 because this is a time of rapid growth and the most likely time period in which children can develop problems of the spine or scoliosis. For a proper and more accurate visualization during postural screening, female students are encouraged to bring a two-piece bathing suit or halter-top to school. This type of clothing permits a more accurate observation of the child's back. Please be assured that privacy will be maintained at all times. Parents will be contacted with results only if there is a need to follow up with a physician or licensed practitioner for further evaluation.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to opt out of this screening, please contact your school nurse.

## **Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening**

BMI is a measure that is used to show a person's weight for height for age. It is calculated using an individual's height and weight. Just like a blood pressure reading or an eye screening test, BMI can be a useful tool in identifying possible health risks, but it does not provide a diagnosis. Massachusetts schools have taken students' heights and weights each year since the 1950s. According to the state's new BMI screening regulations (approved in 2013), schools must now collect the heights and weights of students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. BMI data collected for all children in these grades will be gathered and reported to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as a combined number. No individual student's BMI results will be shared with anyone other than you. The school nurse will supervise your child's screening and will make sure your child's privacy is respected at all times. Your child's height, weight, and BMI measurements are strictly confidential – results will be kept in your child's school health record and will not be shared with anyone without your written permission.

## **The Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)**

The SBIRT program screening process will be incorporated into our annual state mandates screenings; and be done once in middle school and once in high school. All screenings will be conducted by our school nurses confidentially in private one-on-one sessions. We will utilize the CRAFFT-N screening tool, the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts. This year SBIRT will be done with grades 7 & 11.

Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener. The screener will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances, or who is at risk for future substance use. If needed, we will refer students to our counseling staff for further evaluation. This program focuses on harm prevention and does not generate disciplinary action. Results of the screening will not be included in your student's school record. As with any school screening, you have the right to

opt your child out of this screening. Please contact the Health Office at (413) 685-1240 if you have any questions about this program or if you wish to opt out. Additionally, screening is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions. We encourage all parents/guardians to talk with their child about substance use. Together, schools and parent/guardians CAN make a difference for our youth.

**Resources**

“7 Ways to Protect Your Teen From Alcohol and Other Drugs”

<http://files.hria.org/files/SA1011.pdf>

Underage Drinking Prevention Parent Resources from SAMHSA

<http://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/parent-resources>

Marijuana Talk Kit

<https://drugfree.org/marijuana-talk-kit/>