MEDICATION AT SCHOOL
Controlled Substance Responsibilities

The goal of administration of medication during school hours is to assist students in being healthy, safe, and ready to learn. *This procedure refers to medications that are narcotics ("scheduled drugs"), also referred to as controlled substances.* Medications that are controlled substances require more attention to security measures for the health, safety, and well-being of students, parents, and employees. School nurses must adhere to the Alabama Nurse Practice Act / Administrative Code and the most updated copy of the Alabama State Department of Education / Alabama Board of Nursing *Medication Curriculum*.

- Maintain controlled substances in an appropriate double locked secure location:
  - Inside a storage space used exclusively for medications.
  - Keep locked except when opened to obtain medications.
  - Refrigerators should not be used for food storage and marked "medication only."
  - Document the receipt, number, and return of controlled substances.
- The parent/guardian or parent-designated responsible adult should deliver all controlled substances to the school nurse. Students may not deliver controlled substances to the school.
- The school nurse, along with the parent/guardian or parent-designated responsible adult, should count medication upon delivery and document the number or amount delivered to the school.
- The school nurse is required to train unlicensed medication assistants (UMAs) who are responsible for controlled substance administration on all policies, guidelines, laws, and expectations regarding safe delivery of controlled substance medications. This includes, but is not limited to record-keeping, handling and disposing, storage of medications, communication, student identification, and counting and reconciliation.
- Medication count discrepancies should be reconciled immediately.
  - If unable to reconcile, the RN Regional Team Leader should be notified immediately.
  - If the RN Regional Team Leader is unable to reconcile, the Coordinator should be notified.
- School nurses should complete a weekly controlled substance report with a witness.
  - Witnesses should be RN, LPN, or UMA.
  - One (1) week per month, it is recommended that the weekly controlled substance report be completed with the RN Regional Team Leader as witness, as regional staffing allows.
  - Effort should be made by the school nurse to complete the weekly controlled substance report on the same day every week, however, in the event of school closure and/or emergency circumstance(s) necessitating prioritization of patient (student) care, the school nurse should complete the weekly controlled substance report on the next school day, or on the next school day that it is appropriate and safe to do so.
  - Failure by the school nurse to complete a weekly controlled substance report may result in drug screening and/or disciplinary action.
  - Weekly controlled substance counts include emergency medications that are self-carry, such as controlled seizure medications (see ALSDE Safe Schools Seizure Curriculum).
  - While it is recommended that a controlled substance inventory be completed whenever there is a staffing change that involves access to controlled substances – such as when a substitute nurse covers the Health Room, has access to controlled substances, and again when the regular Health Room nurse returns – this process may not always be feasible due to staffing limitations or the availability of a witness.
  - Weekly controlled substance inventory should always take place, regardless of staffing and/or other limitations. If the school nurse has difficulty completing the count that week and/or securing a witness, then the Team Leader should be notified as soon as possible.
- An Unusual Occurrence Report (UOR) should be completed for controlled substance count discrepancies that are unable to be reconciled.
  - School nurses with multiple medication errors, including documentation, and/or narcotic count discrepancies, may be subject to drug screening and/or disciplinary action.
  - The UOR should be filed in the student's health record (blue folder) and at the Health Services Coordinator's office for quality assurance purposes.

Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN). Administrative Code. https://admincode.legislature.state.al.us/administrative-code/610
Alabama State Department of Education. (2019). *Medication Curriculum*: Curriculum to Teach Unlicensed School

Personnel how to Assist with Medication in the School Setting. https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Final-Amended-Medication-Curriculum-2018.pdf