

# **CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS *HEALTH SERVICES***

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## **SCHOOL DISMISSAL FOR ILLNESS PROTOCOL**

The promotion of health and preventing illness and/or disease in the school setting is foundational to academic success (Satcher & Bradford, 2003). A focus on health promotion and illness prevention at school has a ripple effect on the health and wellness of the entire school community served by the school nurse.

The school nurse performs individualized assessments of all students, and works collaboratively with the multidisciplinary team (school staff, parents, students, and health care providers) to ensure that the school setting is a safe and healthy environment where all can effectively perform their jobs, whether as an available learner or committed teacher.

The school nurse possesses the knowledge and skills to conduct a reliable assessment of individual student health as well assist in the identification of health risks of the school community. After assessment of health risk data (for students, school staff, and/or the broader school community), the school nurse can then determine which strategies are most appropriate for each specific issue of concern. As a provider of reputable health-related information, the school nurse can identify early and effective interventions, along with care management and referral. He/she routinely collaborates with the multidisciplinary team to address the individual health-related issues as well as health risk implications, and therefore the learning implications facing the student(s) and the educational environment. As such, the school nurse is an essential member of the school's multidisciplinary team in advocating for the student's health needs in relation to the entire school community.

In accordance with the recommendations of the National Association of School Nurses, the Canton Public School District adopts the following guidelines for the management of illness in the school setting:

## **HEALTH GUIDELINES**

Because of the physical limitations and ages of some of our children, increased susceptibility to infection is a very real concern. We work in such close contact and share common work and play equipment, so spread of infection or illness from one individual to another is common. Although we do make a sincere effort to regularly disinfect commonly used objects; the best protection from illness is to keep your child home when symptoms of illness are present. When you call the absentee line of your school, please specify the nature of the illness. Here are some guidelines to follow:

### **Keep your child home if he/she:**

- Has evidence of a newly developed cold (runny, stuffy nose, coughing, sneezing). The greatest period of contagion is the first 2-3 days after onset of symptoms.
- Has the flu or flu symptoms.
- Has an elevated temperature, over 100° (degrees) within the past 24 hours.
- Has a suspicious rash.
- Has a sore or discharging eye(s) or ear(s).
- Has had an upset stomach, vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Has a contagious disease (i.e. strep throat, tonsillitis, bronchitis, conjunctivitis, etc.) until he/she has been on medication **at least 24 - 48 hours from the first dose**.

**If your child should develop any of these or other symptoms hindering the child's availability to learn during school hours, the school nurse will notify you and the child will be dismissed. Please keep your emergency contacts updated as they will be notified for a dismissal if you are not available. *The child is expected to be picked up in a timely manner to reduce the spread of illness to other students and/or staff.***

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE GUIDELINES**

If your child has a communicable disease, please notify your child's teacher and school nurse. Before returning to school, your child will need to be checked by the school nurse **or** have a certificate from your doctor (contact the school nurse to see which is applicable).

<b><u>Disease</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Minimum Absence From School</u></b>
Chicken Pox	7 days from appearance of first eruption, lesions crusted and fever free
Streptococcal Infections (i.e. strep. throat, scarlet fever)	24 - 48 hours after first dose of medicine and no fever of 100° (degrees) for past 24 hours
Pneumonia	Doctor's certificate for re-entry
Impetigo	24 hours after medical treatment has begun - lesions must be covered in school
Ringworm	Note from doctor that treatment has begun and child may return to school
Scabies	Note from doctor that child had been treated and may return to school
Conjunctivitis	24 hours after medication begun, no drainage
Pinworm	24 - 48 hours after treatment has begun.
Head Lice	Child has been treated with pediculicide and must be checked by school nurse to re-enter

It is the position of the Canton Public School District that variations in the medical, behavioral or emotional health of a student should not disrupt the educational process or the health and well-being of other students, school staff, and/or the broader school community.

### **PROCEDURE**

1. At the beginning of each school year, parents will receive information stating the Dismissal from School Guidelines.
2. Parents/guardians are required to maintain updated contact information with the School Office of *reliable* contact information in the event that the school needs to notify them for any reason or, in this case, a health concern.
3. Parents/guardians are required to notify all emergency contacts listed and verify their availability to serve as the responsible adult for contact in the event the parent/guardian is not available.
4. The Canton Public School system advises that the parent/guardian arranges a “back-up” plan for care of an ill child who must be absent from school, or dismissed.
5. The goal of the multidisciplinary team is to support the academic success of all students in a safe and productive learning environment, which includes the appropriate management of health conditions.
6. With the Health Guidelines in mind, it is important to note that although some illnesses do not require exclusion, sometimes illness requires a child or staff member to be excluded from the school learning environment to prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff. This inherently allows the student or staff time to rest, recover and be appropriately treated for the illness.
7. Some conditions may result in a student being unavailable for learning. In this case the teacher and school nurse will make the collaborative assessment that such a condition is preventing the child from productively or comfortably participating in classroom activities.
8. There are times in which a student may require more care than the nursing or educational staff can provide, which potentially results in compromising care of other children. Again, the teacher and school nurse will make the collaborative assessment that such a condition is preventing the child from productively or comfortably participating in activities.
9. Upon completion of the comprehensive and collaborative individual health and health-risk assessment, the school nurse will contact the primary, secondary or, if necessary, emergency contacts that have been issued to the School Office. This conversation will include the health assessment, intervention(s) and advised disposition of the student.
10. If the school nurse advises dismissal the parent/guardian, or their designee, are required to make appropriate arrangements for prompt dismissal so that the health and well-being of others within the school community are not compromised.

11. If the parent is unable or unwilling to pick up the student and alternative arrangements can not be arranged, the Principal or the Nurse Leader will contact the parent/guardian for administrative advisement to reinforce and support the assessment of the professional staff.
12. The specified administrator will inform the parent/guardian that non-adherence to the Health Guidelines and School Dismissal Guidelines will result in a report filed to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). DCF will make the determination of the referral outcome.

**References:**

MDPH: The Comprehensive School Health Manual (2007)  
National Association of School Nurses Position Statements  
Satcher, D., & Bradford, M. (2003). Healthy schools, healthy kids. *American School Board Journal*, 190(3), 22-25.  
American Academy of Pediatrics (2005) *Managing Infectious Disease in Child Care and Schools, a Quick Reference Guide.*

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