

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if my child needs medication in school?

A: Whenever possible, administer medications at home. If your child needs to take medication during school hours, please have your medical provider complete the appropriate forms (Medication and Treatment Authorization Form, Asthma Action Plan, Action Plan for Anaphylaxis) available on the DCPS website or from your school nurse. Submit the completed forms to the school nurse. Please contact your principal or school nurse if you have any questions.

Q: How will the school help manage my child's asthma and/or allergies?

A: Please let your school nurse know if your child has asthma or other allergies. If your child needs access to asthma and allergy medications during school, please make sure a current Asthma Action Plan or Anaphylaxis Action Plan is on file (see question above). Your child may self-administer asthma and anaphylaxis medications with your medical provider's approval.

Q: Who do I speak with about my child's dietary accommodations?

A: We will make dietary accommodations for students with food allergies, philosophical or religious beliefs or other documented special needs. Parents and guardians will need to submit a Students with Special Dietary Needs form signed by a licensed medical provider. Please contact your principal or nurse for copies of this form.

Q: Who do I contact if my child requires additional accommodations?

A: We are committed to creating caring and supportive learning environments for all students. Under provisions outlined by federal law (known as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973), DCPS must protect students with disabilities from discrimination in services, programs and activities. If you know or suspect that your child has a disability which significantly impacts a major life activity and may need 504 accommodations, please contact your child's teacher or your school's 504 Coordinator. You also can call the District's Director of Targeted Student Support at 202-299-2005 with any questions or concerns you may have.

Free Medical Care

The DC Healthy Families program provides free coverage for working families who: live in DC, do not have health insurance, and meet program income eligibility requirements. For information on how to apply for DC Healthy Families, call 1-888-557-1116.



Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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DCPS School Health Guide for Families

We want to make sure your child is healthy and safe so they can achieve at the highest levels at school. DCPS's Office of Youth Engagement coordinates with the DC Department of Health (DOH), schools and communities to provide various health services and programs that support the physical and emotional health of our students. This guide provides an overview of these programs and services.



KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY

Our schools are vital places where school staff, parents, and the community can come together to keep our students healthy and where our students can learn how to make healthy choices for themselves and others.

School Nurses

School nurses promote a healthy school environment and provide for the physical and emotional safety of the school community. School nurses are trained to assist students with asthma or other allergies. Each DCPS school has full-time nursing coverage from 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m., Mondays — Fridays, per semester, and during the summer if DCPS summer school is in operation at the school site.

Immunizations

Unless you obtain a medical or religious exemption, DC law requires your child to receive immunizations against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, mumps, measles, rubella, polio, Haemophilus influenza type (Hib), Hepatitis B, and Varicella in order to attend school. Your child may require additional grade/age specific immunizations. Information about immunizations and enrollment requirements are available on the DCPS website.

Health and Physical Education (PE)

We offer health and PE instruction and classes that encourage students to make healthy decisions, develop a healthy lifestyle, and engage in health-related fitness activities. We offer HIV/AIDS and substance use education and prevention through its middle and high schools health curriculum. In situations where your child requires adaptations and modifications, please contact the school's Health and PE staff.

Mental Health Support

School mental health and social services in DCPS are provided in schools by school social workers, school psychologists, and school counselors, and itinerant social workers and psychologists. Additionally, our partner agencies, including the Department of Mental Health, have implemented evidence-based programs that target specific issues such as school culture and climate, substance use, self confidence, and mental health. For more information, speak with your school's mental health team.

School-Based Health Centers

School-based health centers bring the services of a doctor's office to schools so students can prevent health-related absences. The centers are open during school hours and staffed with health professionals. DCPS currently has two centers, at Eastern Senior High School and Woodson Senior High School. Three additional centers will open in Fall 2010 at Anacostia, Ballou, and Coolidge Senior High schools. A community health center also operates at Marie Reed Community Learning Center.

**Additional school health
information and forms are
available at
www.dcps.dc.gov**

**DCPS Core Value #4
We believe that our schools
must be caring and
supportive environments.**

Programs for High School Students

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Pregnant and parenting students have the right to remain in their school and participate in all school programs. Our New Heights Teen Parent Program provides pregnant and parenting students in Cardozo and Anacostia Senior High schools with the assistance, support and guidance they need to handle the responsibilities of raising a child and graduating from high school. Up until their 20th birthday, New Heights participants may be eligible for educational, employment, housing, support services and information about community resources.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Screenings

We partner with DOH to offer free screenings for STIs in every DCPS senior high school. DOH administers the STIs screenings in ways that ensure student participation is voluntary and confidential. Students and parents can choose not to participate in the screenings. Students are notified of positive test results and offered the opportunity to receive treatments and counseling.

Condom Availability Program

We have adopted DOH's Wrap MC Condom program in all high schools, where trained school staff provide condoms to students as part of a comprehensive health education program for students in grades 9 — 12. Condoms are also available through the school nurse.