

# General Health Appraisal

## A. Regulations

### **OAR 581-022-0705 Health Services (excerpted)**

- (1) The school district shall maintain a prevention-oriented health services program for all students which provides:
  - (c) Health screening information, including required immunizations and tuberculosis certificates, when required by ORS 433.260 and 431.110 and OAR 333-019-0405; ... and ...
  - (f) Vision and hearing screening;

### **ORS 336.390-400 Dental Health Program (excerpted) 336.390 Dental Health Program; District Duties; Charges; Parental Consent**

- (1) A district school board may conduct a dental health program.
- (2) A district school board that conducts a dental health program may furnish necessary instruments and equipment and provide suitable quarters in which either dental examination or treatment may be made.
- (3) The dental examination and treatment shall be scientific, sanitary, and efficient, and may be furnished by the district school board free of expense to the minor pupils whose parents or guardians are unable to pay therefore and to the pupils who have attained the age of majority who are unable to pay therefore. Any charges made by the board for the dental examination and treatment shall be fair and reasonable.
- (4) No minor pupil shall be required or permitted to receive a dental examination or treatment without the written consent of the parents or guardian of the minor pupil. No pupil who has attained the age of majority shall be required to receive a dental examination or treatment.

### **336.400 Report to Parent; Selection of Dentist; Certificate of Treatment**

The result of the dental examination shall be reported in writing to the parent or guardian of any pupil who, in the opinion of the person making the examination, requires dental treatment. If, after receiving the report, the parent or guardian elects to have the recommended treatment performed by a dentist of the parent or guardian's own choosing, that dentist shall supply a certificate attesting that the treatment was performed in accordance with the report from the dental health program. The content of the certificate shall be recorded by the board.

## **B. Overview**

Recognizing that health and education are interconnected, it is essential that schools recognize the impact of health on the capacity for learning, and support students' health management in order to provide optimal learning opportunities.

## **C. Background/Rationale**

Health is complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease. Good health facilitates learning and managing the stresses of childhood and adolescence. Health concerns of students are increasing in quantity and acuity. A student's physical, mental, emotional, and developmental status is generally determined by a licensed health care professional. The school must be respectful of students' and families' entitlement to privacy about health information. However, to guide school staff in providing for students' safety, learning, and growth and development, pertinent health information should be shared among the student, family, health care provider, and appropriate school staff. Thus, it is essential that each school district establish policies and procedures that specify what health information is requested and how the information is utilized and managed.

## **D. Guidance**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Comprehensive School Health Education**

The district should plan for and provide through trained health educators and other pertinent health professionals in partnership with classroom teachers a kindergarten through grade 12 developmentally appropriate curriculum that develops health knowledge and skills, especially as they relate to wellness, problem identification, and health management. Information should be included to assist students in knowing about the confidential nature of health information and their entitlement to privacy except for situations that place individuals at risk for violence to self or others.

#### **Physical Education**

The district should plan and provide a program through trained physical educators and in partnership with classroom teachers that develops basic physical fitness skills and promotes life-long physical activity.

## **School Health Services**

The district should plan for and provide through the school nurse and other licensed professionals (e.g., physical and occupational therapists, speech pathologists, audiologists) health promotion and mandated health services as well as identification and management of special health needs (see subsections under “Students with Special Health Care Needs”), including emergency care. (See also Specialist Appendix I, “Guide for Obtaining Appropriate Assessment and Support for School Health Services.”)

## **School Nutrition Services**

The district should assure all students affordable and nutritious meals during their school day and provide all students with developmentally appropriate nutrition education by trained personnel (including the classroom teacher).

## **School Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services**

The district should plan and provide through trained mental health providers (e.g., school counselors, child development specialists, psychologists, social workers) developmentally appropriate mental and emotional health promotion and appropriate appraisal services. The school nurse or other pertinent medical providers should be included in the planning of all health promotion activities and health services.

## **Healthy School Environment**

The district should plan and provide through the building administrator and appointed staff for health promotion and appraisals that support the physical, social, and emotional well-being of the members of each school community, including the school staff that model health management as well as provide direct student services.

## **School-Site Health Promotion for Staff**

It is prudent for a school district to plan and facilitate programs that promote the physical and emotional health of its personnel.

## **Family and Community Involvement in Health Education**

The district is encouraged to develop meaningful partnerships among schools, families, and the surrounding community in order to maximize its educational and service capacity. It is the parents’ responsibility to inform the school of health conditions that impact students’ safety at school or learning capacity in order for the school to make appropriate school health management plans or accommodations to support learning. Likewise, schools should advise parents of

symptoms that may indicate a health condition. Consequently, schools must develop appropriate policies about requesting and managing health information and likewise establish communication mechanisms that respect students' and families' entitlement to privacy regarding health information. (See the section "Health Information and School Records.")

## ***Procedures***

Several types of routine health appraisals (comprehensive health examination and health screening) are important to students' well-being:

- A comprehensive health examination is performed on individual students by a licensed health care provider, to determine physical condition and to aid in diagnosing ailments. A comprehensive health examination should identify health needs that might require accommodations which support the child's learning and safety at school. Comprehensive health examinations are ideally conducted by a student's primary health care provider.
- Health screenings are specific tests to detect, as early as possible, deviations from the "norm" that may cause disability and prevent educational progress. Mandated screenings for Oregon's students include vision and hearing. Examples of optional screenings are height, weight, posture (scoliosis), and dental. The extent of the school's screening program should be based upon the documented health needs of the students. These screenings should be under the supervision of the school's nurse or other appropriate licensed medical/dental provider. (See, for example, "General Health Appraisal-Vision Screening" and the other types of screenings discussed in the General Health Appraisal subsections.)
- All appraisal results should be reported to the parent or guardian. It is prudent to mail abnormal findings that indicate a need for further evaluation by an appropriate licensed health care provider in order to have better assurance of parental receipt. Symptoms determined by the school nurse or licensed provider to suggest life threatening or urgent conditions should be called to the parents' attention immediately--for example, by phone call or home visit.
- Documentation for a comprehensive examination should include the date of the examination and any special health need that requires health management during the school day or that may influence school achievement or safe participation, including any special limitations for participation in regular physical education and any extracurricular athletics or other special programs. Documentation for health screenings should include the date of the screening and recommendation for referral and follow-up as indicated. (Refer to the various subsections of "General Health Appraisal," such as vision and hearing and the sample forms contained therein.)
- Documentation should be filed in the Oregon School Health Screening Record or confidential medical file per the guidelines in the section "Health Information and School Records."

## **Staff Development Needed**

- Institute district policies and procedures for providing screenings, and requesting and managing health information, including direction for documentation and storage of mandated and optional health appraisal data.
- Provide staff the appropriate training to identify significant health symptoms and to direct action for sharing students' health symptoms with the school's nurse and parents as well as appropriate documentation guidelines and record management.

## **References**

Marx, E., Wooley, S., Northrop, D. (eds.) (1998). *Health is Academic: A Guide to Coordinated School Health Programs*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

## **E. Oregon Resources**

- Oregon Department of Education: [www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us)
- Oregon School Nurses Association: <http://orschoolnurse.org/> 

## **F. National Resources**

- American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) 
- American Association of School Counselors: [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org) 
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/> 
- National Association for Sports and Physical Education: <http://www.aahperd.org> 
- National Association of School Nurses: [www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org) 
- National Association of School Psychologists: [www.naspweb.org](http://www.naspweb.org) 
- National School Boards Association: <http://www.nsba.org> 

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