

MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS HEALTH SERVICES

Field Trip Protocols for Medical Management

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to provide for the safety and appropriate medical management of all Mansfield Public School students when they participate in school sponsored field trips. This includes both day and overnight trips.

All students are eligible to participate in school sponsored trips consistent with his/her right to a free and appropriate education (FAPE) under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities in Education (IDEA), and Section 504.*

No student is denied the right to a field trip due to a disability.

The school nurse is to be made aware of all or partial day field trips at least **ONE MONTH** in advance by the teacher arranging the trip.

- Walking field trips fall under the same guidelines as all other field trips. Due to the preparation involved, please be sure to notify the nurses **48 hours** in advance of a walking field trip. Every effort will be made to have a nurse go on out of town field trips but not walking field trips.

Overnight field trips require at least **TWO MONTHS** notice to the school nurse by the teacher arranging the trip. Plans for such trips require the approval of: (in this order)

- a. Department Head
- b. Principal
- c. Superintendent
- d. School Committee

*****Once the field trip has been approved by the Principal, the list of students should be given to the nurses for evaluation.**

The school nurse will assess the medical needs of the students who will be attending and consult with school staff about the specifics of the trip (duration of the trip, type of activity, food requirement, etc.) as it relates to the medical issues of the students.

The following are the options in regard to nursing coverage for a field trip:

- a. Not needed.
- b. The parent(s) of the student requiring the nurse could chaperone the trip and provide care to their own child only.
- c. The parent and teacher will make an alternate arrangement for the student.
- d. Coverage may be coordinated by the School Nurse utilizing staff or per diem nurses employed by MPS.
- e. An agency nurse may be hired at the current rate.

f. The last and most regrettable option is to cancel the field trip, as it would not be legal for the medically challenged student to be excluded from the trip.

THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE TO TAKE PLACE FOR MEDICAL MANAGEMENT WHEN COORDINATING ALL FIELD TRIPS:

There will be communication between the principal, teaching staff, food service manager, and the school nurse when all field trips are being planned. This will ensure that appropriate measures are in place prior to the trip.

1) Teacher's Responsibility: The teacher will be responsible for providing the school nurse with the list of the students who are anticipated to be attending the field trip at least **ONE MONTH** prior to the trip, **TWO MONTH** for overnight trips.

2) Nurse's Responsibility: The nurse will determine which students with known health concerns will require nursing intervention during the course of the trip. If it is determined that a student will require nursing intervention and it cannot be safely delegated to a non-licensed staff member, arrangements will be made for the student's parent or a nurse to accompany student on the trip.

a) The school nurse will have a first aid kit available in the Health Office to be taken on all field trips.

a) The School Nurse will arrange for nursing coverage when required. The school nurse can decide based on the needs of the students attending the trip whether she will attend or send the substitute nurse.

b) The school nurse will collaborate with the substitute nurse prior to the trip and discuss the particular nursing care that will be required on the trip, (i.e. individual health care plans, medication plan, nursing procedures etc.).

c) The school nurse will provide the substitute nurse with all the necessary supplies and equipment needed for the trip.

d) Upon return from the trip the substitute nurse will return all supplies and equipment and will document any nursing care provided in the student's health record.

3) Nurse Attending Field Trip: Nurses who accompany a field trip will be responsible for:

a) Medication administration

b) Assessment and monitoring of students with health issues

c) Providing health procedures as ordered by a student's physician

d) Providing first aid and other health related services as needed

e) Dietary pre-planning due to life threatening allergies or special nutritional needs

4) Guidelines for Nurse as Field Trip Chaperone: When a nurse is designated to attend a field trip, she will not be given the added responsibility of having an assigned group of students to chaperone but may assist in this process when possible. If the nurse is attending the field trip to

attend to the needs of one student then the nurse will remain with that student during the trip (as part of the students group). If the nurse is attending for multiple students the nurse will work with teaching staff to determine the best possible location for ease of access.

5) Expenses for Nurse on Field Trip: As with other chaperones, expenses will be covered for the nurse on day or overnight field trips. Per Diem nurses will receive the approved daily rate of pay while on the trip.

6) Nursing Coverage Alternatives:

a) Elementary Student: For students at the elementary school level, the parent of a child who requires medical intervention during the field trip will be asked first if they would like to attend to care for their own child on the trip. If the parent is unable to attend then a nurse will be provided.

b) Middle and High School Student: At the middle and high school level, if the student is determined to have the skills to manage their healthcare needs independently and parents agree, the student will be allowed to manage his/her healthcare needs. If the student is not independent and management cannot be safely delegated, a nurse will be hired to attend.

c) Field Trips Occurring Outside Regular School Day: For all field trips occurring outside of the regular school day the student's parent will be asked first if they are able to attend the field trip to provide care for their child. The parent may also agree to an alternate plan established with nursing staff and teachers. If the parent is unable to attend field trip and an alternate plan is not appropriate, then the nurse will work to arrange nursing coverage.

7) Medication Management

a) EpiPen: The school nurse may determine that an Epi-Pen for a student with life threatening allergies can be delegated to school personnel. If the teacher has completed the required Epi-Pen training and has passed the competency test, the nurse can delegate to the teacher the responsibility of caring for a child who may require the Epi-Pen. The nurse will review the student's Emergency Health Care Plan and Epi-Pen administration prior to the field trip.

b) EpiPen for Middle and High School Students: The school nurse may determine that a middle school or high school student is independent in administering his/her epiPen. If the student is independent he/she may self carry epiPen during a field trip. The teacher will be notified that the student has an allergy and will be carrying his/her epiPen. In this circumstance, a nurse is not required to attend.

c) Other Medications: As needed medications such as inhalers or seizure medications can only be administered by the nurse. The Department of Public Health does not permit delegation of these medications as they require assessment of need and also assessment of response to the medication. If age appropriate with parent consent and the authority of the school nurse, some students may be able to self administer an inhaler. Students at the Robinson School will be allowed to self administer medications with supervision by trained staff. Inhalers will not be sent on walking field trips. The teacher must carry a cell phone and must contact the school nurse if a child with asthma develops symptoms while on a walking field trip.

8) Transport to Emergency Room: In the event that a student requires emergency transport to a hospital while on a field trip, that student must be accompanied to the hospital by a teacher or

other school staff member. That person must stay with the student until the parent arrives. The nurse will remain with the field trip.

9) Trip Cancellation: If it is determined that a nurse is needed and no nurse is available to attend and no other arrangement can be made, the nurse should discuss this with the teacher and administration. If all options have been exhausted, postponement/cancelation of the trip may be necessary.

* Section 504" refers to the section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which guarantees certain rights to individuals with disabilities, including AD/HD. This federal law states that no person "... shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (Sec. 504.(a)).