

## Preparing for School with Student Health Concerns

**Soon students will head back to school. It is time to prepare your child and communicate with the school staff how to handle any emergency situations that may arise during the school year.**

### Turn in Documentation

Contact your school if you are unsure of the proper documentation that will need to be filled out and signed before the start of school. Asthma/Allergy Action Plan forms and Medication Administration forms should be completed with physician and parent signatures verifying the information. If your child has an appointment before the start of school, bring the form(s) along to be signed.

### Know Your School Procedures

In addition to the paperwork that is required by the school, check with staff if you have any questions. If your student plans to “carry” an inhaler, a Physician must sign, giving notice, in addition to the Asthma/Allergy Action Plan. You and your child will need to sign a Contract for Self-Administration in accordance with Nebraska State requirements.

Please note **a parent's written request is required for any medication administered at school.** This includes any one time or short-term medication administration during school hours. All medications are to be brought to the school by a parent with a legible, written note on paper for reference. Do not send ANY medications in with your child. See “Health” in the Student-Parent Handbook.

### Communicate

Talk to your child's school nurse, teacher, coaches, cafeteria staff, bus drivers to help them understand your child's health. Ask your child to describe what their symptoms feel like. Children explain things in their own special way. Knowing how a student experiences their reactions will help adults around them save precious time when needing to recognize when a reaction is happening.

### Action Plans

Review your asthma/allergy action plan with your child. Before the start of the school year these plans should be reviewed and refreshed with your child's physician and your child. A copy of the Asthma/Allergy Action Plan should be submitted to the school. A copy should be kept on hand at home as well. Vigilant asthma monitoring and treatment following the care plan developed by your child's physician is important. This is especially important during the first month of school. Allergens increase due to the return of students all at once. A marked increase in symptoms for asthma 12-14 days after school starts has been seen in increased emergency room visits and hospitalizations. The start of school is very busy making it easy to forget medications, however sticking to your health care plan will help prevent any emergencies.

### Keep Emergency Medications at School

Each child with severe asthma/allergy should have their own prescription for emergency medication. All medications need accompanying signed forms. All medications at school need to be within the date of expiration. All medications need to be labeled.

### Create a “safe food box”

It's common for a classroom to have snacks that may cause issues for an allergic child. Create a safe food box that can be kept with the teacher to substitute for your child with severe allergic reactions. A written, signed verification from a parent is needed for items sent in. Please see GPS district Allergy Policy in the Student Handbook.

### Work with Your Child

As children grow older, they will learn how to manage their own asthma/allergies. When you feel it's age appropriate, make sure your child knows to carry their medicine at all times and how to self-administer if appropriate.

**It is important for you to be your child's number-one advocate. Follow these tips to make sure you, your child and your child's school are ready for the coming school year.**

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