

FROM THE HEALTH SUITE

The Health Suite is open from 8:45am to 3:15pm for students with chronic health concerns, and for students who fall ill or sustain injuries during the school day. The School Nurse conducts vision and hearing screenings, administers prescribed medications, assesses for illness and injury, monitors communicable diseases, provides social-emotional support, makes referrals and provides health education, upon request.

- **HEALTH AND DENTAL CERTIFICATES:** A District of Columbia *Universal Health Certificate*, updated *Immunization Assessment Report* and *Oral Health Assessment Form* are required for your child each school year. The health and dental forms are valid for 365 days (1Year) from the date of the exam. If the exam date has expired, the certificate is no longer valid. <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/school-health-requirements>
- **IMMUNIZATIONS** All students entering and attending child care or school in the District of Columbia are required to show documented proof of complete, correctly spaced immunizations or proof of medical or religious exemption.
- **MEDICATION ADMINISTERED AT SCHOOL:** Before any medication, either prescription or over the counter, can be administered or medical procedures done at school, a physician's written order and parental consent is required. Forms can be downloaded from <https://dcps.dc.gov/health>. *Emergency medications such as Albuterol and EpiPen or Auvi-Q can be carried by a student only when there is written consent by both parent and physician.* All medications and medication forms such as the *Asthma Action Plan* or the *Action Plan for Anaphylaxis* must be brought to the Health Suite **by a parent**. If a child brings in forms or medication, the School Nurse will call the parent and the medication will not be administered.
- **DIETARY ACCOMMODATIONS:** If your child eats meals provided by the school and requires dietary accommodations for medical or religious/philosophical reasons, you may obtain a *Dietary Accommodation* form from the School Nurse who will facilitate this request.
- **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:** Please complete a new *Stoddert Contact and Emergency Release* form every year. The School Nurse relies on the information provided to contact parents or their designees in the event of an illness or injury that needs urgent attention. If the School Nurse is unable to reach you and/or the student has sustained an injury requiring immediate attention, the student may be taken to the hospital via ambulance and will be accompanied by a Stoddert staff member.
- **LICE AND NITS:** DC Public Schools does not exclude students from school when they have lice or nits, but we do want to make sure families have the information they need to monitor and care for their children. While they are a nuisance, head lice are not known to spread disease and therefore students will not be sent home from school because of head lice.

Head lice are parasitic insects found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of affected people. Nits are the eggs that attach like glue to the shaft of the hair commonly near the scalp and behind the ears. If the School Nurse determines that a child has lice or nits, the family will be notified and asked to begin treatment at home. The family will be asked to confirm with the School Nurse that treatment has begun, and before a student goes to class, a parent should bring the child to the School Nurse for another head check.

Prevention and treatment are key to minimizing the spread of head lice from one person to another. At home, families should check their children's heads for lice and nits, especially when there is a known case within the family or a child's classroom or when a child is noticed itching his/her head. Vigilance, including possible repeat treatments and combing out lice and nits with a lice comb, is essential to preventing and eliminating head lice. For those families with known lice and/or nits, it is recommended not only to treat, but also to do daily head checks and thorough combing with a lice/nit comb for 2 weeks, roughly the duration of the lice life-cycle.

- **WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME:** DCPS and DOH recommend that students with symptoms of illness stay at home until they are *fever-free for 24 hours without using fever reducing medications*, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Staying at home while febrile will reduce the spread of illness within our community. A child diagnosed with a contagious illness such as strep throat or bacterial conjunctivitis must stay home until *completing the first 24 hours of antibiotics* and/or when cleared

by a physician. Students who are sick should not participate in any school activity, in after-care, or in other community activities except to seek medical care. Any children who show symptoms of illness while at school will be sent home.

Please notify the nurse and your child's teacher if an extended absence is due to an illness or if you child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness.

- **PREVENTING ILLNESS: Cover Your Cough and Wash Your Hands.** Enforcing good handwashing techniques and teaching to cover the cough is a great way to help keep your child healthy. Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into the elbow prevents germs from becoming airborne. Students should learn that washing before eating, after using the bathroom, or if their hands are soiled is important for maintaining good health. A quick wash is insufficient! 20 seconds or singing 'Happy Birthday' with wet, well-lathered hands is great prevention. Alcohol based sanitizer is a good emergency or a quick option, but good hand washing is the gold standard. Discourage sharing of personal items such as drinks, food, or unwashed utensils. <https://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/index.html>

The health and wellness of Stoddert students is very important to us. We strongly believe that a student whose health needs are met, who has had a good breakfast, and a good night's sleep is more ready to learn and grow academically and socially. I look forward to working with you and your child during the upcoming school year.

Please do not hesitate to contact the School Nurse with questions or concerns at 202-671-6032.