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Dear Parents/ Guardians;

Fall 2016

Re: Ready for School to Start?  
From: Shellie Bueng, RN/PHN, Mahnomen School Nurse  
Norman-Mahnomen Public Health

Greetings from your school nurse! I hope summer was great for you!! It may be difficult to think about the returning school year, but it is never too early to think about your student's health care needs! Early preparation will make the transmission from vacation to school an easier one. Here are a few important questions to ask yourself before school resumes:

**\*Does my child need a Child and Teen Checkups or Physical Exam?**

Regular health checks help keep children healthy. Sports physicals are required every 3 years to participate in sporting activities. However, this should *not* be the only time a child receives a physical. Taking your child to your health care provider when they are well allows the physician to take a good look at several areas of your child's development. Social and Emotional development, physical growth, hearing, vision, lab tests are all components of a complete physical. This is your time to be asking questions and receiving information regarding your child's health. Your healthcare provider may assist you in scheduling these well child exams. Norman-Mahnomen Public Health also offers Child & Teen Checkup assistance and examinations. Don't forget the importance of dental examinations as well!

**\*Does my child need any vaccinations?**

Minnesota law requires children enrolled in school to be immunized against certain diseases or file a legal medical or conscientious exemption (MDH). Your child may need additional vaccinations prior to the start of school, especially if they are starting Kindergarten or 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Please contact your health care provider or your local Public Health office for any questions or concerns. Remember, having your child properly immunized protects not only them but also all the children around them. Your child can receive their immunizations at your health care provider or Norman-Mahnomen Public Health offices. Once your child has received immunizations, it is important to share this information with your school. Ask for a copy or have your healthcare provider fax this information to your student's school office. These immunization records are kept with your student's school file.

**\*Does my child have any medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, seizures, food allergies or any other condition that may need to be managed at school?**

It is important to notify the school if your child has a special health care need. School staff want to keep your child safe and healthy. By sharing important medical information with the school, any unwanted injury or illness may be prevented. An emergency plan of care may need to be developed with the school nurse to help ensure proper actions are taken if your child needs medical attention at school. You know your child best, and sharing this valuable information will help to maintain their health and safety during the school day. These emergency care plans will serve as a guide to staff on how to assist your child. Emergency services will be called in the event staff feels your child is in immediate danger.

**\*Does or may my child need medication during the school day?**

In order for school personnel to administer medication (including over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, self-carrying inhalers) to a student, a completed written request signed by both the prescribing physician and parents/guardian, must be returned to the school. The medication must be supplied to the school with proper label and container. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to supply these medications to the school. Forms are available at the elementary and high school offices in the districts. **No medications** will be administered without the signed consent of both the parent and the physician.

**\*When to keep your child home from school?**

This is often an early morning decision many parents are faced with. There are those times when it is difficult to decide whether to or not to send your child to school. A few guidelines that may help in your decision making:

\*Always keep your child at home if they have an elevated temperature. Temperatures should be normal for 24 hours (without Tylenol) before returning to school. Children with a temperature of 100 degrees or above cannot stay in school and parents will be notified to pick up child.

- If your child has vomited or had diarrhea, please keep him/her home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If your child has any rash that may be disease related or you do not know the cause, check with your family doctor before sending the child to school.
- If your child has eye drainage or whites of eyes are pink or red. Please consult your physician. Rubbing the eyes if they are infected causes spreading of the germs. Your child may return to school after they have been started on antibiotics.
- Strep throat. Children need to stay home for 24 hours after antibiotic treatments begin and are without fever.
- Please notify the school if your child is going to be absent from school and the reason for the absence.
- Please notify the school if your child develops a communicable disease (strep throat, chickenpox, head lice, impetigo, pink eye, etc.).
- If your child becomes ill or injured at school, you will be notified so arrangements can be made for your child to be taken home. It is important that the school be able to contact you. Please notify the school if your phone number changes.
- Children should be dressed appropriately for the season and specific weather.
- Remember good hand washing, covering the cough and keeping children home when they are ill will help prevent the spread of infection.

As school preparations begin, remember the importance of maintaining your child/children's health and safety during the school year. Following these guidelines will assist your school district in supporting your child's medical needs.

Please call Norman-Mahnomen Public Health for assistance or with any questions at 218-935-2527 Or Mahnomen Public School at 218-935-2211.

Shellie Bueng, RN/PHN  
Norman-Mahnomen Public Health  
Mahnomen School Nurse