

IMMUNIZATIONS, HEALTH ASSESSMENTS AND SCREENINGS

The Ledyard Board of Education believes that student health is a key factor in maximizing success in student achievement. Studies have shown that students who have unrecognized or untreated health issues are less able to focus in school and are more likely to have higher rates of absenteeism than their peers. To determine the health status of students, facilitate the removal of health-related barriers to learning, and determine whether some special adaptation of the school program is necessary, the Board requires that students undergo periodic health assessments and screenings. Additionally, the Board desires to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases and requires students to be immunized in accordance with Connecticut state law.

The Board appoints each school nurse as the designee to receive information on student immunizations, health assessments, and other medical-related issues for their school.

Required Immunizations

Proof of adequate immunization against Diphtheria, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hemophilus influenzae type B (Hib), Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chicken pox), Hepatitis A, Pneumococcal disease, Meningococcal disease (Meningitis), and any other vaccine required by the childhood and adolescent immunization schedules promulgated by the Commissioner of Public Health shall be required prior to a school-aged child enrolling in the Ledyard Public School System. The requirements for adequate immunization for each disease is defined in the immunization schedules promulgated by the Commissioner of Public Health.

In the instance where a school-aged child is not adequately immunized at time of enrollment, school attendance shall be permitted only if that child: (1) has received a dose of each required vaccine for which that child is not fully immunized in the month prior to first attendance; and (2) continues on the appropriate catch-up schedule recommended in the most recent standards of care for immunizations promulgated by the Commissioner of Public Health until adequately immunized.

A student enrolled in Ledyard Public Schools who fails to comply with the immunization schedule shall be excluded from school unless he/she presents a written statement from a physician or local health authority stating that the student's immunization dose has been rescheduled to a new date. Such statement shall specify the medical reason for rescheduling.

If the parents or guardians of any child are unable to pay for the required immunizations, the District shall refer them to the Ledyard Department of Youth and Social Services.

Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

Any child who meets one of the following criteria shall be exempt from the applicable immunization requirement(s):

1. Presents a certificate from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse stating that, in the opinion of the medical professional, a specific immunization is medically contraindicated because of the physical condition of the child. A medically contraindicated immunization is one that is not in the best health interest of the child based on either (a) the current recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or (b) the written approval of the Commissioner of Public Health. The child's parents or

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guardian shall also submit a signed copy of the Connecticut Department of Public Health "Medical Exemption Certification Statement."

- In the case of a student for whom a medical contraindication condition has been determined to be of a permanent nature, no further medical review is required.
 - In the case of a student for whom a medical contraindication has been determined to be of a temporary nature, the student shall be evaluated at least annually by an appropriate medical professional to determine whether the contraindication condition continues to exist.
2. Presents a signed copy of the Department of Public Health "Religious Exemption Statement" from the parents or guardian of the child that the immunization would be contrary to the religious beliefs of the child or the child's parents or guardian. The signed religious exemption form shall be acknowledged, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) sections 1-32, 1-34 and 1-35, as applicable, by (a) a judge of a court of record or a family support magistrate, (b) a clerk or deputy clerk of a court having a seal, (c) a town clerk, (d) a notary public, (e) a justice of the peace, (f) an attorney admitted to the bar of this state, or (g) notwithstanding any provision of CGS Chapter 6, a school nurse. A signed religious exemption form must be presented at time of the child's initial enrollment in Ledyard Public Schools and again prior to being permitted entry into the seventh (7th) grade.
 3. In the case of Measles, Mumps or Rubella, presents a certificate from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse or from the director of health in the child's present or previous town of residence, stating that the child has had a confirmed case of such disease.
 4. In the case of Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis A, has had protection against the specific disease confirmed in writing by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse based on specific blood testing by a certified laboratory.
 5. In the case of Varicella, the child is: (a) enrolled in preschool or kindergarten and has a written statement signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse indicating that the child has already had varicella based on diagnosis of varicella or verification of history of varicella according to the most recent standards of care for immunizations in Connecticut as prescribed by the Commissioner of Public Health; (b) has a written statement signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse indicating that the child has a history of herpes zoster; or (c) is enrolled in seventh (7th) grade and has a written statement signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse indicating that the individual has already had varicella based on family or medical history.
 6. In the case of Hemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) or Pneumococcal disease, the child is currently age five (5) years or older.
 7. In the case of Pertussis, the child is currently age six (6) years or older.

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Each school nurse shall maintain a list of students within the school who have been granted an exemption from immunizations based on either the student's/parents'/guardian's religious belief or a medical condition for which the immunization is contraindicated. These lists will enable school and medical personnel to quickly determine which students are at risk in case of a communicable disease outbreak in the District and take appropriate action, up to and including excluding the students from school.

Health Assessment

A complete health assessment is required: (1) when initially enrolling in Ledyard Public Schools; and (2) for enrolled students when entering grade six and grade nine. Additionally, an updated health assessment, either full or partial as appropriate, may be required if a student's health status has significantly changed or if there are known health concerns.

Health assessments shall be conducted by: (1) a legally qualified practitioner of medicine; (2) an advanced practice registered nurse or registered nurse, licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 378; (3) a physician assistant, licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 370; (4) the school medical advisor; or (5) a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse or a physician assistant stationed at any military base. Each healthcare professional performing health assessments and screenings shall completely fill out and sign each form, and any recommendations made concerning the student shall be in writing.

The health assessment shall be documented using the CSDE "Health Assessment Record" and shall include:

1. A physical examination which shall include hematocrit or hemoglobin tests, height, weight, blood pressure, and a chronic disease assessment which shall include, but not be limited to, asthma;
2. An updating of immunizations as required by the immunization schedules promulgated by the Commissioner of Public Health;
3. Vision, hearing, speech and gross dental screenings when initially enrolling in Ledyard Public Schools;
4. Vision, hearing, postural and gross dental screenings in grade six and grade nine; and
5. Such other information, including health and developmental history, as the medical professional completing the health assessment feels is necessary and appropriate.

Under specific circumstances, the health assessment shall also include tests for tuberculosis, sickle cell anemia or Cooley's anemia, and blood lead levels. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall consult with the school medical advisor and Ledge Light Health District to determine when such tests are necessary and shall provide that information to the school nurses.

A health assessment completed within one year prior to the student's enrollment in the District or the start of the school year for enrolled students will be accepted as meeting the requirements of this policy if the school nurse determines that the health assessment meets all Connecticut state law requirements.

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The District shall provide the opportunity for all students whose parents or guardian meet the eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program or for free milk under the Special Milk Program to receive at no charge the health assessments required by this policy.

Ledyard Public School employees shall not conduct health assessments at school for any child enrolled in the District unless the examination is made in the presence of the student's parent or guardian or in the presence of another school employee. The student's parent or guardian shall receive prior written notice of the need to conduct a health assessment at school and shall have a reasonable opportunity to be present at the assessment or to provide for the health assessment to be conducted elsewhere by an appropriate healthcare professional at their own expense.

CGS section 10-206 allows the Board to exclude from school any child who fails to obtain the health assessments required by this policy. Parents or guardians of currently enrolled students, or the students if they are emancipated minors or are eighteen (18) years of age or older, who fail to meet health assessment requirements, or who fail to submit an exemption, shall be given a thirty (30) calendar day notice, in writing, prior to the effective date of school exclusion. Failure to complete the required health assessment components within this thirty (30) day grace period shall result in school exclusion. This exclusion shall be verified, in writing, by the Principal. Parents of excluded students may request, in writing, an administrative hearing of a health assessment-related exclusion within five (5) school days of final exclusion notice. An administrative hearing shall be conducted, and the decision rendered, in writing, within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the request.

Physical Exam for Participation in Intramural and Interscholastic Athletics

For the purposes of this policy, "intramural or interscholastic athletics" shall include any activity sponsored by Ledyard Public Schools that involves any athletic contest, tryout, practice, scrimmage, competition, demonstration, display, or club activity.

Every student in the District who participates in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity must have been determined to be physically fit through a pre-participating evaluation performed within the past thirteen (13) months. This evaluation is in addition to any health assessment required for initial or continued enrollment in the District.

The pre-participation physical evaluation shall be conducted by a medical professional previously authorized in this policy to conduct health assessments and shall be documented using the current Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) "Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation" form.

The District shall provide the opportunity for all students whose parents or guardian meet the eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program or for free milk under the Special Milk Program to receive at no charge the pre-participation physical evaluation required by this policy.

Completed pre-participation physical evaluation forms shall be turned in to the school nurse and be retained in the student's cumulative health record. The school nurse shall review the forms for completeness.

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State law requires the Board to request that an oral health assessment be conducted when a child initially enrolls in Ledyard Public Schools and for enrolled students when entering grades six and nine. The oral health assessment is more in-depth than the gross dental screening required as part of the overall health assessment and provides for a better opportunity to detect any oral health issues that, if left untreated, might interfere with the student receiving the full benefit of the educational program. The Board will not deny enrollment or continued attendance in Ledyard Public Schools to any child who does not submit to an in-depth oral health assessment.

The oral health assessment shall include either a dental examination conducted by a dentist licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 379 or a visual screening and risk assessment for oral health conditions conducted by: (a) a dental hygienist licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 379a; (b) a legally qualified practitioner trained in conducting an oral health assessment as part of a training program approved by the Commissioner of Public Health; (c) a physician assistant licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 370 and specifically trained in conducting an oral health assessment; or (d) an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to CGS chapter 378 and specifically trained in conducting an oral health assessment.

The oral health assessment shall be documented using the CSDE's "Oral Health Assessment/Screening" form. Each dentist, dental hygienist, legally qualified practitioner of medicine, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse who performs an oral health assessment shall completely fill out and sign the form, and any recommendations regarding the student's oral health shall be made in writing.

Ledyard Public School employees shall not conduct oral health assessments at school for any child enrolled in the District unless the student's parent or guardian consents to the oral health assessment and the assessment is made in the presence of either the student's parent or guardian or another school employee. The student's parent or guardian shall receive prior written notice of the need to conduct an oral health assessment at school and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt his or her child out of such assessment, to be present at the assessment, or to provide for the oral health assessment to be conducted elsewhere by an appropriate healthcare professional at their own expense.

If the Board decides to host a free oral health assessment event at which a provider described above, who is not an employee of Ledyard Public Schools, will perform an oral health assessment of children attending a District school, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall notify the parents and guardians of the children attending the school in advance of the event. Each parent and guardian shall have the opportunity to opt his or her child out of the oral health assessment event. Each child whose parent did not opt him or her out of the oral health assessment event shall receive an oral health assessment free of charge. No child shall receive dental treatment of any kind as part of the oral health assessment event unless the child's parent or guardian provides informed consent for such treatment.

Health Screenings

Vision, audiometric and postural health screenings shall be conducted annually in accordance with the procedures delineated in State Board of Education regulations for all students enrolled in Ledyard Public Schools according to the schedule delineated in CGS section 10-214.

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Each school nurse shall conduct postural screenings in a manner that ensures student privacy.

The results of the health screening shall be documented using the CSDE's "Health Assessment Record" form.

The Ledyard Public School System shall provide these screenings to students at no cost to parents. Parents shall be provided an annual written notification of screenings to be conducted. Parents wishing to have these screenings conducted by their private physician shall be required to report the screening results to the school nurse.

The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall give written notice to the parent or guardian of each student found to have: (a) any defect of vision or disease of the eyes, with a brief statement describing such defect or disease and a recommendation for the pupil to be examined by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist; (2) any impairment or defect of hearing, with a brief statement describing such impairment or defect; or (3) who evidences any postural problem, with a brief statement describing such evidence of the postural problem.

Additionally, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall give written notice to the parent or guardian of each student who did not receive a vision, audiometric and/or postural screening as required, with a brief statement explaining why the student did not receive the screening(s).

Review of Health Assessments and Screenings

Health assessments and screenings and oral health assessments shall be reviewed by the school nurse. If it is determined, after consulting with the school medical advisor if needed, that a student needs further testing or treatment, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall give written notice to the student's parent or guardian, or the student if he/she is an emancipated minor or is eighteen (18) years of age or older, and shall make reasonable efforts to assure that such further testing or treatment is provided. Such reasonable efforts shall include a determination of whether the parent or guardian, or the student as appropriate, has obtained the necessary testing or treatment, and, if not, advising the parent/guardian/student on how such testing or treatment may be obtained. The results of such further testing or treatment shall be recorded in the student's cumulative health record and shall be reviewed by the school nurse, and school medical advisor if needed.

Retention of Health Assessments and Screenings Results

The results of each health assessment and screening and oral health assessments shall be recorded on forms supplied by the State Board of Education, included in the cumulative health record of each student, and kept on file in the school the student attends.

If a student permanently leaves the jurisdiction of the Board, the student's original cumulative health record shall be sent to the chief administrative officer of the school district to which the student moves. Ledyard Public Schools shall retain a true copy.

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No student shall be required to undergo a physical or medical examination or treatment, or be compelled to receive medical instruction, if the parent or legal guardian of the student or the student, if the student is an emancipated minor or is eighteen (18) years of age or older, in writing, notifies the teacher or principal or other person in charge of the student that the parent/guardian/student objects, on religious grounds, to the physical or medical examination or treatment or medical instruction. A copy of this notification shall be retained in the student's cumulative health record.

Exceptions for Children of Military Families

In accordance with the "Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children," children of military families shall have thirty (30) days from the date of enrollment to obtain any required immunizations. For a series of immunizations, initial vaccinations must be obtained within thirty (30) days.

Notification and Reporting Requirements

The Superintendent, or his/her designee, is responsible for ensuring that the parental notification requirements of this policy are carried out as applicable, including annual notification of the requirements for immunizations and health assessments and screenings and a request for an oral health assessment.

On and after October 1, 2017, the District shall report to Ledge Light Health District and the Department of Public Health, on a triennial basis, the total number of students per school and per the District having a diagnosis of asthma: (a) at the time of public school enrollment, (b) in grade six, and (c) in grade ten. The report shall contain the asthma information collected as part of the student health assessments and shall include the student's age, gender, race, ethnicity and school.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes (last amended by Public Act (PA)):

- 10-15f – Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. (PA 08-57)
- 10-204a – Required immunizations. Temporary waiver. (PA 15-174 and 15-242)
- 10-204c – Immunity from liability. (PA 79-88)
- 10-205 – Appointment of school medical advisors. (PA 80-440)
- 10-206 – Health assessments. (PA 18-168)
- 10-206a – Free health assessments. (PA 80-440)
- 10-207 – Duties of medical advisors. (PA 12-198)
- 10-208 – Exemption from examination or treatment. (PA 80-440)
- 10-208a – Physical activity of student restricted; boards to honor notice. (PA 03-211)
- 10-209 – Records not to be public. Provision of reports to schools. (PA 18-168)
- 10-212 – School nurses and nurse practitioners. (PA 04-181)
- 10-214 – Vision, audiometric and postural screenings: When required; notification of parents re defects; record of results. (PA 17-173)
- 19a-7f – Child immunization standard of care and programs. Provision of vaccines by department. Vaccine policy and reporting. (PA 12-1 of June Special Session)
- 19a-7h – Childhood immunization registry. Regulations. (PA 14-231)

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Public Act 18-168 – “An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health’s Recommendations Regarding Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes” (Section 80).

Department of Public Health Regulations 10-204a-1 to 10-204a-4 – “School Immunization Requirements.”

Department of Public Health Regulations 19a-7h-1 to 19a-7h-5 – “Reporting Information to and Releasing Information from the Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking System.”

State Board of Education Regulations 10-214-1 to 10-214-5 – “Vision, Audiometric and Postural Screenings.”

20 USC 1232g – “Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).”

34 CFR 99 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy.

42 USC 1320d to 1320d-9 – Implementation of Privacy Requirements of Section 264 of Public Law 104-191, “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).”

45 CFR Part 160 – General Administrative Requirements.

45 CFR Part 164, Subpart A – General Provisions.

45 CFR Part 164, Subpart E – Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information.

Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) Handbook

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