

Ministry of Education

Deputy Minister

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Memorandum To: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Executive Director of Provincial Schools Branch

From: Bruce Rodrigues
Deputy Minister

Date: February 28, 2018

Subject: PPM 161 : Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in Schools

Please find attached the final Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 161 entitled Supporting Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools. This PPM is to be implemented by September 2018.

As you are aware, the Ministry released this policy as a draft last fall and we have valued the ongoing engagement and feedback we have received over the past several months. The release of this policy is an important step towards continuing to keep our students healthy and safe, and ensuring that they feel included. This policy builds on the work that school boards are already doing to ensure that children and students with prevalent medical conditions are supported in school.

This PPM provides direction to school boards to develop and maintain policies to support students with prevalent medical conditions (anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy). School board policies are expected to support students with prevalent medical conditions to fully access school in a safe, accepting, and healthy learning environment that supports well-being, and empowers students to reach their full potential for self-management of their medical condition(s). The PPM also outlines an expectation for each student with anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy to have a personalized Plan of Care, containing individualized information about the student and their needs. In developing or revising their policies, school boards should consult with students, parents, principals' associations, teachers' federations, education workers' unions, school staff, volunteers working in the schools, their school councils, Joint Health and Safety Committees, and community health care professionals. This consultation should also include Parent Involvement Committees and Special Education Advisory Committees. School boards are also expected to make their policies and Plan of Care templates available on their public website in the language of instruction.

The ministry has provided resources to support school boards in the development and implementation of board policies. These resources, developed by the Ontario Education Services Corporation, Ophea, Canadian Paediatric Society, Diabetes Canada, The Lung Association - Ontario, Asthma Canada, Food Allergy Canada, and Epilepsy Ontario, include fact sheets, Plan of Care templates, training modules, and discussion guides. The resources can be found on the ministry website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/medicalconditions.html>) and on the Prevalent Medical Conditions page on the EduGAINS portal (www.edugains.ca/newsite/SafeHealthySchools/medical-conditions/Prevalent-Medical-Conditions.html).

Supporting students with prevalent medical conditions in schools is a complex, shared responsibility that requires a whole-school and whole-system approach. Education and community partners have important roles to play in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can learn. In developing and implementing policies to support students with prevalent medical conditions, school boards are to strive to ensure that students with these conditions are supported to feel included and respected at school, and are treated equitably. No student should ever feel excluded or stigmatized due to their medical condition. This includes ensuring that the dignity and privacy of each student with a prevalent medical condition is maintained, that they are allowed to perform daily or routine management activities at school, and that they are enabled to participate in school to their full potential.

We are committed to continuing to work collaboratively with you, as well as the broader education sector and community partners, on this important work. We will be following up with you to have conversations about how we can continue to support you to ensure successful implementation of the PPM.

If you have any questions as you work to implement this PPM, please contact Debbie Thompson, Director, Safe and Healthy Schools Branch at 416-325-7645 or Debbie.Thompson@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Rodrigues". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce Rodrigues
Deputy Minister

cc: Senior Business Officials
School Board Chairs
Council of Ontario Directors of Education
Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario
Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques
Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association
Ontario Public School Boards' Association