

# New Dental Examination Requirements

## WVBE Policy 2423: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

### Questions and Answers for School Personnel

More time is lost when students miss school because of toothaches. An estimated 51 million school hours per year are lost due to dental related illness. Overall, children with good oral health spend more time in school learning.

**Question: How has Policy 2423 changed and what does it mean for the students?**

**Answer:** Formerly named *Communicable Disease Control*, West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2423 has been around since 2007 and requires a comprehensive physical examination and immunizations for students prior to the start of the school year. Effective July 1, 2014, WVBE Policy 2423 has been renamed *Health Promotion and Disease Prevention* and has been expanded to require a dental examination as part of the current comprehensive physical for new enterers in Pre-K and Kindergarten and subsequent grades 2, 7 and 12. The policy will be phased in, beginning with Pre-K and Kindergarten for School Year (SY) 2015-16, grade 2 (SY 2016-17), grade 7 (SY 2017-18) and grade 12 (SY 2018-19).

**Question: Will I be trained on Policy 2423? / When and how will I receive the information?**

**Answer:** Training opportunities will be available throughout the next year (RESAs, webinars, school nursing trainings, in-service days, 2015 Kid Strong Conference in Charleston, WV, etc.). This is part of the Governor's *Kids First* Initiative at <http://www.wvkidsfirst.org/> which is part of the five promises for our students. Regional Oral Health Coordinators, WV Department of Education (WVDE) and State Oral Health Program (OHP) staff will be available to provide technical assistance upon request. A dental exam school toolkit and a statewide webinar which will be recorded for listening at the convenience of school personnel will be made available to support these efforts prior to the start of county pre-enrollments.

**Question: Where can the students go to get their dental examination completed?**

**Answer:** If your child already has a dentist, he/she can complete the examination. The student will need a signed slip from the dentist verifying the student had an exam and the date the exam was given. If the student does not already have a dentist, he/she will be eligible for enrollment in the Oral Disease Prevention Program (ODPP) and an oral health assessment can be completed at his/her school with parent/guardian permission. If this is the case, the program staff will assist with any follow-up care including the student to be seen by a regular dentist within six months after the assessment. The State Oral Health Program will assist the parent/guardian in finding the student a regular dentist.

**Question: When are the students' dental examinations due?**

**Anyone needing additional information about Policy 2423 should contact:**

Rebecca King, School Health Services and 504 Coordinator,

WV Department of Education-Office of Special Programs,

(304) 558-8830; [rjking@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:rjking@access.k12.wv.us) or visit the website at <http://wvde.state.wv.us>.

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**Answer:** The dental examination should be completed one year of the date of preenrollment or at the time of enrollment. There will be a grace period of 45 days from enrollment (first day of class) for students to provide proof of the completed dental examination.

**What is the required documentation?**

**Answer:** Students must provide proof that they have had a dental examination within 12 months or one year of pre-enrollment date or at the time of enrollment (first day of class). At a minimum, it must show the date the exam was given and the dentist's signature. There is no special form to show proof of examination. In order for the school and ODPP to assist with follow-up care coordination with your Dentist, it would be beneficial if the information indicated need for restorative care.

**Question: Will students who do not provide proof of a dental examination be removed from public schools?**

**Answer:** No child will be refused a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) because they did not provide proof of a dental examination. The parent/guardian will be provided with an option based on consent to enroll their child for an oral health assessment regardless of their ability to pay.

**Question: Should schools include a dental screening and/or assessment in their pre-enrollment day?**

**Answer:** No. Schools should work toward encouraging students to establish a dental home with a local Dentist and ensuring students have dental and medical insurance coverage. Many schools that provide onsite dental screenings/assessment miss the purpose of this requirement, to establish a dental home and biannual dental exams which include an examination, x-ray, diagnosis and treatment by a Dentist. Please continue to work towards proof of the dental examination by using onsite pre-enrollment HIPAA/FERPA consents to obtain records directly from the student's Dentist or work with local Dentist to obtain bidirectional consents to share dental examinations. If a dental exam cannot be obtained from the parent then the Oral Disease Prevention Program will provide a simple oral health assessment with parent/guardian consent at the school as the last resort.

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**Question: Where will schools document the dental examination or oral health assessment?**

**Answer:** The WV Department of Education will provide a data entry area on the WVEIS on the Web (WOW), Health tab for dental examination and assessment. Please note oral health screening is under the HealthCheck completed by a medical or health care provider, not the Dentist for this data collection site. Oral Health screenings by the school nurse or medical home should be placed under the oral health screening section not the dental exam or oral health assessment.

**Question: What is the difference in an oral health screening, assessment or dental examination?**

**Answer:**

- **An oral health screening** is usually completed by a nurse or medical provider to see if your child has any possible concerns with their teeth or mouth to detect any type of mouth ulcers or oral diseases or concern with your child's teeth to make a referral to a Dentist.
- **A dental assessment** is completed by a dental hygienist or Dentist to provide a simple structural assessment of your child's mouth with the aid of an x-ray. Your child should see a Dentist for a dental examination inclusive of an x-ray within 6 months of the dental assessment.
- **A dental examination** is a complete oral health assessment inclusive of an x-ray of the dental bones to diagnose and treat any dental concerns for oral health prevention completed by a dentist.

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**New Dental Examination Requirement**  
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**Questions and Answers for Parents & Guardians**

Children with healthy teeth live longer more productive lives and have higher self-esteem. The oral health of your child is important to ensure their school success, health and happiness. Please work with your Dentist and school to make sure your child has a healthy smile and great life!

**Question: What is Policy 2423 and what does it mean to me and my child?**

**Answer:** Formerly named *Communicable Disease Control*, West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2423 has been around since 2007 and requires a comprehensive physical examination and immunizations for students prior to the start of the school year. Effective July 1, 2014, Policy 2423 has been renamed *Health Promotion and Disease Prevention* and has been expanded to include a dental exam for new enterers in Pre-K and Kindergarten and subsequent grades 2, 7 and 12. The policy will be phased in, beginning with Pre-K and Kindergarten for School Year (SY) 2015-16, grade 2 (SY 2016-17), grade 7 (SY 2017-18) and grade 12 (SY 2018-19).

**Question: When is my child's dental examination due?**

**Answer:** The dental examination should be completed within one year of the date of pre-enrollment or at the time of enrollment. There will be a grace period of 45 days from enrollment (first day of class) for students to provide proof of the completed dental examination.

**Question: Where can I get my child's dental examination completed?**

**Answer:** If your child already has a dentist, he/she can complete the examination. Your child will need a signed slip from the dentist verifying the date he/she had an exam and the date the exam was given. If your child **does not** already have a dentist, he/she will be eligible for enrollment in the Oral Disease Prevention Program (ODPP) and an oral health assessment can be completed at his/her school with parent/guardian permission. The program staff will assist with any follow-up care including the need for your child to be seen by a regular dentist within six months after the assessment. The State Oral Health Program will assist you in finding your child a regular dentist.

**Question: How will the dental examination be paid for?**

**Answer:** If your child is enrolled in Medicaid, CHIP, or any other dental insurance plan, the exam will be paid for by them. If your child is not covered by a dental insurance plan, and you cannot afford to pay, your child is eligible for the school-based program called the Oral Disease Prevention Program, as mentioned above. This service is provided regardless of ability to pay.

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(304) 558-8830- or email [rjking@k12.wv.us](mailto:rjking@k12.wv.us) or visit the website at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/>

**New Dental Examination Requirement**  
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**Question: What is the required documentation?**

**Answer:** Students must provide proof that they have had a dental examination within the last 12 months at the time of enrollment. At a minimum, it must show the date the exam was given and the dentist's signature. There is no special form to show proof of examination. In order for the school and ODPP to assist with follow-up care coordination with your Dentist, it would be beneficial if the information indicated need for restorative care.

**Question: Are oral health screenings or assessments at school the same as a dental examination?**

**Answer:** No, unless your school has a dental clinic staff with a Dentist and x-ray equipment.

- **An oral health screening** is usually completed by a nurse or medical provider to see if your child has any possible concerns with their teeth or mouth to detect any type of mouth ulcers or oral diseases or concern with your child's teeth to make a referral to a Dentist.
- **A dental assessment** is completed by a dental hygienist or Dentist to provide a simple structural assessment of your child's mouth with the aid of an x-ray. Your child should see a Dentist for a dental examination inclusive of an x-ray within 6 months of the dental assessment.
- **A dental examination** is a complete oral health assessment inclusive of an x-ray of the dental bones to diagnose and treat any dental concerns for oral health prevention completed by a dentist.

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## **Insist on dental sealants – proven to prevent dental decay!**

Dental sealants are plastic coatings applied to the chewing surfaces of molars that prevent dental decay. When combined with appropriate use of fluorides, dental sealants can virtually eliminate dental decay, the most prevalent dental disease!

### **Myth**

Too much time is lost when taking students out of the classroom for school-based dental care.

### **Fact**

More time is lost when students miss school because of toothaches. An estimated 51 million school hours per year are lost due to dental related illness. Overall, children with good oral health spend more time in school learning.

### **Myth**

It is too costly to provide dental services in schools.

### **Fact**

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Oral Health Program partners with Marshall University School of Medicine and the West Virginia Department of Education and provides grant funds to facilitate the Oral Disease Prevention Program by utilizing grant funds to implement school-based dental sealant programs throughout the state. West Virginia dental service providers, community dentists and dental hygienists provide preventive services **at no cost to your school**. A value cannot be placed on the averted dental disease, or the pain and suffering of a child with oral disease.

### **Myth**

Dental equipment takes up too much space in the schools and takes a long time for dental staff to set up.

### **Fact**

Portable dental equipment can be set up in a school gymnasium, library, classroom corner or a hallway if necessary. It takes approximately 45 to 60 minutes to set up equipment and supplies and approximately 30 to 45 minutes to disassemble and pack up.

### **Myth**

Students are apprehensive about receiving dental care in a school setting, especially when parents are not present.

### **Fact**

Students actually do very well when receiving school-based dental services. Students tend to find dental care less threatening when they observe their classmates receiving care.

### **Myth**

School-based dental services are second rate.

**Fact**

Quality care is priority with school-based services. **The Dental Sealant Grant Program** requires rigorous standards for quality assurance by following the guidelines of regulatory agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), West Virginia Board of Dentistry, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in addition to performance reviews, site visits, audits and sealant retention rate standards.

**Myth**

It is the responsibility of the parent, not the school, to ensure that children have good oral health.

**Fact**

Unfortunately, many parents cannot afford or access dental care. Schools can help children receive necessary preventive care in order to stay healthy and in school. School-based dental services keep students healthy in schools and learning versus absent for toothaches and leaving a full day for a one-hour appointment with a Dentist.

**Myth**

Dental sealants don't make a big difference in a child's oral health status.

**Fact**

Dental sealants are effective in preventing dental decay. School-based dental sealant programs have been shown to reduce dental decay on the chewing surfaces of back teeth by 60 percent over a five-year period. They are 100 percent effective when fully retained.

**\*Reminder – West Virginia Board of Education, Policy 2423 now requires all children in Pre-K and Kindergarten, and grades 2, 7 and 12 to have a dental examination. Utilizing school-based services may be a viable way to help your students fulfill this requirement.**