

The Empower Academy

School Health Office Information and Guidelines for Families

2026–2027 School Year

Welcome to a new year at Springs Empower Academy!

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Debbie Parker or “Nurse Debbie”. I have been a registered nurse for 35 years. Primarily, I have been a hospital / adult nurse. Last year was my first year as an elementary school nurse. I have learned a great deal. Children are great teachers and I have loved helping and seeing them everyday.

I have a passion for health education. My educational goals for staff and students.

For School Staff -

- To have a current CPR/AED card. (The majority of the school staff already have this certification.)
- To be able to recognize symptoms that need care or emergency intervention. Certain staff will be trained in administering medication or responding to health needs if I am not present.

For Children -

- To learn the amazing workings of the human body and to make healthy choices. For some children, to understand their chronic conditions and how to prevent or handle symptoms within the depth of their understanding.

I am here to work with parents within state, district and evidence based guidelines. Please complete the student health information form and read the following.

This will help ensure an informative and healthy school year. - Nurse Debbie.

Complete Health Information Matters

Students spend a significant portion of their day at school. Having current medical information allows us to:

- Respond appropriately during medical emergencies.
- Provide necessary accommodations and support.
- Safely administer medications when required.
- Communicate effectively with families and healthcare providers.
- Ensure teachers and staff are aware of important health concerns.
- Create individualized plans for students with chronic health conditions.

Incomplete or outdated medical information can delay care during an emergency and may impact our ability to provide appropriate support.

Vaccinations and Physicals

- Vaccinations must be up to date. Please speak to your pediatrician about specific guidelines for incoming Kindergarten and 7th graders. The doctors office will have the Tennessee Immunization form that will be needed to attend school.
 - Summer is a great time to schedule a yearly physical if it has not been done in the last year. All new students (pre-K, kindergarten, new to Tennessee or coming from a private or home school setting) must have had a physical within the last year and proof written on the Tennessee Certificate of Immunizations.
 - Sports physical or proof of a recent physical by a healthcare provider will be necessary to participate in some sporting activities.
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Health Screenings

Annual health screenings will be conducted on all students in K, 2nd, 4th and 6th grades. The screenings consist of height, weight, blood pressure, hearing and vision. Blood pressure will not be taken on Kindergarten students. All parents can opt their child out of the screenings through the online registration process. Once screenings are complete, results will be mailed home to the parent. This is a screening only and does not take the place of a physical by your child's healthcare provider.

Health Forms and Medication Guidelines for over the counter or prescription medications.

- **All Health forms must be renewed each year.**
- Daily medicine that is required by a physician must have a doctor completed Medication Authorization Form for each medicine.
- Daily medications should be given at home, unless the doctor specifies a necessary specific time during the school day.
- Medication must be in original packaging or prescription bottle with a complete label that matches the medication authorization form.
- Parents are responsible for replacing medication that has expired or in need of a refill.
- Expired or discontinued medication must be picked up by parent immediately or will be discarded per policy.
- Medication can not be transported or kept by the student in a backpack / lunch box. This includes over the counter medications, sun block, insect repellent or cough drops.
- The school does not have a stock supply of medications for issues like pain, allergy or acid reflux.
- No prescription medication or as needed over the counter treatments will be given or kept at school without completed appropriate paperwork and a sign off by the school nurse.
- Please note that we can not give supplements or herbal remedies that are not approved by the FDA.
- Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) are common with some conditions such as asthma, severe allergies or seizure activity. These are also completed by the child's healthcare provider.
- It is recommended that children that need daily or emergency medication have a parent chaperone accompany them on field trips, although this is not required. School staff that are with the child will be trained on giving daily or emergency medication. The school nurse may or may not be present.

Best Practices for Families

To help us provide the best possible care:

Keep Contact Information Current

Ensure all phone numbers and emergency contacts are up to date.

Respond Promptly

Please put the school number in your contacts so you will know to answer if called. If a voicemail is not clearly identified as belonging to a parent, we can not leave detailed messages.

We cannot send text messages regarding health information, very basic information can be sent or received via DOJO, which is an internal chatting system. Do not provide sensitive information over DOJO.

Submit Forms Early

Please complete Student Health Information form and any consent forms necessary for chronic health conditions and medication administration at school as soon as possible. School Nurse, Debbie Parker is available to receive forms or answer questions via school email over the summer.

Communicate Health Concerns

Notify the School Health Office whenever there is a change in: Medical diagnoses or conditions, medications, allergies, hospitalization, surgeries or contact information.

****Please do not assume the school is aware of changes from previous school years. Health information should be updated annually and whenever changes occur.**

When to Keep Your Child Home

Students should remain home if they have:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Contagious illness as directed by a healthcare provider.
- Symptoms that prevent meaningful participation in school activities.

Students should generally be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school. If antibiotics are prescribed by a healthcare provider, children should be on medication for 24 hrs before returning to school and signs of improvement are evident.

Contact the School Health Office

Debbie Parker RN

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615-237-7170 x 3

Thank you for helping us keep our students healthy, safe, and ready to learn!