

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

AUXILIARY SERVICES

Lead Testing

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the elementary schools adhere to the rules and regulations of Iowa law 641 and cooperate with the Iowa Department of Health concerning lead testing of elementary kindergarten school students. The purpose of the testing requirement is to improve the health of Iowa's children.

A blood level test shall be performed before the applicant or transfer student reaches six years of age, or in cases in which the applicant or transfer student has already reached six years of age, as soon as the Department of Health notifies the parent/guardian that a blood lead test has not yet been performed.

Any kindergarten applicant and/or transfer student must have a blood level test unless they have an exemption for religious reasons or an exemption for very low risk of elevated blood lead levels.

A religious exemption may be granted to students if the testing conflicts with a genuine and sincere religious belief. A certificate for religious exemption from blood lead testing shall attest that the testing conflicts with a genuine and sincere religious belief and that the belief is in fact religious and not based on merely philosophical, scientific, moral, personal or medical opposition to blood lead testing. The certificate of blood lead testing exemption for religious reasons shall be signed and dated by the applicant's or transfer student's parent/guardian and must be notarized. Since there is no legitimate reason for a religious exemption for Catholics; no religious exemption will be granted for Catholic students.

The Department of Health may grant an applicant or transfer student an exemption for very low risk if the parent/guardian provides evidence satisfactory to the Department that the applicant or transfer student meet the definition of very low risk. The exemption certificate shall be signed and dated by the student's parent/guardian and by the chief of the Bureau of Lead Poisoning prevention. The certificate is only valid if it has been notarized.

Each school shall furnish the Department of Health, in the format specified by the Department, (www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/lead_poisoning_prevention.asp#testing) within 60 days after the start of school, an electronic list of the children enrolled in kindergarten, including the names of children who have filed certificates of blood lead testing exemption. The Department will then inform each school of the children who have and have not met the legal blood lead testing requirements.

If the parent/guardian cannot provide evidence that the child received a blood lead test, the school shall, in collaboration with the Department of Health, provide the parent/guardian with community blood testing information, including contact information for the Department of Health

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