Please see the below information sent by PDE to school administrators earlier today:

The information contained in this letter is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Please consult your Solicitor regarding your duties and obligations under the School Code. The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will provide additional guidance, implementation resources, forms, and technical assistance as soon as it is available.

Eating Disorder Awareness and Education (24 P.S. § 14-1426)

Section 1426 of the School Code requires the Joint State Government Commission to establish the Eating Disorder Advisory Committee to provide recommendations to DOH and PDE concerning eating disorder awareness and education. DOH and PDE will develop the required educational information and materials once the Committee issues recommendations. School entities are not expected to make materials available to parents, guardians, and school personnel until DOH and PDE have developed and disseminated the educational information.

Academic Instruction on Personal Health (24 P.S. § 15-1512.1)

Effective immediately, academic instruction on personal health, nutrition, and physical fitness may not include the calculation of BMI. Any instruction that requires the collection of a student's height and weight measurement must be conducted in a manner that protects student confidentiality.

Height and Weight Reporting (24 P.S. §§ 14-1402 and 1408)

Effective immediately, a student's measurement of height and weight may only be collected by a school nurse or other health care practitioner. Teachers may no longer collect a student's height and weight. Information must be collected in a manner that protects student confidentiality.

For the purposes of this section, a health care practitioner means an individual who is authorized to practice some component of the healing arts by a license, permit, certificate or registration issued by a Commonwealth licensing agency or board.

A student is exempt from measurement of height and weight if the student's parent or guardian requests an exemption in writing. School entities must provide notification to parents and guardians of their procedure for requesting an exemption. The notification should be provided ahead of height and weight screenings, so parents and guardians have adequate time to request an exemption.

Effective immediately, height and weight measurements may be calculated into a BMI by a school nurse or other trained health care practitioner employed by a school entity solely for reporting purposes. School entities must report the height, weight, and BMI calculation to DOH in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the student's information.

School entities may not deliver a student's BMI to either the student or the student's parent or guardian unless requested by the parent or legal guardian in writing.

School entities should establish procedures for collecting height and weight exemption requests and BMI calculation requests and ensure such procedures are properly communicated to parents and guardians. A Growth Screening Exemption Form Template and a Pennsylvania Student Wellness Report Template are available on the DOH Growth Screening Program website.

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