

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HARRISBURG

ROBERT S. ZIMMERMAN, JR., MPH
SECRETARY OF HEALTH

April 14, 2000

Dear Superintendent/Health Coordinator:

As you are aware, the Pennsylvania School Code currently requires physical examinations be completed for new enterers (K or first), sixth and eleventh graders. Dental examinations are required for new enterers (K or first), third and seventh graders.

Many parents/guardians elect to have their child's exam done privately. However, the Pennsylvania Public School Code also requires that private exams be completed within four months of the beginning of the designated school year. For some parents who elect to do private exams as well as physicians, dentists, and schools, this time constraint has become difficult. It often results in unnecessary examinations, lost time for parents and practitioners, additional expenses for families, and added paperwork for schools.

To rectify this situation, I am exercising my authority under Section 1402 (f) of the Public School Code to allow for a modification in the school health services program related to physical and dental exams. Specifically, I will allow school districts to accept reports of private physical and dental exams completed within one year prior to a student's entry into the grade where an exam is required. If your district chooses to expand the acceptable time frame for completion of private examinations, it must be approved by your school board and incorporated into your school health program policies/procedures. Individual requests from school districts for these modifications are not necessary. However, school districts must notify the Department of Health of this change stating that the school board has approved it. The Department will then consider this aspect of your school health services program modified.

This modification conforms to generally accepted medical and dental practices, and will provide your school, students, parents/guardians and practitioners flexibility in assuring minimum school health requirements are met. Should you have any questions, please contact our District School Health Consultant for your area, or our Division of School Health at (717) 787-2390.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert S. Zimmerman, Jr.".

Robert S. Zimmerman, Jr.
Secretary of Health