Pennsylvania Department of School Health Examination
Mandates and Provisions

Physical Examinations - Upon original entry into school, grades 6 and 11

A physical examination is required upon original entry into school, grade six and eleven, and on when entering at any grade level if the student's health records are incomplete by Pennsylvania standards. Parents are encouraged to have their children examined by their own physician. Your child's physician is familiar with your child and is better able to recognize changes in your child's health, to provide treatment or council for on-going conditions, and to provide important immunizations.

www.nhsd.org/HealthServices/docs/PrivatePhysician.pdf

If there exists a financial need, or you have a personal preference, the school doctor can perform the needed physical examination. The option to have a school physical is available on the bottom portion of the request for physical exam form you will receive in the mail over the summer. If you would like your child to receive the exam from the school doctor, please complete and sign the bottom of that form and return it to the school nurse.

Dental Examinations - Upon original entry into school, grades 3 & 7

All children of school age in the Commonwealth, upon original entry into school, grade three and seven are required to have a dental examination.

It is strongly encouraged that students be examined by their own dentists routinely where they can receive routine cleaning and treatments.

www.nhsd.org/HealthServices/docs/PrivateDentist.pdf

If your student does not have a dentist, or you prefer, your child may be examined by the school dentist. Please be aware that the school dentist is limited to a simple oral examination and does not provide cleaning or any follow-up care that might be needed. The school dentist will make recommendations for further evaluation based on his/her findings.

Annual Health Screenings: http://www.nhsd.org/HealthServices/annualhealth.html

All students will receive an annual health screening by the school nurse. Please visit the site above for details.
*Scoliosis Screening - Grades 6 & 7*

Scoliosis Screenings are required on your child's sixth grade physical examination forms, and should be completed by your child's physician. If a school physical is required the scoliosis screening will be part of the school screening conducted by the school physician, and a report will be forwarded to you if scoliosis is detected.

All students in seventh grade will be screened by a Certified School Nurse, trained in scoliosis screening and detection. Your child will be screened in private and will not be required to remove only excess clothing e.g. sweaters or sweatshirts. If the nurse feels that a careful exam cannot be conducted due to clothing that may be hindering the screening, the child will be asked to return to be examined on another day with a request to wear lighter clothing that allows the back, and form to be more visible.

If your child does not meet the criteria for passing the scoliosis screenings, within the guidelines set by the Pennsylvania Department of School Health, you will be notified via mail, and will be encouraged to seek a more comprehensive evaluation by a physician.

**FACTS ABOUT SCOLIOSIS**

- Scoliosis is a three-dimensional curvature of the spine
- One in 10 persons will have at least a mild form of Scoliosis. Two to three persons in every 1000 will need active treatment for a progressive condition.
- Frequent signs are a prominent shoulder blade, uneven hip and shoulder levels, unequal distance between arms and body, and clothes that do not “hang right.”
- Eight percent of Scoliosis cases are idiopathic (cause unknown). Scoliosis tends to run in families and affects more girls than boys.
- Spinal curvature is best dealt with when a young person's body is still growing and can respond to treatments, such as a body brace. Mild cases may not need treatment, but must be monitored.
- Kyphosis (round back) may also occur in developing adolescents. It should be screened for and may need to be treated.
- A scoliosis check can be performed in approximately 30 seconds and is part of your child's annual screening during 6th and 7th grades, during these growing years.

**BMI Mandated Reporting - Grades K-12**

BMI (Body Mass Index) reports are part of the Growth Screening Program developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, in a nationwide effort to address a growing risk of heart disease and other related chronic diseases related to being overweight, at risk of becoming overweight, or underweight. The BMI was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The BMI is a weight for stature index, based on a percentile curve that factors in gender, age, and national health statistics.

The Pennsylvania growth screening program enables school health professionals to:

- **Monitor growth and development patterns of students**
- **Identify students who may be at nutritional risk or who may have a common nutritional problem**
• Notify parents/guardians of screening results with a recommendation to share findings with the student's health care provider for further evaluation and intervention, if necessary.

For more information please visit:  www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/index.htm