

# Bishop Feehan High School

## Policy Regarding Prescription Opioid Administration in the School Setting

### Rationale and Purpose

According to Health and Human Services, ***Our nation is in the midst of an unprecedented opioid epidemic. More people died from drug overdoses in 2014 than in any year on record, and the majority of drug overdose deaths (more than six out of ten) involved an opioid.***

This policy is to assure that any student attending Bishop Feehan who requires the classification of opioid medications to control pain is in the safest environment and that any administration of such medication by the school nurse (RN), is done within the guidelines of sound practice.

### Policy Statement

Students that require the use of an opioid to control **“temporary acute pain”** should remain out of school until pain free OR the discomfort is well controlled using over-the-counter analgesics.

Students that experience **“chronic pain”** and are followed by a licensed physician for that explicit purpose, may have an opioid administered in the school setting under strict provisions.

### Implementation

Parents/Guardians of Bishop Feehan students who have had or will have surgical or dental procedures or who have sustained an injury that may temporarily require opioids for pain relief, will be made aware that due to the side effects of opioid medications that may include, but are not limited to: dizziness, sedation and confusion, their child should remain home until their pain is sufficiently minimized so as to be alleviated by an over-the-counter analgesic such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil).

Any student that experiences “chronic pain” and is under the direct care of a physician for that explicit purpose, may be allowed to receive opioid medication under the following provisions.

1. A written order by a licensed prescriber
2. The order must contain a beginning date, an end date, and a date of review. It may not be “open-ended”.
3. The order must contain the acceptable general guidelines of a medication order:

Students Name, Name of Medication with the Strength and Dose, the Route for Administration and the Frequency of Administration, Potential Side Effects and Diagnosis

4. The medication must be brought to the school by a parent/guardian. It must be in the original pharmacy container, and must be given to the nurse.
5. The student may not “carry” the medication and may not “self-administer”.
6. The medication will be kept in the nurse’s office in the double-locked, wall-mounted cabinet.
7. The parent/guardian will be responsible for informing the nurse of recent doses taken at home so as to prevent over-dosing.

### Definitions

1. **Opioid Medication-** Opioids are a classification of drugs that act on the nervous system to relieve pain. Continued use and abuse can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms. They come in tablets, capsules, liquid or skin patch. Common examples of opioid medications:  
codeine (with acetaminophen is called Tylenol #3)  
hydrocodone (with acetaminophen is called Vicodin)  
oxycodone (with acetaminophen is called Percocet, without acetaminophen is called Oxycontin)  
hydromorphone (Dilaudid)  
meperidine (Demerol)  
fentanyl (Duragesic)
2. **Temporary Pain:** Pain that goes away when there is no longer an underlying cause for the pain. Examples of Temporary Pain may include: post-operative pain, pain from dental procedures, broken bones, sprains/strains.
3. **Chronic Pain:** Chronic pain is often defined as any pain lasting more than 12 weeks. Whereas acute pain is a normal sensation that alerts us to possible injury, chronic pain is very different. Chronic pain persists—often for months or even longer. Examples of Chronic Pain may include: Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD), spinal disorders, intractable headaches, fibromyalgia, joint disease (rheumatoid arthritis), cancer

### References

The United States Department of Health and Human Services