

Dear Parent or Guardian:

To make sure your child is ready for school, California law, *Education Code* Section 49452.8, now requires that your child have an oral health assessment (dental check-up) by May 31 in either kindergarten or first grade, whichever is his or her first year in school. Assessments that have happened within the 12 months before your child enters school also meet this requirement. The law specifies that the assessment must be done by a licensed dentist or other licensed or registered dental health professional.

Take the attached Oral Health Assessment/Waiver Request form to the dental office, as it will be needed for your child's check-up. If you cannot take your child for this required assessment, please indicate the reason for this in Section 3 of the form. You can get more copies of the necessary form at your child's school or online from the California Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/>. California law requires schools to maintain the privacy of students' health information. Your child's identity will not be associated with any report produced as a result of this requirement.

The following resources will help you find a dentist and complete this requirement for your child:

1. Medi-Cal/Denti-Cal's toll-free number or Web site can help you to find a dentist who takes Denti-Cal: 1-800-322-6384; <http://www.denti-cal.ca.gov>. For help enrolling your child in Medi-Cal/Denti-Cal, contact your local social service agency at (fill in appropriate local contact information, available at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/mcs/medi-Calhome/CountyListing1.htm>.)
2. Healthy Families' toll-free number or Web site can help you to find a dentist who takes Healthy Families insurance or to find out if your child can enroll in the program: 1-800-880-5305 or <http://www.healthyfamilies.ca.gov/hfhome.asp>.
3. For additional resources that may be helpful, contact the local public health department at (fill in appropriate local contact information, available at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/mcs/medi-Calhome/CountyListing1.htm>)

Remember, your child is not healthy and ready for school if he or she has poor dental health! Here is important advice to help your child stay healthy:

- Take your child to the dentist twice a year.
- Choose healthy foods for the entire family. Fresh foods are usually the healthiest foods.

- Brush teeth at least twice a day with toothpaste that contains fluoride.
- Limit candy and sweet drinks, such as punch or soda. Sweet drinks and candy contain a lot of sugar, which causes cavities and replaces important nutrients in your child's diet. Sweet drinks and candy also contribute to weight problems, which may lead to other diseases, such as diabetes. The less candy and sweet drinks, the better!

Baby teeth are very important. They are not just teeth that will fall out. Children need their teeth to eat properly, talk, smile, and feel good about themselves. Children with cavities may have difficulty eating, stop smiling, and have problems paying attention and learning at school. Tooth decay is an infection that does not heal and can be painful if left without treatment. If cavities are not treated, children can become sick enough to require emergency room treatment, and their adult teeth may be permanently damaged.

Many things influence a child's progress and success in school, including health. Children must be healthy to learn, and children with cavities are not healthy. Cavities are preventable, but they affect more children than any other chronic disease.

If you have questions about the new oral health assessment requirement, please contact (fill in name of district personnel or office responsible for the program, telephone number and/or e-mail address).

Sincerely,

District Superintendent

Attachment

## Oral Health Assessment/Waiver Request Form

California law, *Education Code* Section 49452.8, now requires that your child have an oral health assessment by May 31 in kindergarten or first grade, whichever is his or her first year of public school. The law specifies that the assessment must be performed by a licensed dentist or other licensed or registered dental health professional. Oral health assessments that have happened within the 12 months before your child enters school also meet this requirement. If you cannot take your child for this assessment, you may be excused from this requirement by filling out Section 3 of this form.

### Section 1

#### To be completed by the parent or guardian

|                       |   |                 |   |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| Child's First Name:   | Last Name:  | Middle Initial: | Child's birth date:   |
| Address:              |   |                 | Apt.:   |
| City:                 |   |                 | ZIP code:   |
| School Name:          | Teacher:  | Grade:          | Child's Gender:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Male<br><input type="checkbox"/> Female |
| Parent/Guardian Name: | Child's race/ethnicity:<br><input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino<br><input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Alaska Native<br><input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-racial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unknown |                 |   |

### Section 2

#### Oral Health Data Collection

#### To be completed by the dental professional conducting the assessment

|                  |   |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| Assessment Date: | <u>Visible caries and/or fillings present:</u><br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <u>Visible caries present:</u><br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <u>Treatment Urgency:</u><br><input type="checkbox"/> No obvious problem found<br><input type="checkbox"/> Early dental care recommended<br><input type="checkbox"/> Urgent care needed |
|------------------|---|---|---|

*Dental professional's signature*

*Date*

**Return this form to the school by July 31**

*Original to be retained in child's school record.*

**Section 3**  
**Waiver of Oral Health Assessment Requirement**  
**To be completed by a parent or guardian requesting to be excused from this requirement**

I request that my child be excused from the oral health assessment requirement for the following reason: (Please check the box that best describes the reason.)

- I am unable to find a dental office that will take my child's insurance plan.  
My child is covered by the following insurance plan:  
 Medi-Cal/Denti-Cal     Healthy Families     Healthy Kids     None  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

- I cannot afford an oral health assessment for my child.  
 I do not wish my child to receive an oral health assessment.

Optional: other reasons my child could not get an oral health assessment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

California law requires schools to maintain the privacy of students' health information. Your child's identity will not be associated with any report produced as a result of this requirement. If you have any questions about this requirement, please contact your school office.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of parent or guardian**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Return this form to the school by July 31**

*Original to be retained in child's school record.*