

6.014 Policy and Administrative Procedures Regarding Prohibition Concerning Recommendations for the Use of Psychotropic Drugs by Students

Cooperative Educational Services believes that the use of psychotropic drugs by students is a personal decision to be made by the parents of students. Therefore, it is the policy of Cooperative Educational Services to prohibit any school personnel from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any child. This policy does not prohibit school health or mental health personnel or the Planning and Placement Team from recommending that a child be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, or prohibit school personnel from consulting with such practitioner with the consent of the parents or guardian of such child. Nor does this policy prohibit C.E.S.' consulting physicians (e.g., consulting psychiatrist, consulting neurologist, etc.) from directly discussing with parents/guardian the benefits of psychotropic drugs to address behavioral, developmental, emotional and/or physical problems presented by their child, or to recommend a specific psychotropic drug for them to consider and/or discuss with their child's private physician.

REFERENCES: CGS 10-212b. Policies Prohibiting the Recommendation of Psychotropic Drugs by School Personnel as amended by: P.A. No. 03-211 An Act Concerning the Provision of Medical Care for Student's Health Care Needs

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C.E.S. Representative Council
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6.014 Administrative Guidelines for Prohibition Concerning Recommendations for the Use of Psychotropic Drugs by Students:

1.a. For the purposes of this C.E.S. policy, school personnel include program administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, student teachers, educational instructors, instructional aides, secretaries/clerical staff, speech pathologists, audiologists, occupational and physical therapists. These educational personnel are prohibited from recommending to parents/guardian the use of psychotropic medications for their child.

1.b. For the purposes of this C.E.S. policy, school health or mental health personnel include the school nurse, school psychologists, and school social workers, C.E.S. medical advisor and consulting physicians or nurse practitioners (e.g., consulting psychiatrist, consulting neurologist, etc.). These staff may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner for consideration of psychotropic drugs.

1.c. For the purposes of this C.E.S. policy, psychotropic drugs means prescription medications for behavioral or social-emotional concerns such as attention deficits, impulsivity, anxiety, depression and thought disorders, and includes, but is not limited to stimulant medication and antidepressants.

2. Because of the challenging behavioral, developmental, emotional and/or physical problems presented by students attending certain C.E.S. education programs, there may be instances when C.E.S. school personnel observe behavior, developmental, emotional or physical symptoms in a child that may benefit from, or require medical attention (e.g., psychotic symptoms including hallucinations, delusions, or highly disorganized thought processes; facial tics; severe depression with or without suicidal ideation; severe hyperactivity, self-injurious behavior, impulsivity, or inattention; obsessions and/or compulsions; severe aggressive outbursts, etc.). In such instances, such school personnel should communicate these concerns to the program administrator who will consult the appropriate school health or mental health personnel to determine the best course of action for communicating these concerns to the student's parents/guardian. The program administrator may also with parent consent consult with an appropriate medical practitioner designated by the parents/guardian. This course of action shall not include a recommendation to parents/guardian that he/she seek psychotropic drugs for their child. As reflected in the C.E.S., policy, the decision to place a child on psychotropic drugs is strictly between the parents/guardian and a physician.

Additionally, this course of action may include communicating to the parents/guardian that these symptoms have been observed, and that it is the belief of the C.E.S. school health or mental health personnel that these symptoms may benefit from, or require, medical attention. As such, the recommendation to the parents/guardian would be to seek

the advice of a physician (e.g., psychiatrist) regarding the observable symptoms. Because C.E.S. has in its employ, consulting physicians (e.g., psychiatrist, neurologist), the parents/guardian may be offered the opportunity to discuss the observed symptoms with one of C.E.S.'s consulting physicians. It will be made clear to parents at the time of such consultations, that they may seek the advice of their own physician or that they may choose to disregard the recommendations made by C.E.S. consulting physicians. The C.E.S. consulting physician may discuss the benefits of certain psychotropic drugs to address the student's observable symptoms or may recommend a specific psychotropic drug for them to consider and/or discuss with their child's private physician.

3. C.E.S. school and/or school health or mental health personnel (i.e., consulting physicians, school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker) will obtain written permission from a student's parents/guardian in order to speak with or obtain information from a child's private physician. Such permission will be obtained using the *C.E.S. HIPPA compliant Authorization for Release of Health Information Form*.

4. C.E.S. school, school health or mental health may report at a student's PPT meeting the student's progress or lack of progress and the behavior(s) demonstrated by the student that may be interfering with his/her ability to learn in the classroom or school environment. The Planning and Placement team may recommend a medical evaluation as part of a reevaluation to determine the child's educational needs for his/her individualized program.

5. When a student attending a C.E.S. program is being administered psychotropic drugs, C.E.S. school personnel may verbally or in writing receive information about such medications from parents/guardian. Such information should be conveyed to appropriate C.E.S. school health and mental health staff. Any questions raised by the parents/guardian or advice sought by parents/guardian about such medications should be directed to C.E.S. school health and mental health staff.