



Coosa County School System  
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### Alabama Students Can Now Use Sunscreen at School

Students in Alabama's public and private schools are now allowed to use sunscreen at school despite any existing State Department of Education or Board of Nursing regulations that restrict the use of prescription and over-the-counter medications. It also makes the schools immune from liability if a student does - or does not - opt to apply sun protection.

### Finding a Safe Backpack

Despite their potential problems, backpacks are great when used properly. Before you buy one, though, consider a backpack's construction.

Look for the following features to choose the right backpack:

- **a lightweight pack:** get one that doesn't add a lot of weight to your child's load; for example, leather packs look cool, but they weigh more than canvas backpacks
- **two wide, padded shoulder straps:** straps that are too narrow can dig into shoulders
- **a padded back:** it not only provides increased comfort but also protects kids from being poked by sharp objects or edges (pencils, rulers, notebooks, etc.) inside the pack
- **a waist belt:** this helps to distribute the weight more evenly across the body
- **multiple compartments:** to help distribute the weight throughout the pack

Although packs on wheels (which look like small, overhead luggage bags) may be good options for students who have to lug around really heavy loads, they're very hard to pull up stairs and to roll through snow. *Check with the school before buying a rolling pack;* many do not allow them because they can be a tripping hazard in the hallways.

### Flu Vaccination

#### Why should people get vaccinated against the flu?

Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently, but millions of people get the flu every year, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized and thousands or tens of thousands of people die from flu-related causes every year. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. The CDC estimates that flu-related hospitalizations since 2010 ranged from 140,000 to 710,000, while flu-related deaths are estimated to have ranged from 12,000 to 56,000 (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/2015-16.htm>). During flu season, flu viruses circulate at higher levels in the U.S. population. ("Flu season" in the United States can begin as early as October and last as late as May.) An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce your risk of getting sick with seasonal flu and spreading it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community. Additional information regarding flu disease and the flu vaccine is located in Document Uploads under Flu Information.



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**nurseWebsites for Health Services Information**

Alabama Department of Public Health

<http://www.adph.org/>

Alabama State Department of Education

<http://www.alsde.edu>

Centers for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Heavy Backpack Awareness

[www.bacsupport.com](http://www.bacsupport.com)

Meningococcal Information - Alabama Department of Public Health

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/meningococcal.html>

Flu & Pneumonia Vaccines - Alabama Department of Public Health

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/flu-and-pneu-vaccines.html>