

January 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian:

To make sure your child is ready for school, California law, *Education Code* Section 49452.8, 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 public school. Assessments that have happened within the 12 months before your child enters school also meet this requirement. The law specifies that the assessment be completed 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. 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!

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 factors 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 **Laurel Yrun, School Nurse at (415) 451-4078**.