January 16, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Education

RE: 2019 Revised Scoliosis Manual

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) have worked to revise the ALSDE Scoliosis Manual. Screening should be offered once annually for all students in Grades 5-9 (ages 11-14) to include special education students. There must be at least eight to ten months between intervals for each annual screening. The goal of this program is early detection of spinal deformities.

There is one significant change in the manual; the repeal of the Senate Joint Resolution 62 pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 16-29-1. The repeal allows the ability to include an opt-in or opt-out option for the parent or guardian of all students. The parent letter has been updated to provide parents/guardians with the information needed to make informed decisions.

Please note: the Parent Letter indicates that “forms not returned will result in students not receiving the screening.”

Additionally, the lead nurse will no longer be required to report referrals to the ALSDE. All reports will be kept at the local education agency.

The revised 2019 manual is designed to ensure that students who have scoliosis are identified and referred for medical evaluation prior to students’ complete growth, thereby reducing the potential for more involved treatments. This 2019 edition reinforces the standards and provides current best practices for school scoliosis screening.

The manual will be available on the ALSDE School Health Website at the link below:

www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Health%20Medications/ALABAMA%20PUBLIC%20SCHOOL%20SPINAL%20SCREENING%20MANUAL%20%202019.pdf

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Jennifer Ventress, Nurse Administrator, at 334-694-4717 or by email at jventress@alsde.edu or Ms. LaBrenda Marshall, Nurse Manager, at 334-694-4725 or by email at lmarshall@alsde.edu.

EGM/JV/KM

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