# Do Not Attempt Resuscitation - Procedure Worksheet for School Nurses

**Introduction:**

Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) orders are a sensitive issue. Professional school nurses are qualified to lead the process of responding to these orders in collaboration with the student’s family, physician, school administrators and the community emergency response team. This collaboration will support the development of appropriate accommodations to be included in the Individualized Health Plan (IHP) for the full needs of the student. The IHP should reference the procedure or the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to be taken in the event of cardiac or respiratory arrest. The National Association of School Nurses recommends evaluation of the DNAR with input from the school district’s legal counsel (NASN, 2014).

For the purposes of this document DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) means the same as DNAR. This process needs to begin once a DNAR order is in place. All health care providers are required, by law, to honor it (V.S.A. 18. § 9708). The following checklist can assist the school nurse in developing the EAP to comply with DNAR orders and the wishes of the family.

**School Nurse/Associate School Nurse Role:**

* Review the most current version of the States Nurse Practice Act and any other state and federal laws or regulations related to DNAR.
* Develop an IHP for the care of the whole child in school and the EAP for the actual process of DNAR. If applicable, include a Section 504 plan.
* Provide staff education and training on implementation of EAP and IHP.
* Plan for care of other students who may witness the death of the child.
* Provide emotional support to school staff regarding a death of a student in school.
* Inform the school administrators of the DNAR order. This allows the administration an opportunity to ask questions, review documentation and seek legal counsel, if necessary.

**Definitions:**

"Clinician orders for life-sustaining treatment" or "COLST" means a clinician's order or orders for treatment such as intubation, mechanical ventilation, transfer to hospital, antibiotics, artificially administered nutrition, or another medical intervention. A COLST order is designed for use in outpatient settings and health care facilities and may include a DNR order that meets the requirements of section 9708 of this title. 18 V.S.A. § 9701 (6).

"Do-not-resuscitate order" or "DNR order" means a written order of the patient's clinician directing health care providers not to attempt resuscitation. 18 V.S.A. § 9701 (8).

**CONSIDERATIONS**

* Meet with guardian and physician of student, to discuss individualized healthcare plan. Encourage guardians to discuss how they would like the school to respond to their child’s medical crisis, should it occur in school. Assure guardians that they may change their decision regarding the DNAR order without hesitation.
* Obtain assessment data and current medical summary, prepare an individualized healthcare plan.
* Obtain signed copy of DNAR order from physician. This document must be signed by the student’s guardian as well as the student’s physician *and* [emphasis added] a second clinician.
* In collaboration with the student’s family, physician, and local EMS, create or revise the student’s EAP to include the DNAR order. Consider contacting the VT Medical Examiner.

The EAP will include:

* Emergency contact information
* The procedure to be taken in the event of respiratory or cardiac arrest
* Which school team members will respond
* How the child will be moved to a safe and private area
* What comfort measures will be given
* The protocol for notifying family and who will notify the funeral director
* Who may pronounce death (physician will certify death); determine when body can be moved. How the deceased will be transported from school.
* Plans to communication between the school nurse or designee and the palliative care team, healthcare team, and other agencies as needed.
* In addition, the EAP will include procedures to be taken in the event of other medical emergencies; when the child is in distress but does not appear to face an imminent risk of death.
* Meet with guardian, student’s physician, local EMS/first responder liaison, and school administration and designated members of the student’s school team to review student’s IHP.
* Train designated staff.
* Plan for the student’s transportation for all school functions and door to door, curb to curb, and any needed unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP).
* Assess need to address student population preparation if DNAR is implemented.
* Clarify end of life vs. acute issues. Outline what may and may not be performed by staff that requires care, treatment and management.
* Determine plans for transport and mortuary arrangements, both if students are present on site or not, i.e. type of vehicle, where parked, how moved (stretcher, etc.) who will clear the halls, which exit to use.
* Implement bereavement plan for staff and students, may use crisis team (i.e. how will siblings on-site be notified).
* Convey final plan to all appropriate school staff and administrators. Staff will have the opportunity to express their feelings and establish roles in which they are comfortable participating. It may be helpful to include consultation from a medical ethicist. The Vermont Department of Health, School Nurse Consultant, may be able to assist in locating such a resource.
* The DNAR form and EAP should be reviewed periodically and a new form completed if necessary when:

1. The patient is transferred from one care setting or care level to another, or

2. There is a substantial change in the patient’s health status, or

3. The patient’s treatment preferences change, or

4. At least annually, but more frequently in residential or inpatient settings. (Instructions for Clinicians: 18 V.S.A. § 9701(4).

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School Nurse

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Guardian

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Students Physician

**References**

American Academy of Pediatrics – *Honoring Do-Not-Attempt-Resuscitation Requests in Schools:* <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/125/5/1073.full>. Pediatrics Vol. 125 No. 5 May 1, 2010, pp. 1073 -1077, (doi: 10.1542/peds.2010-0452)

National Association of School Nurses – Position Papers

* *Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) – The Role of the School Nurse (2018):* <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-dnar>
* *Individualized Healthcare Plans: The Role of the School Nurse* [*https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-ihps*](https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-ihps)

Putman, S. (2017). Do Not Attempt To Resuscitate (DNAR) in the School Setting. In Resha, C; Taliaferro, V. (Eds.), *Legal Resource for School Health Services* (pp. 243-252) Nashville, TN: SchoolNurse.com

School Crisis Planning Guide: [*Untimely Death*](http://schoolsafety.vermont.gov/sites/ssc/files/documents/SchoolSafetyPlanning/VTSchoolCrisisGuide/Response/Untimely%20Death.xls) *(June 2016)*

<http://schoolsafety.vermont.gov/planning/vermont-school-crisis-guide>

Selekman, J., Bochenek, J., Lukens, M. (2012). Children with Chronic Conditions (pp. 700-783), in Selekman, J., (Ed.) *School Nursing: A Comprehensive Text* / Edition 2. Philadelphia, F. A. Davis Company

Vermont Statutes Online:

* Advance Directives And Disposition Of Remains -18 V.S.A. § 9708

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/18/231/09708>

* Definitions -- 18 V.S.A. § 9701

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/18/231/09701>