

After the passage of Public Act 316 of 2023, MDHHS and MDE have been fielding calls from local school districts about what this new legislation means to them moving forward, particularly around reporting requirements. To help answer some of these questions, a memo was sent on Jan 18th to all local schools. The memo includes a link to a map detailing the LHD regions currently implementing the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) Program.

You and your staff may begin getting questions from local schools who want to plan for the upcoming school year.

If you are currently part of the KOHA program, we encourage you to work with your local districts to determine a timeline and plan for providing these oral health assessments.

If you are not currently implementing KOHA, below is some information that might be helpful to share with schools.

- Let them know that your LHD is not currently providing oral health assessments. Consider identifying a contact person at the school to follow up with at a later time if needed.
 - In the meantime, consider suggesting to schools and parents to have the dental assessment done at their private dental office if possible.
 - If you have a list of dental providers in your community that provide assessments, you may want to have those resources available to share.
 - If you are starting a planning process for KOHA, consider inviting them to participate.
 - The KOHA assessment form (MDHHS-6067) is available for download from the MDHHS KOHA website <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/familyhealth/oralhealth/koha> There is also other information on the website such as FAQs and flyers.
- Schools that receive a completed dental assessment form should place a copy in the student's school health record. *Schools can also check the dental screening checkbox in MCIR, but this is not required at this time.*
- In terms of school reporting, there is nothing schools need to do this school year. School district reporting of dental screening will begin in the 2024-25 school year. Instructions for reporting of data will be announced once the reporting mechanism is implemented.
- The MDHHS contact for the dental screening program is Michele Kawabe; email is kawabem@michigan.gov.

We recognize that it takes time and adequate funding to build a state-wide program. We are in the midst of building the KOHA program and look forward to working with you and your staff to address the oral health needs of children in your community. If you have any questions about KOHA, please reach out to Michele Kawabe at KawabeM@michigan.gov. We appreciate your partnership!

Sincerely,

Carrie



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STATE OF MICHIGAN

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 11, 2024

To: Principals and Superintendents of all Michigan Public, Private and Parochial Schools

From: Michele Kawabe, MPH, RD, CDCES
Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program Consultant

Subject: Dental Screening for Kindergarten Entrants

[Public Act 316 of 2023](#) was recently enacted which sets forth the requirement that all children in Michigan enrolling into their first year of school receive an oral health assessment (“dental screening”) prior to starting school. This new requirement begins with the 2024-2025 school year. MDHHS is required by law to establish and maintain a statewide Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program (KOHA) to provide the dental assessments at no cost to families. Similar to Michigan’s school-based hearing and vision screening programs, the dental assessment program is carried out at the local level through local health departments or their designee. The program is in Phase 2 of three-year phased implementation plan with the goal for full statewide implementation by the 2025-2026 school year.

Please note the following points regarding the kindergarten dental assessments:

- **Parents/guardians** are responsible for getting their child’s dental assessment completed prior to the first day of kindergarten.
- **Schools** facilitate the assessments by communicating the requirement to parents and by including health department dental screeners in their Roundups or registration events, if available.
- **Local health departments** offer no-cost dental assessments to all eligible children within their service area and coordinate events with local schools and pre-K settings. Not all local health departments currently offer dental assessments; parents/guardians will need to contact their local health department to see if they are offering the dental assessments.
- Dental assessments should take place prior to entry into kindergarten but no earlier than 6 months prior to the start of school.
- Students should be allowed access to school even if a dental assessment has not been completed. Schools *in counties that have implemented the KOHA program* are encouraged to arrange for [local health departments](#) to provide in-school dental assessments during the kindergarten school year in an effort to reach children who did not have the assessment completed prior to enrollment.

- Dental assessment statements (MDHHS-6067) from the local health department or a private dental office are acceptable; documentation of the assessment should be placed in the student's health file.

A map of counties in which KOHA is currently operating can be found at the bottom of the Schools page on the [MDHHS KOHA website](#).

Schools located within a 2024-2025 school year implementation area should do the following:

- Communicate information about the dental assessment requirement to parents. The dental assessment form (MDHHS-6067) and other resources can be found on the [MDHHS KOHA website](#).
- Work with local health department staff to coordinate dental assessments at pre-enrollment events.

Schools NOT located within a 2024-2025 school year implementation area:

- Dental assessments are not yet available through the local health department in your area. Encourage parents/guardians to have the dental assessment done at a private dental office for the 2024-2025 school year.

Should you or your support personnel have questions regarding the kindergarten oral health assessments, please contact Michele Kawabe, Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program Consultant – kawabem@michigan.gov; (517) 342-4128.