



Just Before School Starts, Fourteen States Get “Honor Roll” Status In New Health Report

Asthma and Allergy Foundation Looks at Statewide Public Policies that Support Kids with Asthma, Food Allergies and Related Diseases at School

WASHINGTON, DC (August 11, 2015) – With schools across the United States already, or soon to be, back in session, it's never too late – or too early – to ensure that students and faculty with asthma, food allergies and other allergic conditions remain safe. Today, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) unveiled its 2015 report, the State Honor Roll™ of Asthma and Allergy Policies for Schools. Fourteen states made the grade this year, with four new states added to the Honor Roll list since last year's report – Delaware, Illinois, New Mexico and North Carolina. One state, Indiana, resumed its place on the list after a one-year absence.

Nearly 26 million people in the US suffer from asthma, approximately 28% (6.8 million) of them children, who account for 10.5 million missed school days each year due to asthma. Also, an estimated 6 million children have food allergies and 10 million have other allergic diseases. That is why it is important for schools to implement policies that encourage a supportive learning environment for students and adults living with asthma and allergies in America's schools to help keep them safe and in control.

The good news is that the number of states to make AAFA's 2015 "Honor Roll" has more than doubled since the first report in 2008. One key driver has been the near universal adoption of state epinephrine stocking laws and policies, indicating states' awareness of how important it is to keep emergency medications for severe allergies on-hand at school. That is a realization that should bring some comfort to parents and school officials nationwide.

The full report – with tables, charts, maps and state-by-state summaries at www.StateHonorRoll.org – celebrates exemplary state efforts and ongoing state progress. The 2015 State Honor Roll list includes (in alphabetical order):

- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Massachusetts
- Mississippi
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Rhode Island
- Vermont



- Washington
- West Virginia

AAFA's annual report compares all 50 states and the District of Columbia (DC) on 23 core public policy issues that affect kids and adults with asthma and allergies while they spend the day in K-12 schoolrooms nationwide. States that have enacted at least 18 of these 23 core policies are named to the Honor Roll. Of special note in this year's report, is the success that lawmakers in 46 states have enacted laws making epinephrine auto injectors available to schools for severe allergic emergencies. That is a major victory for just one of the many battles to keep children and school faculty safe. AAFA's 2015 State Honor Roll report also includes two "spotlight" articles on the epinephrine stocking issue in schools, as well as the next challenge regarding laws for medication stocking in other settings, or "entities," such as restaurants.

"The State Honor Roll report makes it easy for parents, legislators and school personnel to proactively seek the changes they wish to see in their school systems," says Meryl Bloomrosen, AAFA's Senior Vice President of Policy, Advocacy and Research. The report provides parents and caregivers with information that will enable them to assess the asthma and allergy policies in each state and advocate for improvement. The report gives legislators an overview of how public policies and practices in their state compare to others and provides models for improvement. It also helps school system personnel set standards and benchmarks by highlighting best practices and experiences in other states. "The next challenge is to strengthen environmental health policies and improve school nurse coverage," says Bloomrosen, "this report is a celebration of the states that are moving ahead, and it identifies future work that still needs to be done to make schools safe."

About the Study

For AAFA's State Honor Roll report, three categories of policies were assessed: Medication and Treatment policies, Awareness policies and School Environment policies. Within these categories AAFA research and policy experts, in consultation with leaders in the fields of medicine, education and advocacy, identified 23 core policy standards relating to asthma and allergies in schools. Policy areas included school nurse-to-student ratios; laws allowing students to carry and administer their asthma and anaphylaxis medications; school building indoor air quality policies, and smoking bans and cessation programs.

The full report, methodology, tables, detailed state profiles, maps and back-to-school tips and tools are available at www.StateHonorRoll.org. The 2015 report and dissemination is sponsored by Mylan Specialty L.P. Additional support for the study has been provided by Genentech and individual donations to AAFA from patients, families and supporters.

About AAFA

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through education, advocacy and research. For more information about asthma and allergies, visit www.aafa.org or call 1-800-7-ASTHMA.

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