

The school nurse performs a growth screening for every student every school year. This includes measuring the student's height, and weight, and then configuring the student's body mass index (BMI).

Your child's health care provider is the best person to evaluate whether or not his/her measurements are within a healthy range. Keeping in mind that this is only a health screening, please share the results with your child's health care provider, who may suggest changes in eating or physical activity or may have other suggestions.

Being either overweight or underweight can put a person at risk for certain health problems. A student who is overweight has an increased risk of developing serious conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and certain cancers. A student who is under weight has an increased risk for heart problems, loss of bone mass, and anemia. Underweight may also be a sign of an underlying eating disorder.

Many factors, including sports participation or family history, can influence height and weight in children and adolescents. BMI should be considered a screening tool and not a definitive measure of overweight and obesity as the indicator does have limitations. For example, athletes, dancers and other physically active students may have a high BMI due to their increased muscle mass, which weighs more than fat mass.