RESPONSE TO MILD TO MODERATE RESPIRATORY DISTRESS

**Algorithm for Undesignated Stock Albuterol Inhaler Use for Mild/Moderate Respiratory Distress**

**Mild to Moderate Respiratory Distress Symptoms include one or more of the following:**
- Struggling to breathe
- Whistling in the chest
- Persistent coughing, chest pain, wheezing, chest tightness
- Noisy breathing
- Shallow breathing
- Decreased breath sounds
- Breathing hard or fast and or shortness of breath

Based on symptoms, determine that respiratory distress appears to be occurring. Act quickly as it is safer to give albuterol than to delay treatment.
- Never leave a student alone.
- Have the student sit in a chair or on the ground and restrict physical activity
- Summon for help, notify parent and school administration and follow your school division protocol.
- If available, Registered Nurse/Licensed Practical Nurse should obtain and continue to monitor vital signs (pulse, respiratory rate, blood pressure, pulse oximetry if available) every 5 minutes or as needed.

**Mild to Moderate Respiratory Distress:**
Administer 4 puffs of albuterol MDI with a valved holding chamber each 15-30 seconds apart between puffs

- **No Improvement in 10-15 minutes**
  - Repeat 4 more puffs of albuterol MDI with a valved holding chamber, 15-30 seconds apart between puffs
  - **No Improvement**
    - Call 911
      - Follow the actions for Severe Respiratory Distress

- **Improvement**
  - If symptoms improve and the student has no tightness in chest, shortness of breath and can walk and talk easily, continue to monitor the student. Keep in the health office until breathing returns to normal and the parent or guardian has been contacted. Refer to healthcare provider.

Use this algorithm if a student does not have an asthma action plan by their healthcare provider and appears to be having respiratory distress.