

420 Students and Employees with Communicable Diseases and Infectious Conditions

[Note: School districts are required by statute to have a policy addressing these issues.]

I. Purpose

Public concern that students and staff of the school district be able to attend the schools of the district without becoming infected with serious communicable or infectious diseases requires that the school board adopt measures effectively responding to health concerns while respecting the rights of all students, employees, and contractors, including those who are so infected. The purpose of this policy is to adopt such measures.

II. General Statement of Policy

A. Students

It is the policy of the school board that students with communicable diseases not be excluded from attending school in their usual daily attendance setting so long as their health permits and their attendance does not create a significant risk of the transmission of illness to students or employees of the school district. A procedure for minimizing interruptions to learning resulting from communicable diseases will be established by the school district in its IEP and Section 504 team process, if applicable, and in consultation with community health and private health care providers. Procedures for the inclusion of students with communicable diseases will include any applicable educational team planning processes, including the review of the educational implications for the student and others with whom the student comes into contact.

B. Employees

It is the policy of the school board that employees with communicable diseases not be excluded from attending to their customary employment so long as they are physically, mentally and emotionally able to safely perform tasks assigned to them and so long as their employment does not create a significant risk of the transmission of illness to students, employees, or others in the school district. If a reasonable accommodation will eliminate the significant risk of transmission, such accommodation will be undertaken unless it poses an undue hardship to the school district.

C. Circumstances and Conditions

1. Determinations of whether a contagious individual's school attendance or job performance creates a significant risk of the transmission of the illness to students or employees of the school district will be made on a case by case basis. Such decisions will be based upon the nature of the risk (how it is transmitted), the duration of the risk (how long the carrier is infectious), the severity of the risk (what is the potential harm to third parties) and the probabilities the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm. When a student is disabled, such a determination will be made in consultation with the educational planning team.

2. The school board recognizes that some students and some employees, because of special circumstances and conditions, may pose greater risks for the transmission of infectious conditions than other persons infected with the same illness. Examples include students who display biting behavior, students or employees who are unable to control their bodily fluids, who have oozing skin lesions or who have severe disorders which result in spontaneous external bleeding. These conditions need to be taken into account and considered in assessing the risk of transmission of the disease and the resulting effect upon the educational program of the student or employment of the employee by consulting with the Commissioner of Health, the physician of the student or employee, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student.

D. Students with Special Circumstances and Conditions

The school, along with the infected individual's physician, the infected individual or parent(s)/guardian(s), and others, if appropriate, will weigh risks and benefits to the student and to others, consider the least restrictive appropriate educational placement, and arrange for periodic reevaluation as deemed necessary by the state epidemiologist. The risks to the student shall be determined by the student's physician.

E. Extracurricular Student Participation

Student participation in nonacademic, extracurricular and non-educational programs of the school district are subject to a requirement of equal access and comparable services. Student educational services are subject to FAPE/LRE standards.

F. Precautions

The school district will develop routine procedures for infection control at school and for educating employees about these procedures. The procedures shall be developed through cooperation with health professionals taking into consideration guidelines of the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Department of Health (last revised 1988). (These precautionary procedures shall be consistent with the school district's procedures regarding blood-borne pathogens developed pursuant to the school district's employee right to know policy.)

G. Information Sharing

1. Employee and student health information shall be shared within the school district only with those whose jobs require such information and with those who have a legitimate educational interest (including health and safety) in such information and shall be shared only to the extent required to accomplish legitimate educational goals and to comply with employees' right to know requirements.

2. Employee and student health data shall be shared outside the school district only in accordance with state and federal law and with the school district's policies on employee and student records and data.

H. Reporting

If a medical condition of student or staff threatens public health, it must be reported to the Commissioner of Health.

I. Vaccination and Screening

The district will follow state-mandated policies regarding student immunizations upon enrollment in school. In addition, the district will follow the authority of the state regarding screening for infectious diseases.