

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

Purpose

Good health and safety are essential to student learning. The education and monitoring of communicable diseases during the school year is necessary to keep students healthy and learning. This policy establishes the standards that must be in place for addressing issues and educating students and school personnel on communicable diseases.

The objective of this policy is to allow for procedures to be in place for detection of potential communicable diseases, inclusion and exclusion, standard/universal precautions and enhancement of knowledge to ensure preventative measures occur for students and school personnel. This policy will assist in developing a working relationship with school personnel, parents/guardians, the students' medical home and the Wetzel-Tyler Health Department while decreasing duplication of health services offered by the school and the medical home and/or the community serving the students.

The Tyler County School system will work cooperatively with the Wetzel-Tyler Health Department to enforce and adhere to the West Virginia Codes: 18A-5-1, 16-3-4a, 16-3-5, 18-2-5, 18-5-9, 18-5-22, and 18-5-34 for prevention, control and containment of communicable disease in schools. The administrative protocol for communicable diseases known not to be spread by casual conduct can be found in the Tyler County Schools' Administrative Procedures Manual.

Definitions

Casual Contact – means day-to-day interaction between individuals and others in the home, at school or in the work place. It does not include intimate contact, such as sexual or drug use interactions, and it implies closer contact than chance passing in the hallway or sharing a lunch table.

Communicable Disease – means a disease that may be transmitted directly or indirectly from one individual to another.

Direct Contact – means a disease that is spread through the exposure of blood and/or body fluids to mucus membranes, open skin wounds, semen or intravenous transfusion. HIV/AIDS is spread by direct blood transmission into the blood stream of another and by semen or vaginal fluid contact. Hepatitis A can spread by direct or indirect contact with feces while Hepatitis B and C can spread by direct contact with semen and blood. These diseases do not pose a risk in school if body fluids such as blood and feces are handled using universal precautions.

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Health or Safety Situation – is determined on a case-by-case basis, and is defined as a specific situation that presents imminent danger or threat to students or to the members of the community, or requires an immediate need for information in order to avert or diffuse serious threats to the safety or health of a student or other individuals. Any release of any confidential medical information must be narrowly tailored considering the immediacy and magnitude of the emergency and must be made only to parties who can address the specific emergency in question. This exception is temporally limited to the period of the emergency and generally does not allow a blanket release of personally identifiable information from a student's education records to comply with general requirements under state law. Certainly an outbreak of disease such as measles, rubella, mumps, and polio not only pose the threat of permanent disability or death for the individual, but have historically presented themselves as epidemic in nature. Thus, disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' education records to state health officials for an outbreak of a communicable disease would generally be permitted under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act's (FERPA) health or safety emergency provisions.

Legitimate Educational Reason – is defined as school officials who have been determined to have genuine concern related to the student's educational achievement and performance allowing access and review of pertinent educational records including medical and health information. A record of disclosure must be maintained and include: (1) the parties who have requested the information from the educational records, and (2) the legitimate interests the parties had in requesting or obtaining the information.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) - is defined as a division of the United States Department of Labor that provides standards and guidelines for the health and safety of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health.

Universal Precautions – is a body substance isolation approach to infection control. Universal precautions apply to 1) blood; 2) all body fluids, secretions and excretions, except sweat, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood; 3) non-intact skin; and 4) mucous membranes. According to the concept of universal precautions, all human blood and all other human body fluids are treated as if known to be infectious for HIV, HBV, and other blood borne pathogens. There are three types of transmission: contact, airborne and droplet.

Disease Prevention Measures

Good hand hygiene is the single most effective procedure in preventing communicable disease in schools. The good practice of hand washing, is outlined in *The Basic and Specialized Health Care Procedures Manual for West Virginia Public Schools*.

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It is best to wash hands with soap and clean running water for at least twenty seconds. However, if soap and clean water is not available, the use of an alcohol-based product will also reduce the number of germs on the skin. All students in West Virginia public schools should have hand washing incorporated into the daily routine, especially before eating, after blowing the nose, coughing, or sneezing, after going to the bathroom and as deemed necessary by the school.

All students must be in compliance with the required immunization schedule as set forth by the WVDHHR State Health Officer. The WVDHHR State Health Officer, or his/her designee (local health officer) shall make the final decision in cases in which an authorized medical practitioner's written medical exemption is challenged by school personnel as inappropriate or invalid. Immunization records shall be entered into the West Virginia Education Information Systems (WVEIS) and reviewed annually.

Students who are entering pre-kindergarten (pre-K), kindergarten, and first time enterers into a West Virginia public school must have immunizations and show proof upon enrollment as defined by WV Code 16-3-4. Pre-k students shall also meet the requirements in 126csr28 West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525, West Virginia's Universal Access to a Quality Early Education System.

All incoming 7th grade and 12th grade students in West Virginia public and private schools must have proof that they have had age-appropriate Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis or whooping cough) and Meningitis shots. These shots are recommended for these age groups by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health.

Instruction on principle modes by which communicable disease, including but not limited to, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) are prevented, spread and transmitted shall be taught to students as outlined in 126csr44e West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2520.5, Health Content Standards and Objectives. Curriculum materials utilized in instructing students concerning AIDS shall be available for review by parents. After such review, parents can exempt their children from instruction concerning AIDS by giving written notice to the school principal as set forth in WV Code 18-2-9.

An educational in-service shall be provided to all school personnel every two years as specified in WV Code 18-2-9 and 18-5-15d. Instruction will include, but will not be limited to, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Disease Control Measures

Distinctions will be made related to diseases that are communicable in a school setting versus those known to be spread by casual contact. Each reported case of disease known not to spread through casual contact will be validated by a designated individual such as the school nurse. The principal or school nurse shall exclude from school any student known to have or suspected of having any infectious disease known to be spread by casual contact and considered to be a health risk to the school population. The superintendent has the authority to exclude a school employee when reliable evidence or information from a qualified source confirms he/she has a potential communicable disease that is known to spread by casual contact and poses a health risk to the school population. Such a student (see Tyler County Policy: IM Homebound Instruction) or staff member shall be excluded in accordance with guidelines of American Academy of Pediatrics and WVDHHR unless a physician approves school attendance and the condition is no longer contagious.

All reportable communicable disease will be referred to the Wetzel/Tyler Health Department, without disclosure of personally identifiable information, as set forth in West Virginia Bureau for Public Health Legislative Rule 64CSR7, Reportable Diseases, Events and Conditions.

Mandatory screening for communicable diseases that are known not to be spread by casual contact is not warranted as a condition for school entry or for employment and/or continued employment, nor is it legal based on WV Code 16-3C-1. All screening in public school should be age appropriate and deemed effective and necessary through evidence-based and scientific research-based practice utilizing standard procedures and with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. 1232h. WV Code 18-5-22 allows county boards to provide proper medical and dental inspections for all students attending school and gives authority to take any other necessary actions to protect students from infectious disease.

Irrespective of the disease presence, universal precautions shall be used and adequate sanitation facilities will be available for handling blood or body fluids within the school setting or on school buses. Blood and body fluids from any person in the school setting shall be treated with universal precautions: no exception shall be made when handling blood and body fluids. School personnel will be trained in universal precautions as set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

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Confidentiality

All persons privileged with any medical information that pertains to students or staff members shall be required to treat all proceedings, discussions and documents as confidential. Before any medical information is shared with anyone in the school setting, a “legitimate educational reason” or “health or safety emergency situation” must exist. All other release of confidential

medical and health information shall be released only with the consent of the parent, student if over 18, employee or their representative as outlined in 126CSR94, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4350, Procedures for the Collection, Maintenance and Disclosure of Student Data, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1988 and Family Educational Rights and Privacy: Final regulations, Part II, 34 CFR Part 99.

Information from health records is part of the educational record and should be shared with the student's parent and passed freely among the school and medical home health care provider to enhance student health and prevent duplication of services, only after permission is obtained from the student's parent or guardian.

If any provision of this rule or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this rule.

REFERENCE: State Laws of West Virginia: 18A-5-1, 16-3-5, 18-2-5, 18-2-9,
18-5-9, 18-5-22, 18-5-34, 18-5-15d, 16-3-4
State Board of Education Policies: 2423, 2525, 2520.5, 4350
Board of Education Minutes
Tyler County Policy: IM Homebound Instruction

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