

COMMUNICABLE/INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Background

The Mt. Lebanon School Board strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students and employees of the Mt. Lebanon School District. The Board also strives to maintain a balance between the need to educate all eligible students, to protect students' and employees' rights, and to control communicable diseases, including Hepatitis, HIV and AIDS.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to acknowledge the need to address communicable diseases (including bloodborne pathogens) in the schools, to require principles and procedures to reduce the risk of transmission of communicable diseases, and to require compliance with reporting and confidentiality requirements.

Definitions

Communicable Disease – A communicable disease is an illness due to a specific infectious agent, bloodborne pathogen, or its toxic products, which is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal.

Bloodborne Pathogen – A bloodborne pathogen is a pathogenic microorganism that is present in human blood, including but not limited to the Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus, and Human Immunodeficiency virus.

Universal Precautions – Universal precautions is the practice of treating all human blood and body fluids as if they are known to be infectious due to bloodborne pathogens.

Communicable diseases range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature (such as measles, chicken pox, etc.), to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as Hepatitis B virus and Human Immunodeficiency virus. The District shall rely on the advice of the public health and medical communities to assess the risk of transmission of various communicable diseases and determine how best to protect the health of both students and staff.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board to safeguard the welfare of students and staff while maintaining the operations of the District in an effective and efficient manner. The District shall establish principles and procedures to:

1. reduce the likelihood of exposure to communicable diseases and bloodborne pathogens in the school setting;
2. promote safe work practices and a healthy school environment;
3. provide appropriate instruction to students and staff concerning the prevention of exposure to communicable diseases; and
4. inform and advise the District community about procedures for dealing with communicable diseases.

The District will comply with state and federal laws regarding privacy, disease reporting, and student attendance.

Case-By-Case Basis

Under certain circumstances, students or employees with communicable diseases may pose a threat to the health and safety of other students and staff. Decisions regarding the educational/employment status of students or employees with communicable diseases will be made by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy and applicable law. Decisions concerning student attendance or participation in activities should involve input from public health personnel, the student's physician, the student's parents/guardian and appropriate school personnel. Students and employees may be required to submit to a medical examination and may be excluded from school and school-related functions pending the Superintendent's decision.

Nothing in this policy is intended to grant or confer any school attendance or education rights beyond those existing by law. An alternative educational program will be available to a student whose removal pursuant to this policy is expected to result in a prolonged absence from school or where otherwise required by law.

Confidentiality

The identity of a student or employee who has a communicable disease will be kept confidential and will be revealed only in accordance with applicable law.

Notification

Employees and parents/guardians of students suffering from a communicable disease or condition are encouraged to inform their principal or health office so that appropriate accommodations may be made and appropriate precautions may be taken.

Infection Control

Employees shall treat all bodily fluids as hazardous and shall follow universal precautions for any exposure to bodily fluids. In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, administrative procedures for necessary health and safety precautions will be distributed by the Administration and followed by all District employees. Those procedures shall include the District's bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan that contains specific work practice controls related to the handling, disposal and cleanup of blood and other potentially infectious materials. Students should not be involved in the handling, disposal or cleanup of potentially infectious materials.

Administrative Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Administration to implement and enforce this policy, and to develop Administrative Procedures for implementation or enforcement where necessary.

Communication

This policy shall be communicated to:

1. District Staff
2. Students, Parents/Guardians
3. The Mt. Lebanon Community

Adopted: February 15, 1988
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