

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that a pandemic/epidemic outbreak is a serious threat that stands to affect students, staff, and the community as a whole. With this consideration in mind, the Board establishes this policy in the event the town/municipality and/or school district is threatened by a pandemic/epidemic outbreak. At all times the health, safety and welfare of the students shall be of foremost concern along with the health, safety and welfare of the District employees and mindful of the overall health and welfare of the community.

Planning and Coordination

The Superintendent shall designate the head School Nurse or other appropriate staff members who in conjunction with the School Medical Advisor, shall serve as a liaison between the school district and local and state health officials. This designee and the School Medical Advisor are jointly responsible for connecting with health officials to identify local hazards, determine what crisis plans exist in the school district and community, and to establish procedures to account for student well-being and safety during such a crisis. The designee shall work with local health officials and shall keep the Superintendent advised when the risk of a pandemic or an epidemic of a serious illness has materially increased.

The Principals and/or school nurse or other designee shall develop a curriculum component to health classes that is designed to teach students about preventing or limiting the spread of communicable diseases.

The District shall purchase and store supplies necessary for an epidemic/pandemic outbreak, including but not limited to disinfectant products, face masks, water, examination gloves, and other supplies as recommended by the school nurse and/or School Medical Advisor and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures and plans for the transportation of students in the event of an evacuation. Such procedures shall include provisions for students who cannot be transported to home at the time of the evacuation.

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Response

In the event anyone within the school is discovered or suspected to have a communicable disease that may result in an epidemic/pandemic, that person shall be immediately quarantined pending further medical examination, as recommended by state and national protocols. Local and state health officials shall be notified immediately.

In conjunction with local and state health officials, the Superintendent shall ascertain whether an evacuation (school closing), lockdown, or shelter-in-place needs to be established. As soon as such a decision has been made, the school district shall notify the parents/guardians of all students.

In the event of an evacuation (school closing), the Superintendent is charged with determining when District schools shall re-open. In the event of a lockdown or shelter-in-place, the Superintendent shall notify all proper authorities and relief agencies to seek their assistance for the duration of the lockdown or shelter-in-place.

Infection Control

Any student or staff member found to be infected with a communicable disease that bears risk of pandemic/epidemic will not be allowed to attend school until medical clearance is provided by that individual's primary care physician or other medical personnel indicating that that person does not bear the risk of transmitting the communicable disease.

Students with excessive absences due to a communicable disease shall be given a reprieve from other Board policies relative to excessive student absences. Efforts will be made by the staff to determine what, if any, school work the student can complete while absent.

Staff members who are forced to miss excessive days of work shall first use any leave entitled to them through the Family and Medical Leave Act and accrued sick leave.

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Continuance of Education

The Superintendent shall develop a plan of alternate means of educating students in the event of prolonged school closings and/or extended absences. Such a distance learning plan may include, but are not limited to, providing students with assignments via mail or by email, local access cable television, or the school district's website.

The Superintendent/designee may amend the traditional class schedule and schedule of days. Such a plan may include extending the school day, having school days held on Saturdays if Connecticut statute changes, the use of previously scheduled vacation days, and/or extending the school year beyond the previously established end of school year, within applicable statutory requirements.

(cf. 5141.22 – Communicable/Infectious Diseases)

(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Management Plan)

(cf. 6114 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness)

(cf. 6114.6 – Emergency Closings)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse and student.
10-207 Duties of medical advisors.
10-209 Records not to be public.
10-210 Notice of disease to be given parent or guardian.
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.
19a-221 Quarantine of certain persons.
52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 45 C.F.R. 99.

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