

## Health Advisory Board Meeting Minutes May 17, 2022

**Present:** Rebecca Abernathy, Lori Balaban, Gayle Burt, Erin Callas, Kristy Davis, Brenda Doremus-Daniel, Christie Eagleson, Eileen Gomez, Mark Niehaus, Chris Siebert, Kevin Kirst

### Antigen testing for students and staff with symptoms

Eileen explained that ACPS procured a 1,650 BinaxNOW antigen tests and asked if the SHAB would recommend allowing the school nurses to use them when excluding students or staff from school with symptoms.

Current protocol is that a person with symptoms must leave school/work and can return when they:

- Produce a negative PCR test result
- Are evaluated by a physician
- After 10 days

Antigen tests are not nearly as sensitive (accurately identify someone with COVID) as PCRs, perhaps requiring 2 negative antigen tests spaced 36 or 48 hours apart would bring the accuracy to an acceptable level. Eileen said she would research the sensitivity of 2 antigen tests and send it out for a poll. It is hard to determine what an acceptable level would be for the purposes of allowing symptomatic individuals to return to school given the current community and schools prevalence. One consideration is that since some of the strategies such as masks and contact tracing have been removed from the layered mitigation strategies, now may not be the time to remove the requirement for PCR testing.

**Return to school or work after testing positive** We are currently allowing employees to return after 5 days of isolation with a negative antigen test on day 5 or later, but we are not allowing students to test out of isolation early because we cannot enforce masking on days 6 through 10, and it is not always operationally possible to space them 6 feet from classmates.

Eileen reported that most employees who try to test to shorten their isolation period continue to test positive through day 10.

There was general consensus that acknowledging how difficult this is for families, maintaining the 10-day isolation period for students is the safest option.

**Isolation rooms** Eileen reported that principals at schools where space is at a premium have asked if they need to continue to designate a space to isolate individuals with illness symptoms. It is always a good idea to try to separate individuals with symptoms of communicable conditions from those without, but it is too early to predict the landscape for SY 2022-2023.

**Use of undesignated albuterol inhalers** Effective January 1, 2022 schools are [required](#) to stock undesignated inhalers as well as [disposable air chambers](#) to be administered to any student believed to be experiencing asthma symptoms. ACPS has standing orders for use, but no requirement for follow-up. Gayle and Eileen explained that they are still in the data collection phase: undesignated albuterol was used 12 times since January – mostly for students whose inhaler ran out of doses or self-carry students who forgot to bring an inhaler. There was at least one time when the medication was used for a student who had not been previously diagnosed with asthma and the parents did not think the student needed to be evaluated by a physician.

There was agreement that students who need to use inhaled medication ought to be referred for a follow-up evaluation. Members proposed that school nurses send a form to parents when the undesignated inhaler is used that recommends a medical evaluation and communicates the details of the event, how much medication was used and whether or not it was effective. Sending the form to parents electronically is preferred over the backpack express.

**Follow-up: [Turning Water Fountains On](#)**

Eileen explained that ACPS Building Services started the process of flushing the lines and turning back on the water fountains with the goal of having all of the water fountains available by this week. Members applauded this action.

**Meeting schedule for SY 2022-2023** For now the plan is to hold next school year's meetings in-person at the McIntire County Office Building, but that is subject to change

**Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:30 pm**

September 21, 2022

January 18, 2023

March 15, 2023

May 17, 2023