

Communicable Diseases

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. Attendance at school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a communicable disease which could make the child's attendance harmful to the welfare of other students. In the instance of diseases causing suppressed immunity, attendance may be denied to a child with suppressed immunity in order to protect the welfare of that child, when others in the school have an infectious disease which, although not normally life-threatening, could be life-threatening to the child with suppressed immunity.

The Board recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. This District shall rely on the advice of the public health and medical communities in assessing the risk of transmission of various communicable diseases to determine how best to protect the health of both students and staff.

Management of common communicable diseases will be in accordance with Montana Department of Health guidelines and communicable diseases control rules (16.28.101, ARM, et seq.). A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease which is readily transmitted in the school setting may be temporarily excluded from school attendance.

Students who complain of illness at school may be referred to the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, and may be sent home as soon as the parent, guardian, or person designated on the student's emergency medical authorization form has been notified.

The District reserves the right to require a statement from the student's primary care provider authorizing the student's return to school.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy.

When information is received by a staff member or volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer shall promptly notify the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, to determine appropriate measures to protect student and staff health and safety. The school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, after consultation with and on the advice of public health officials, shall determine which additional staff members, if any, have need to know of the affected student's condition.

Only those persons with direct responsibility for the care of the student or for determining appropriate educational accommodation will be informed of the specific nature of the condition if it is determined there is a need for such individuals to know this information.

Parents of other children attending the school may be notified that their child has been exposed to a communicable disease without identifying the particular student who has the disease.

The Superintendent shall initiate procedures to insure that all medical information will be held in confidence. Any school staff member who violates confidentiality shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Note: For purposes of this policy, the term "communicable disease" refers to the diseases identified in 16.28.202, ARM, Reportable Diseases, with the exception of common colds and flu.

Legal Reference: 16.28.101, et seq, ARM Communicable Disease Control

Policy History:

Adopted on: 12-8-98

Effective Date: 1-1-99