

**#5120.3.2
HIV Infection**

Philosophy

The District shall strive to protect the safety and health of children and youth in our care, as well as their families and the general public, and are committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for employees. Staff members shall cooperate with public health authorities to promote these goals.

The evidence is overwhelming that the risk of transmitting human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is extremely low in school settings when current guidelines are followed. The presence of a person living with HIV infection or diagnosed with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) poses no significant risk to others in school, day care, and school athletic settings.

School Attendance

A student with HIV infection has the same right to attend school and receive services as any other student, and will be subject to the same rules and policies. HIV infection shall not factor into decisions concerning class assignments, privileges, or participation in most school sponsored activities.

The school principal will determine the educational placement of a student known to be infected with HIV on a case-by-case basis by following the established policies and procedures for students with chronic health problems or students with disabilities. The principal must consult with the student's physician and parent or guardian, respect the student's and family's privacy rights, and reassess the placement if there is a change in the student's need for accommodations or services.

School staff members will always strive to maintain a respectful school climate and not allow physical or verbal harassment of any individual or group by another individual or group. This includes taunts directed against a person living with HIV infection, a person perceived as having HIV infection, or a person associated with someone with HIV infection.

Confidentiality

Students are not required to disclose HIV infection status to anyone in the district. HIV antibody testing is not required for an), school-related purpose.

Every employee has a duty to treat as highly confidential any knowledge or speculation concerning the HIV status of a student. Violation of medical privacy is cause for disciplinary action, criminal prosecution, and/or personal liability for a civil suit.

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No information regarding a student's HIV status will be divulged to any individual or organization without a court order or the informed, written, signed, and dated consent of the student with HIV infection (or the parent or guardian of a legal minor). The written consent must specify the name of the recipient of the information and the purpose for disclosure.

All health records, notes, and other documents that reference a student's HIV status will be kept confidential. Access to these confidential records is limited to those named in written permission from the person (or parent or guardian) and to emergency medical personnel. Information regarding HIV status will not be added to a student's permanent educational or health record without written consent.

School Environment Infection Control

Schools will operate according to the standards promulgated by the U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Administration for the prevention of blood-borne infections. All employees are required to consistently follow infection control guidelines in all settings and at all times, including playgrounds and school buses. Equipment and supplies needed to apply the infection control guidelines will be maintained and kept reasonably accessible.

The Director of Special Educational and Regional Programs shall oversee implementation of the precautions and investigate, correct, and report on instances of lapse in practice.

A school staff member is expected to alert the person responsible for health and safety issues, or the school nurse, if a student's health condition or behavior presents a reasonable risk of transmitting an infection.

If a situation occurs at school in which a person could have been exposed to an infectious agent, such as an instance of blood-to-blood contact, school authorities shall counsel that person (or, if a minor, alert a parent or guardian) to seek appropriate medical evaluation.

HIV and Athletics

The privilege of participating in physical education classes, athletic programs, competitive sports, and recess may or may not be conditional on a student's HIV status. School authorities will make reasonable accommodations to allow students living with HIV infection to participate in school-sponsored physical activities.

All employees must consistently adhere to infection control guidelines in locker rooms and all play and athletic settings. Student handbooks will reflect these guidelines. First aid kits must be on hand at every athletic event.

All physical education teachers and athletic program staff must complete an approved first aid and injury prevention course that includes implementation of infection control guidelines.

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Student orientation about safety on the playing field will include guidelines for avoiding HIV infection.

HIV Prevention Education

The goals of HIV prevention education are to promote healthful living, and discourage the behaviors that put people at risk of acquiring HIV. The educational program will:

- be taught in all grades, kindergarten through grade twelve;
- use methods demonstrated by sound research to be effective;
- follow content guidelines prepared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
- be appropriate to students' developmental levels, current behaviors, and cultural backgrounds;
- build knowledge and skills from year to year;
- stress the benefits of abstinence from sexual activity and intravenous drug use;
- include accurate information on reducing the risk of HIV infection;
- address students' own concerns;
- include means for evaluation;
- be integrated within an overall school health program;
- be taught by well-prepared instructors with adequate support; and
- involve parents and families as partners in education.

Parents and guardians will have convenient opportunities to preview all HIV prevention curricula and materials. School staff members shall assist parents or guardians who ask for help in discussing HIV infection with their children. If a parent or guardian submits a written request to a principal that a child not receive instruction in specific HIV prevention topics at school, and assures that the topics will be discussed at home or elsewhere, the child shall be excused without penalty.

The school district will endeavor to cooperate with HIV prevention efforts in the community that address youth in situations that put them at high risk of acquiring HIV.

Related Services

Students who are HIV infected or who have an immediate family member or close friend who is HIV infected will have access to voluntary, confidential counseling services that are age and developmentally appropriate. School administrators will maintain confidential linkage and referral mechanisms to facilitate voluntary student access to appropriate HIV counseling and testing programs and to other HIV-related services as needed. Public information about resources in the community will be kept available for voluntary student use.

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General Provisions

On an annual basis, school administrators will notify students, their family members, and school personnel about current policies concerning HIV infection, and invite public input and discussion.

In accordance with the established policy review process, or at least every three years, the Superintendent shall report on the accuracy, relevance, and effectiveness of this policy and, when appropriate, provide recommendations for improving and/or updating the policy.

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