

Executive Summary

Prepared for Board of Trustees Meeting, June 10, 2008

Workshop - Policy DBB Local

Purpose of Report

This information is given to the board to provide a basis for discussion regarding potential changes to Policy DBB Local. In light of the recent occurrence with a student-observer who came into an elementary classroom on several occasions and was found later to have extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis, our current policy bears some consideration as to its adequacy in preventing that from happening again. Additionally, reviewing the HEALTH OR SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS and the EXCLUSION portions of this policy is advisable considering the latest date of issue (Nov. 15, 1996).

Objectives

- to review current policy for adequacy in protecting our students, employees, and visitors from unnecessary exposure to communicable disease
- to minimize the need for expensive and time-consuming reaction measures resulting from exposure
- to minimize the district's susceptibility to litigation in the event of exposure

Operational Impact

Potential added costs to changing this policy might include:

1. increased use of substitute employees
2. costs for screening procedures
3. additional responsibilities (implementation time and administrative educational needs) for HR and building supervisors responsible for monitoring and enforcing any new requirements

Results

An expected outcome of reviewing and recommending changes to the existing policy would be clear expectations for our employees, volunteers, student teachers (also student nurses, dental hygiene students, counselor and special education interns, etc) and student observers regarding their health status prior to coming into our buildings, thus limiting possible exposure to communicable disease. Each entity (universities, etc.) and person would know ahead of time what was expected regarding documentation of screening, and what signs and symptoms would be "excludable" with regards to job attendance.

It certainly would increase awareness of those concerns. Considering the other side of "operational impact," the **cost of not paying attention** to these concerns could also be phenomenal (think more absenteeism due to spread of communicable disease resulting in even higher sub use, public relations costs of trying to defend why we don't clearly define/enforce screenings and/or assessment of signs and symptoms and possibly exposed children to preventable disease, the cost of providing prophylaxis/treatment drugs in the event of exposure).

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An emphasis on “responsible job attendance” policies rather than “must be at work at all costs” would most likely result in more time spent by principals and supervisors/directors monitoring employees and H R spending more time reviewing screening results (such as TB tests) and educating facilities and people on what the requirements for health status would be.

To provide some basis for comparison and discussion of this policy, please see the attachments “When to Keep Your Child Home from School,” “Signs and Symptoms for Exclusion from School.” and “Texas Criteria for Exclusion and Readmission,” and Policy FFAA Local.

Although these documents are student-related, they may help in considerations for employee/other job attendance.

Other Options not to review or consider changes