

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Background

The Division is committed to the humane, responsible, and compassionate treatment of students and staff infected with communicable diseases within an environment that protects the health and safety of all students and staff. The Division is also committed to promoting information programs for communicable disease prevention.

The Division will follow the teaching of the Catholic Church, the directives of the local health unit and the legislation of the province of Alberta when making decisions related to cases of communicable and sexually transmitted diseases.

Procedures

1. In all cases, the confidentiality of the persons affected by the disease shall be reserved for those who need to know on the basis of providing appropriate programs or services for the persons affected.
2. All employees must balance the needs of the person who is injured or ill with the need to protect themselves and others from contracting communicable diseases.
3. Normally, students with communicable diseases will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Public Health Act.
4. Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) shall be allowed to attend school programs in an unrestricted setting unless, in the opinion of the local Medical Health Officer, special circumstances dictate otherwise.
5. The right of infected students to privacy will be respected by staff, including the confidentiality of records.
6. Information about communicable diseases will be provided to students as part of the regular instructional program as specified within the Alberta Program of Studies and related Curriculum Guides.
7. Employees infected with communicable diseases shall be allowed to continue normal duties unless:
 - 7.1 In the opinion of the local Medical Health Officer, special circumstances dictate otherwise; or
 - 7.2 The job of the employee requires that the employee be free from any communicable diseases.
8. The right of infected employees to privacy will be respected and their identities will remain confidential.

9. Employees are expected to observe careful health and safety requirements by following universal precautions (Appendix A).
10. In the event that any employee indicates that s/he has been infected with communicable diseases, the supervisor shall immediately contact the Superintendent to review procedures to be followed as authorized by the Medical Health Officer.
11. If, in the opinion of the attending physician, an employee is unable to continue his/her duties as a result of having a communicable disease, the employee shall have full access to sick leave, long term disability and other medical benefits provided for by the various collective agreements, benefit plans the employee assistance program and other relevant Board policies.
12. Confidentiality decisions for employees infected with a communicable disease shall be made using a team approach which may include: employee, physician, public health personnel, and personnel associated with the proposed care.
 - 12.1 In each case, the risks and benefits to both the infected employee and to others in the educational setting shall be considered; and
 - 12.2 The number of people who are aware of the employee's condition shall be kept to a minimum needed to ensure proper care of the employee and to detect situations where the potential for transmission may occur.

Reference: Section 8, 18, 20, 45, 60, 61, 113 School Act
Emergency Medical Aid Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Health Information Act
Occupational Health and Safety Act
Personal Information Protection Act
Public Health Act
Communicable Disease Regulation 238/1985
Ministerial Directive 4.1.1 – HIV / AIDS in Educational Settings