

BLOOMSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT Policy Manual
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Section: PUPILS
Title: COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND IMMUNIZATION
Date Adopted: August 17, 1981
Date Last Revised: November 18, 2002

203. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND IMMUNIZATION

- .1 In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS the Board requires the following procedures to be used.
- .2 Immunization – All students shall be immunized against certain diseases in accordance with Pennsylvania statutes, unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons.
 - .21 No student shall be admitted to school for the first time who has not been immunized against such diseases as are enumerated by the Advisory Health Board and in the manner directed by the Secretary of Health.
 - .22 The implementation of this policy shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent and the nurse assigned to each school building in the district.
 - .23 A child shall be exempt from the requirements for immunization whose parent or guardian objects in writing to such immunization for religious grounds, or whose physician certifies that the child’s physical condition contraindicates immunization.
 - .24 The Superintendent shall inform parents and guardians of children prior to their entry to school for the first time of the requirements of immunization, the requisite proof of immunizations, the exemption available for religious or medical reasons, and the means by which such exemptions may be claimed.
- .3 Health Records – The district shall require that prior to admission to school for the first time that the parents or guardian shall complete a medical history report form which shall include information regarding known communicable diseases.

The nurse or school physician may use such reports to advise the parent of the need for further medical care as set forth in Policy 209.

- .31 The school nurses shall report the presence of suspected communicable disease to the appropriate local health authority as required by the Department of Health.
 - .32 All health records shall be confidential and their contents shall be divulged only when necessary for the health of the child or at the request of the parent or guardian to a physician.
 - .33 As part of the health record, a certificate of immunization for each child enrolled shall be maintained as established by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
- .4 Attendance – The following shall supplement the Board’s Policy 204 on student attendance by establishing guidelines for the attendance of students with communicable diseases.
- .41 The Board authorizes that students who have been diagnosed by a physician, or are suspected of having the disease by the school nurse, shall be excluded from school for the period indicated by regulations of the Department of Health for certain specified diseases and infectious conditions.
 - .42 Students who have been diagnosed by a physician as being absent due to a communicable disease not specifically listed by the Department of Health, or who have been diagnosed as a carrier of such disease, may be excluded for the protection of the school community under the following procedures. HIV/AIDS is not listed by the Department of Health and therefore falls under this policy.
 - .421 The school physician shall make a preliminary recommendation to the district as to the health risks associated with diagnosed communicable disease. In the event that potential health risks to the school community would be identified by the school physician due to the admission or continued attendance of the student in question, a panel shall be convened to review the medical history and assess the specific health risks to the identified student and to the school community.
 - .422 Prior to the panel’s assessment and recommendation as to health risks, the Superintendent may preliminarily exclude the child from the educational program based upon the school physician’s previous recommendation, and after the Superintendent has consulted with the student’s parents or guardian and personal physician.

.423 The Superintendent shall coordinate the district's response to the issue, and shall convene the panel. The panel shall consist of school district physician, school nurse, family physician, parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, and Building Principal. The panel shall make an assessment of the potential for transmission of the communicable disease to the school community and the risks associated with potential infection. In HIV/AIDS cases, the panel shall utilize, as a resource, the Centers for Disease Control Guidelines on Education of Children infected with HIV/AIDS causing viruses. Within ten days, the panel shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent regarding the attendance of the student. The Superintendent shall promptly make a final decision on attendance or alternate placement of the student.

.5 Educational Options – In making decisions about individual students with HIV/AIDS, the following options may be utilized:

.51 Normal School Attendance – First consideration shall be given to having the student attend school within the normal school population.

.52 Assignment within the School System – The district maintains its authority to assign students to any school building or portion thereof as it deems best to educate its students.

.53 Classified as Disabled Students – AIDS students classified as disabled are equally entitled to attend public schools, as are all other students.

.54 Classified as Exceptional Students – Physical and/or psychological affects of HIV/AIDS disease in a particular case may be such as to reasonably prompt a total educational evaluation. The results of the evaluation shall maintain flexibility in proposing accommodations, in any educational program that meets the students needs. Due process protections required by special education laws must be followed. If a student already classified as exceptional is diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS, the district shall make its attendance decisions as it would regarding any other exceptional student. The district's educational decisions must also be made in the same manner as any other case involving an exceptional student. If a change in educational program is deemed appropriate, due process procedures must again be followed.

.55 Creation of Special Classes – The school district alone or with other districts and intermediate units has the authority to create special classes or schools to assure that exceptional students receive education. If the psychological or physical conditions of HIV/AIDS warrant, such special classes shall be considered.

- .56 Homebound Instruction – Students diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS and unable to attend school as determined by a medical examination shall be considered for homebound instruction.
- .57 Excused From School – As with any other disease, school district personnel may approve a student’s absence from school if the parent or guardian seeks such excuse based on the advice of medical or psychological experts treating the student.
- .58 Exclusion Based on Health – A student may be legally excluded from school based on health reasons.
- .59 Exclusion for Other Reasons – The school board also has authority to exclude a student upon satisfactory evidence of urgent reasons, which prevent the student from attending school or application to study. The Department of Education prior to exclusion must approve the exercise of this authority.