

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MITIGATION AND BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

DATE ADOPTED: June 18, 2024

PURPOSE

The Colchester School District strives to protect the safety and health of its employees and the children and youth in its care. It is the policy of the District to implement communicable disease mitigation measures, including but not limited to vaccination of school staff, mask-wearing, social distancing, screening testing, quarantine/isolation, improved ventilation, cleaning and disinfecting, and providing hygiene supplies in conjunction with Department of Health recommendations.

I. DEFINITIONS

Communicable disease means an illness due to an infectious agent or its toxic products which is transmitted, directly or indirectly, to a person from an infected person, animal or anthropoid, or through the agency of an intermediate animal, host or vector of the inanimate environment. “Communicable disease” shall include, but not be limited to: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV); Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS); Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2); Varicella (Chicken pox); Hepatitis; Measles; Meningitis; Mononucleosis; Pertussis (Whooping cough); Anthrax; and any mutations arising from or relating to infectious disease or communicable disease.

Comprehensive health education includes the study of disease, such as HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as other communicable diseases, and the prevention of disease.

Bloodborne pathogen means a pathogenic microorganism that is present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. Such pathogens include hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

II. RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS

Privacy and Confidentiality

The superintendent shall develop procedures that ensure confidentiality in the maintenance and, where authorized, dissemination of all medically-related documents.

The “Vermont Standards of Practice: School Health Services Manual” shall determine the procedures 1) for monitoring students and staff who may potentially have a communicable disease if in school while infectious and 2) for documenting appropriate

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information accordingly.

III. HEALTH PROTECTIONS AND UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Infection Control

The District shall comply with applicable Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Administration (VOSHA) rules in order to protect employees who are reasonably anticipated to be exposed to communicable diseases as part of their regular job duties.

The superintendent or designee shall determine those employees (by job class and possibly by task or procedure) who are reasonably anticipated to have occupational exposure to communicable disease as part of their duties.

A written Exposure Control Plan concerning communicable diseases, which includes the use of universal precautions, shall be developed, maintained, and followed.

IV. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Comprehensive Health Education

The Colchester School District shall provide a systematic and extensive elementary and secondary educational program, including the study of disease, such as HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as other communicable diseases, and the prevention of disease.

Athletics and Co-curricular Activities

School authorities will make reasonable accommodations to allow students with communicable disease(s) to participate in school-sponsored physical activities.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to assure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws pertaining to communicable diseases and the mitigation of communicable diseases and to protect the rights of students and staff with regard to communicable disease.

All District personnel shall be advised of routine procedures to follow with regard to universal precautions (handling body fluids). These procedures, developed in consultation with public health and medical personnel, shall provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of diseases to persons exposed to the blood or body fluids of another. The procedures shall follow standard health and safety practices. No distinction shall be made between body fluids from individuals with a known disease or infection and from individuals without symptoms or with an undiagnosed disease.