

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, ILLNESSES AND INFECTIONS POLICY

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#### 1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Communicable diseases, illnesses and infections may affect students or school staff. These diseases, illnesses and infections can be transferred to others and could be life-threatening.
- 1.2 Students who are diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection may be absent from school.
- 1.3 The confidentiality and dignity of students diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection will be respected.
- 1.4 The Halifax Regional School Board will collaborate and take advice regarding communicable diseases, illnesses and infections from the Public Health Services Team within Capital Health.

#### 2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring the *Communicable Diseases, Illness and Infections Policy* is in accordance with the following:
  - 2.1.1 *Education Act*
  - 2.1.2 *C.009 Administration of Medication Policy*
  - 2.1.3 *Health Protection Act*
  - 2.1.4 *Nova Scotia Communicable Disease Control Manual*

**3.0 AUTHORIZATION**

- 3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, ILLNESSES AND INFECTIONS

## PROCEDURES

### CONTENTS:

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### **1.0 PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

1.1 The principal shall:

- 1.1.1 Notify the school Public Health nurse or practitioner when aware that a student has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection;
- 1.1.2 Notify the school Public Health nurse or practitioner if 10% or more of the students are absent from school due to illness;
- 1.1.3 Contact parent(s)/guardian(s) if it is suspected that a student is exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease, illness or infection;
- 1.1.4 Collaborate with the school Public Health nurse or practitioner regarding student immunizations;
- 1.1.5 Distribute communicable disease, illness or infection information sheets and/or letters home only under the direction of a Public Health nurse or practitioner;
- 1.1.6 Ensure school staff is aware of this policy.

### **2.0 SCHOOL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

2.1 School staff shall:

- 2.1.1 Notify the principal if they are aware that a student has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection;
- 2.1.2 Promote with students the importance of regularly washing hands with soap and water as it the most effective way to prevent communicable diseases, illnesses and infections from spreading;
- 2.1.4 Exercise sensitivity and confidentiality when a student is diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection;

- 2.1.5 Distribute communicable disease, illness or infection information sheets and/or letters home only when directed to do so by the principal;
- 2.1.6 Contact the school Public Health nurse or practitioner with questions regarding communicable diseases, illnesses or infections.

**3.0 PARENT(S) /GUARDIAN(S) RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall:
  - 3.1.1 Notify the principal if their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, illness or infection that might put others at risk;
  - 3.1.2 Promote proper hand washing techniques with their child;
  - 3.1.3 Contact the school Public Health nurse or practitioner with any questions regarding communicable diseases, illnesses or infections.

**4.0 RECOMMENDED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

- 4.1 The following are recommended timelines from Public Health indicating when students may be absent from school as a result of having a communicable disease, illness or infection:

<b>Disease/Illness/Infection diagnosed by a physician</b>	<b>Recommended timelines</b>
Conjunctivitis – (Pink Eye)	Student may return to school when free of symptoms.
Fifth Disease	Student may attend school.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Student may attend school.
Hepatitis A	Student may return to school two weeks after onset of symptoms.
Hepatitis B	Student may attend school.
Hepatitis C	Student may attend school.
HIV/AIDS	Student may attend school.
Impetigo	Student may return to school twenty four hours after treatment has been initiated.
Influenza	Student may return to school when symptoms have improved.
Meningitis-Bacterial	Student may return to school after having completed antibiotic treatment.
Meningitis-Viral	Student may attend school.
Mononucleosis (Infectious)	Student may attend school.
Mumps	Student may return to school five days from

	the time of onset.
Roseola	Student may return to school when rash is no longer apparent.
Rubeola (Measles)	Student may return to school five days after onset of rash.
Rubella (German Measles)	Student may return to school seven days after the onset of rash.
Pertussis -(Whooping Cough)	Student may return to school five days after starting antibiotics or if no antibiotics are given, three weeks after onset of symptoms.
Ringworm	Student may return to school after treatment is initiated.
Scabies	Student may return to school after treatment is completed.
Strep Throat	Student may return to school twenty four hours after onset of treatment.
Varicella-Zoster (Chicken Pox)	Student may return to school five days after onset of rash or when all lesions are crusted over.