

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS

The Westmoreland County School Board recognizes its dual obligations to protect the rights of individual students infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and to provide a safe environment for students, staff, and the public. Because HIV is not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is HIV-infected continues in a regular classroom assignment unless the student's health significantly interferes with the student's ability to benefit from the educational program.

Westmoreland County Public Schools works cooperatively with the local health department with regard to the school attendance of students infected with HIV. To enhance the school attendance of students who are HIV-infected, the school division collaborates with public and private organizations in the provision of support services to HIV-infected students.

All students are expected to satisfy the immunization requirements of Virginia Code § 22.1-271.2 unless a required immunization would be harmful to the health of the student. Students who are HIV-infected or have acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) may be exempted from obtaining immunizations which would otherwise be required. School personnel cooperate with public health personnel regarding exemptions from the requirements.

Mandatory screening for HIV infection is not warranted as a condition of school attendance. Upon learning that a student is HIV-infected or has AIDS, the superintendent may consult with the student's family, the student's family physician, or an official from the local department of health to determine whether the student is well enough to stay in school. If a change in the student's program is necessary because of the student's health, the superintendent or superintendent's designee will work with the student's family, family physician or local health official to develop an educational plan for the student.

Any school board employee or volunteer who has any information regarding a student's HIV-infected status treats that information as confidential.

Despite the extremely remote risk that exposure of skin to blood could result in infection, the following universal precautions for handling blood are implemented within schools and on school buses:

- persons involved in cleaning surfaces exposed to blood and persons rendering first aid to bleeding students should wear disposable gloves to avoid exposure of open skin lesions and mucous membranes to blood;
- surfaces contaminated with blood should be promptly cleaned with household bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) using disposable towels and tissues;
- hands must be washed after gloves are removed;
- if one person's skin is exposed to the blood of another person, the exposed areas should be washed with soap and water.

Universal precautions do not apply to feces, nasal secretions, saliva, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomitus unless they contain blood.

To ensure implementation of the proper procedures for all body fluids, training is provided to all school personnel. Training includes information regarding the following: etiology, transmission, prevention, and risk reduction of HIV; standard procedures for handling blood and body fluids; community resources available for information and referral; and school board policies.

Comprehensive and age-appropriate instruction on the principal modes by which HIV is spread and the best methods for the reduction and prevention of AIDS is provided.

Adopted: October 7, 1996
Amended: April 18, 2011
Amended: April 15, 2019
