

BIOHAZARDS, INCLUDING BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

PREAMBLE

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to prevent and minimize student and employee contact with harmful biological agents, including blood-borne pathogens, arising from the medical condition of an individual, a group of individuals, or, arising from a community or pandemic outbreak.

The Board acknowledges the right to confidentiality regarding student and employee personal medical information. In consultation with Health Authorities, where the risk of transmitting a harmful biological agent is extremely low and appropriate precautionary measures can be taken to ensure the health and safety of others, the student or employee may continue to attend or work at a school or site.

The Board recognizes the need to consult with Health Authorities to identify and implement preventive measures and appropriate strategies for communication and education for students, employees and the community.

POLICY

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION SUPPORTS THE RIGHTS OF STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT. IN ADDITION, THE BOARD RECOGNIZES THE RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY REGARDING STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE PERSONAL MEDICAL INFORMATION. THE BOARD IS COMMITTED TO MINIMIZING STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE EXPOSURE TO HARMFUL BIOLOGICAL AGENTS, INCLUDING BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS, AND WILL PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STUDENTS, STAFF, AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES THROUGH CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH HEALTH AUTHORITIES.

OBJECTIVES

1. The Board shall develop and implement a comprehensive Biohazard Exposure Control Program, including a Pandemic Response Plan and Pandemic Communication Plan, in the event of the threat of, or occurrence of, a pandemic outbreak.
2. The Board shall consult with Health Authorities to ensure the Biohazard Exposure Control Program is founded on current and accepted practices, including standard and universal precautions, and to communicate the program to all stakeholders.

3. The Board shall protect the confidentiality of student and employee personal medical information.
4. The Board shall ensure students and employees, infected with a harmful biological agent, have reasonable access to educational services, counseling and employment, while ensuring a safe working environment for all students and employees.
5. The Board may provide, where applicable, an immunization vaccine to employees identified as being at risk of exposure, due to the nature of their duties, to a harmful biological agent.

REGULATIONS

1. For the purpose of this policy, the Board will establish a Biohazards Exposure Control Program that includes a Pandemic Response Plan and a Pandemic Communication Plan. The program will be consistent with recommended practices, as outlined by WorkSafeBC and the applicable Health Authorities, while maintaining the operational continuity of the Board's education and business operations.
2. Educational resources and training will be provided to encourage students and employees to practice good hygiene on a daily basis.
3. Basic awareness of standard precautions for biohazards will be annually communicated to all employees.
4. Employees will be adequately informed on handling all spilled blood and/or body fluids utilizing standard and/or universal precautions.
5. Where applicable, a risk assessment will be conducted to determine the potential exposure of students and employees to harmful biological agents and preventive measures will be implemented.
6. When school authorities are advised of a student or employee, who is infected with a biohazard or blood-borne pathogen, a meeting in consultation with the student's parents, family physician, or the employee, their family physician, and Health Authorities, and the Superintendent or designate, shall be convened to identify preventive measures for the purpose of ensuring continuity of education or employment.
7. Where the unique circumstances of a student, infected with a biohazard or blood-borne pathogen, poses a health risk in the school setting, alternate instruction will be provided.
8. Where an employee, infected with a biohazard or blood-borne pathogen, develops limitations to completing all of their duties, a medical accommodation will be considered.
9. Student and employee medical information will be kept confidential.
10. Common symptoms and trends associated with absences due to sickness will be monitored to identify an emerging outbreak.

11. During the phases of a pandemic outbreak, preventive measures will be identified and communicated to all stakeholders.
12. Where a vaccine is available for a specific or group of harmful biological agents, it may be provided to employees identified as being at risk of exposure, due to the nature of their duties, as an additional preventive measure.

.....

Date Adopted: 2011-01-25
Date(s) Revised:

Cross References:
Statutory: WCB O.H.S. Reg. 6.33-6.41 School Act Sections 91, 92
Other: