

ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY STATEMENT

Communicable, Infectious or Contagious Diseases and Health and Safety of Staff and Students

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board, in keeping with its philosophy and the Gospel message, recognizes its Christian responsibility in the areas of health and safety of staff and students in relation to the provision of appropriate first aid, safe procedures for the cleanup of blood and body fluids and a supportive response to the management of infectious, contagious or communicable diseases.

This policy is intended to adhere to our Christian Philosophy and to two basic Gospel values:

- (i) the dignity and rights of the person; and
- (ii) the compassionate application of policy.

The Board affirms its intention to cooperate with the responsible medical authorities and to act in conformity with the pertinent Acts and Regulations in all its procedures and practices.

Final decisions of appropriate action would be left to the discretion of the Board or its agents.

Note: Pediculosis (head lice) is not categorized by health authorities as a disease. Procedures to deal with this matter are on file in each school.

Approved: May 23, 2000
Revised: June 17, 2003

ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Communicable, Infectious or Contagious Diseases and Health and Safety of Staff and Students

A. GENERAL

1.0 **Reporting of Communicable, Infectious or Contagious Diseases**

The principal of a school must report to the Board's Administration and to the Medical Officer of Health when he/she has reason to suspect the existence of any infectious, communicable or contagious disease in the school. This requirement includes both students and staff members. No other person, except the principal is required to report.

The following specified reportable diseases (Ontario Regulations 559/91 and 205/95 under the Health Protection Act) are to be reported to the Local Medical Officer of Health immediately upon being made aware of their occurrence:

Anthrax Botulism, Cholera, Diphtheria, Food Poisoning (all causes), Gastroenteritis, Group A Streptococcal infections (invasive), Haemophilus influenzae b disease (invasive), Hemorrhagic fever (including Ebola virus disease, Marburg virus disease, Other viral causes), Hepatitis, Lassa Fever, Measles, Meningitis (acute bacterial), Meningococcal disease (invasive), Paratyphoid Fever, Plague, Poliomyelitis (acute), Rabies, Shigellosis, Typhoid Fever, Verotoxin producing E. Coli infection indicator conditions including Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS) Yellow Fever.

The following specified reportable diseases (Ontario Regulations 559/91 and 205/95) under the Health Protection Act are to be reported by the next working day upon being made aware of their occurrence.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Ambeviasis, Brucellosis, Campylobacter enteritis, Chancroid, Chickenpox (Varicella), Chlamydia trachomatis infections, Cytomegalo virus infection (congenital), Encephalitis (including primary, post infectious, vaccine related, subacute sclerosing panencephalitis, unspecified), Giardiasis, Gonorrhea, Group B Streptococca infections (neonatal), Hepatitis (B,C,D), Herpes, neonatoal), Influenza (more than 10% population elementary, 15% population secondary), Legionellosis, Leprosy, Listeriosis, Lyme Disease, Malaria, Meningitis (viral, other), Mumps, Ophthalmia neonatorum, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Psittacosis/Ornithosis, Q Fever, Rubella, Rebella (Congenital syndrome), Salmonellosis, Syphilis, Tetanus, Trichinosis, Tuberculosis, Tularemia, Yersiniosis.

Except as to the above obligations to report, the principal is bound by the requirement of confidentiality. With respect to the obligation to report to the Board, only the disclosure of non-identifying information will be transmitted to the Board of Trustees at the discretion of the Director of Education.

B. ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (A.I.D.S.)

1.0 **Disclosure**

1.1 No staff persons, no adult student and no parent of a minor pupil on behalf of the pupil is required to disclose the fact to anyone that he/she has or may have, tested positive to the AIDS virus or that he/she has any stage of AIDS.

1.2 All persons in the employ of the Board are expected to maintain strict confidentiality with reference to any knowledge or opinion regarding the presence of AIDS in a student or staff member and will only divulge on a strict "need to know" basis.

1.3 The only exception to the above will occur when a person or the person's parent wishes to disclose the information and asks for the support and assistance otherwise described in these procedures. In that event, only those with a strict "need to know" will be informed.

2.0 **Response to Medical Officer of Health**

It is recognized in these procedures that the local Medical Officer of Health has a key role to play and that the Board and its officials will cooperate fully with him/her in the discharge of his/her duties as required in the Acts and Regulations.

2.1 It is expected that the Medical Officer of Health will know about the presence of AIDS in any staff member or pupil because of the reporting requirements of the Health Promotion and Protection Act, or because the principal of a school has reported under the requirements of that Act or the Education Act.

2.2 According to Section 100 of the Health Promotion Act, the Medical Officer of Health has considerable responsibility to investigate and act to reduce or eliminate the risk of health. This includes the giving of such orders to the school board, the school, the principal or others with the school system, parent or one or more pupils, or anyone else described in that order to accomplish his/her mandate. Any diagnosed case of an AIDS virus carrier or AIDS case must be reported to the Medical Officer of Health. If there are special needs for the individual, the Medical Officer of Health determines if the school principal should be notified or who else should be notified regarding this confidential matter.

2.3 Except as to communication of information necessary to carry out his/her duties, it is not expected that the Medical Officer of Health will confirm to any person within or outside the school system, the presence of AIDS in any staff person or student, except on a strict "need to know" basis, consistent with the legislated authority of the Medical Officer of Health.

3.0 **Confidentiality and Privacy**

It is the intention of this policy and these procedures to recognize the right of the person with AIDS to privacy and confidentiality except as specifically required by the Acts, Regulations or this policy. Every attempt must be made by the principal to ensure that the rights of privacy and confidentiality are maintained.

3.1 In general terms, only persons who cannot discharge the duties of the office they hold without the knowledge, have a "need to know" when AIDS is present. This may include, in particular circumstances, those with an obligation to provide a health care service, those who may be required to take special precautions against the spread of the disease, or those who may need to take action to protect the person with AIDS or to protect others within the system.

3.2 In the absence of particular duties requiring the knowledge, pupils, teachers, principals, supervisory officers, parents and the public at large have no need or right to know of the presence of AIDS in a staff person or in a student.

3.3 Except to the extent that the report required to be made and the Education Act is brought before them, trustees have no need or right to know of the presence of AIDS in a pupil and with respect to employees they have no need or right to know.

4.0 **Rights of Employees**

Except as to the action taken by the Medical Officer of Health with respect to his/her mandate, and except for the normal duties and rights of the Board with respect to any employee's ability to perform his/her duties, the employee with AIDS has the right to expect fair treatment which includes privacy, confidentiality and support from the Board and its employees. No employee will be terminated merely because he/she has AIDS.

4.1 The staff person will continue in his/her current position of work except:

- a) if the employee requests alternatives to be explored to continuing the current work placement;
- b) if the degree of illness makes it impossible or highly unlikely in the judgment of the Superintendent that the person is able to discharge his/her duties in a satisfactory manner. This decision should be made in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health.
- c) if the risk to the person with AIDS or to others as determined by the local Medical Officer of Health required modification of the work environment.

4.2 The staff person has the right to expect that all alternatives to the current work environment will be explored and attempted as long as the person wishes to work and/or is able to work. The Board acknowledges its obligations of accommodation under the Human Rights Code.

4.3 The staff person with AIDS continues to have the right to all the benefit plans which are normally available to other employees in that group and for which the employee is signed up, and has the right to expect that the appropriate personnel will assist in maximizing the benefits available and in providing knowledge, support and direction in accessing these benefits.

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- 4.4 The staff person with AIDS has the right to expect that his/her condition will be kept strictly confidential except if he/she chooses to divulge it and discuss it, or expect to the extent that it becomes necessary to divulge it to persons with a "need to know".
- 4.5 The staff person with AIDS has a right to all the support and pastoral care which the Board can offer as outlined in these procedures.
- 4.6 All other staff persons have the right to expect that the Board will take all necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of employees and students within the system as far as it is in their power to do so, if they are made aware of the presence of AIDS.
- 4.7 No employee has, merely by virtue of the presence of a person with AIDS in the workplace, the right to refuse to work in that workplace. Every attempt will be made to provide education and support for persons so affected to enable them to fulfill their duties.
- 5.0 **Rights of Students and Parents**
Except as to the action taken by the Medical Officer of Health with respect to his/her mandate, and except for the duties of the Board with respect to a student's rights to attend school, the student and his parents have the right to expect fair treatment which includes the right to privacy, confidentiality and support from the Board and its employees. No student will be excluded from attendance at school merely because he/she has AIDS.
- 5.1 The student has the right to continue to attend school on a full-time basis if he/she wishes to do so except:
- a) if he/she (in the case of an adult student) or his/her parents request alternative instruction. This will be provided as far as it is within the Board's powers to provide;
 - b) if in the opinion of the Superintendent, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, the degree of illness makes it impossible or highly unlikely that the student is able to continue to attend school. Infected individuals may continue to study/work as long as the Medical Officer of Health says they are well enough and pose no risk to others. In that event, alternatives will be offered to provide an education to the student;
 - c) if the risk to the student with AIDS or to others, as determined by the local Medical Officer of Health requires modification of the school environment, including the provision of home instruction for the student with AIDS.
- 5.2 The student with AIDS who cannot attend school in a regular way has the right to expect that all alternatives to the current school placement will be explored and attempted as long as the student wishes to be provided with an education program.
- 5.3 The student with AIDS has a right to all the support and pastoral care which the Board can offer.

- 5.4 All other staff persons have the right to expect that the Board will take all necessary steps to ensure the Health and Safety of employees and students within the system as far as it is in their power to do so, if they are made aware of the presence of AIDS.
- 5.5 No parent or student, merely by virtue of the presence of AIDS in another student or staff person, has the right to withdraw a student from the classroom or school.

6.0 Education

While making every effort to prepare for the event, it must be remembered that each real experience with AIDS will still come as a shock to everyone affected. The more thorough and careful the education program, the better the chances that the encounter with the first person with AIDS will be handled with maturity by all concerned.

- 6.1 The Board's policy and procedures regarding AIDS need to be carefully and clearly made known to all constituent groups. This may be accomplished in the following ways:
- a) the production of a pamphlet for community and staff use, outlining and clarifying the Board's response to AIDS in the organization;
 - b) the dissemination of the required information via parent nights, staff meetings, cable T.V. messages, etc.
 - c) the regular in-service of principals and other workplace supervisors and all staff, regarding the known facts about AIDS and the details of the Board's policy and procedures regarding response to AIDS in this Board.

C. RESPONSE TO REPORTING OF COMMUNICABLE, INFECTIOUS, OR CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

- 1.0 Notwithstanding the affected student's rights to attend school under normal circumstances, the Board recognizes its responsibility to the safety and protection of all staff and students against the spread of communicable, infectious, or contagious diseases through the occasion of possible contact or exposure within the school environment.
- 1.1 Upon confirmation of a communicable, infectious, or contagious condition involving a student, the parents/guardians of the child will assume responsibility for his/her care outside the school environment during the period the disease is communicable, infectious, or contagious to others.
- 1.2 The principal shall report, as required, the communicable, infectious, or contagious disease to the Board and the Medical Officer of Health.

- 1.3 With written permission to re-attend from a medical practitioner or on the advisement to the principal by the Medical Officer of Health or Health Unit Personnel, the principal shall readmit the student to the school. Provisions consistent with Board Policy shall be assumed should the administration of medication be necessary at school to complete the treatment for the condition beyond the isolation period.
- 1.4 During the absence from school, the principal shall endeavour to provide suitable curricular activities to the student should the parents/guardians request them.