

TURKEYFOOT VALLEY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: COMMUNICABLE
DISEASES-STUDENTS

ADOPTED: 9/21/2009

REVISED: 04/19/2021

203. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES – STUDENTS

1. Authority
Sc 1303a (a)

The Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District has consulted and will continue to consult appropriate medical, educational, legal, and governmental authorities regarding policies and guidelines concerning the topic of communicable diseases.

To safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases, the Board requires that established Board policy, administrative regulations, and Board-approved health and safety plans be followed by students, parents/guardians and district staff.[1][2]

With a commitment to providing a healthful learning environment and safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases, the Board requires that established policy and guidelines be followed.

Advisory Council

The district shall establish an Advisory Council on Communicable Diseases, (Council), which, for students shall consist of the Superintendent, Building Principal, School Nurse the district medical director and other designated personnel. The Building Principal shall serve as chairperson of the Council. This Council shall convene to review and assess all pertinent aspects of a case and recommend an appropriate educational program in consultation with the parents/guardians and the student. The Council will consider each case individually, consistent with policy.

2. Definitions

Carrier – A person who, without any apparent symptoms of a communicable disease, harbors an infectious agent and may serve as a source of infection.

Certificate of Immunization - the official form furnished by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The certificate is filled out by the parent/guardian or health care provider and signed by the health care provider, public health official or school nurse or a designee. The certificate is given to the school as proof of full immunization. The school maintains the certificate as the official school immunization record or stores the details of the record in a computer database.[3]

Communicable Disease – An illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic

products, which is capable of being transmitted directly or indirectly to a susceptible host from a carrier, infected person, animal or arthropod, or through the agency of an intermediate host or vector through the inanimate environment.

Communicable Period – The time interval during which a carrier or infected person can transmit an infectious agent directly or indirectly to another person.

Contact – A person exposed to the possibility of acquiring a communicable disease because of his/her association with a carrier or infected person.

Infected Person – A person who shows evidence of any symptoms associated with a communicable disease.

Medical Certificate - the official form furnished by the Pennsylvania Department of Health setting out the immunization plan for a student who is not fully immunized, filled out and signed by a physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant, or by a public health official when the immunization is provided by the Department of Health or a local health department, and given to a school as proof that the student is scheduled to complete the required immunizations.[3]

Reasonable Accommodation – Any addition to or modification of existing facilities, equipment, programs, schedules, policies, procedures, methods, operation or services that would enable a carrier, contact, or infected person, to remain in his/her existing classroom, facility, or position or to enter a classroom, facility, or position comparable to that which her/she would have entered were her/she not a carrier, contact, or infected person. Reasonable accommodations, however, do not require additions or modifications that would impose undue hardship on the operation of Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District programs. In determining whether an addition or modification would impose “undue hardship” the Council will consider the following factors.

1. The cost of change.
2. The ability of the Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District to cover the cost of the change.
3. The degree to which the change will disrupt or diminish the effectiveness of Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District programs.
4. The number of students, faculty, and programs affected by the change.
5. The educational and other needs of the students affected by the change.
6. The extent to which the change will reduce the risk to health and safety.
7. The duration and severity of the risk to health and safety; and any other matter that the Advisory Council deems to be relevant.

<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>Significant Risk to Health and Safety – Risk that is posed by the presence of a carrier, contact, or infected person and that is significant enough to justify a change in the educational program or placement of a carrier, contact, or infected person. In determining the significance of a risk, the Board will consider reasonable medical judgments on the following factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The manner by which the infectious agent is transmitted. 2. The duration of the communicable period. 3. The severity of the risk to other; and the probability of transmission to others. <p><u>Applicability</u></p> <p>This policy and applicable guidelines shall apply to all students of the Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District.</p> <p><u>Immunization</u></p> <p>All students shall be immunized against specific diseases in accordance with state law and regulations, unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons.[1][2][4]</p> <p>A certificate of immunization shall be maintained as part of the health record for each student, as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.[5]</p> <p>A student shall be exempt from immunization requirements whose parent/guardian objects in writing to such immunization on religious grounds or whose physician certifies that the student's physical condition contraindicates immunization.[1][4][6][7]</p> <p>A student who has not been immunized in accordance with state regulations shall not be admitted to or permitted to attend district schools, unless exempted for medical or religious reasons, provisionally admitted by the Superintendent or designee after beginning a multiple dose vaccine series and submitting proof of immunization or a medical certificate on or before the fifth school day of attendance, or in accordance with programs or guidance established by the PA Department of Health.[1][4][5][6][7]</p> <p>Homeless students who have not been immunized or are unable to provide immunization records due to being homeless shall be admitted in accordance with the provisions of applicable law and regulations.[5][8][9]</p> <p>Foster care students and students transferring into a school within the Commonwealth shall be admitted in accordance with law and regulations, and shall have thirty (30) days to provide proof of immunization, a medical certificate detailing the plan to complete a multiple dose vaccine series or to satisfy the requirements for an exemption.[5][10]</p>
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Monitoring of immunization requirements shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent or designee and the school nurse. [1]

Students attending child care group settings located in a school, a pre-kindergarten program or an early intervention program operated by the district shall be immunized in accordance with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) standards.[6][11]

The Superintendent or designee shall:

Ensure that parents/guardians are informed prior to a student's admission to school, or a grade requiring additional immunizations, of the requirements for immunization, the requisite proof of immunization, exemption available for religious or medical reasons, and means by which such exemptions may be claimed.[1][5][6][7][8][12]

Designate school personnel to review student medical certificates in accordance with law and regulations to ensure compliance with full immunization requirements.[3][5]

The Superintendent or designee shall report immunization data electronically to the PA Department of Health by December 31 of each year. If the district is unable to complete the report electronically, the Superintendent or designee shall report the immunization data on the required form to the PA Department of Health by December 15.[13]

Communicable Diseases

The Board directs that students who have been diagnosed by a physician or are suspected of having a disease by the school nurse shall be excluded from school for the period indicated by regulations of the PA Department of Health or guidance from state or local health officials for specified diseases and infectious conditions.[14][15][16][17]

Parents/Guardians shall be notified of this policy at the beginning of the school year, and that during the school year it may be necessary for a student to be excluded from school due to communicable disease. Parents/Guardians of a student needing to be excluded shall be notified and required to come to school or have a designated emergency contact come to school to transport the student home or to an appropriate place of care. Students may return to school when the criteria for readmission following a communicable disease, as set forth in law, regulations, or guidance from state or local health officials, have been met.[14][15][16]

The Board directs school staff to request emergency contact information from parents/guardians of students at the beginning of each school year and request that it be updated as necessary during the school year.

The school nurse shall report the presence of suspected communicable diseases to the

appropriate local health authority, as required by the PA Department of Health.[18][19][20]

The Superintendent or designee shall direct that health guidelines, Board-approved health and safety plans, and universal precautions designed to minimize the transmission of communicable diseases be implemented in district schools.

Admission of Students

The district shall admit a carrier, contact or infected person to his/her assigned classroom or facility, unless a change in assignment, or an exclusion is recommended by the Superintendent and is approved by the Board after consultation with the Council. Any decision to change or exclude a student should be made after consultation with student's attending physician, the student's parent/guardian and, if necessary, the educational personnel in the student's existing proposed placement.

The Board shall approve a change in assignment or an exclusion only if, after reasonable accommodation, the carrier, contact, or infected person would pose a significant risk to health and safety. This change will continue only for as long as necessary, to prevent significant risk to health and safety.

If a student contracts any of the communicable diseases identified by the Department of Health in Section 27.1 of the Department's regulation, 28 PA Code 27.71, the Superintendent may exclude that student without consulting the Advisory Council on Communicable Diseases or the Board. The exclusion and readmission of the student shall conform to the requirements of 28 PA Code 27.71 through 27.75.

The district may require a limited waiver of the physician-patient privilege as a condition of admission or continued admission of the carrier, contact or infected person, to the extent necessary to prevent significant risk to health and safety.

The Superintendent or his/her designee may exclude any suspected carrier, contact, or infected person, until a licensed physician can complete an examination, or on the physician's recommendation and opinion that it is necessary to prevent significant risk to the health and safety until such time that the Advisory Council has had an opportunity to act on recommendation for a change in assignment or exclusion.

The Advisory Council will review at least once every three (3) months the case of each carrier, contact, and infected person to determine the current status of the case and, if necessary, to revise the original recommendation in light of new information and new developments in medicine.

Any student who is excluded from school pursuant to this policy will be referred to the building principal for appropriate action, which may include the provision of homebound or other alternative education action to comply with Section 1329 of the Code, 24 P.S. 12-1329, and/or other action at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District may establish procedures necessary for the

<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>safe operation of each of its services, programs, and activities. Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District may make such inquires as are needed to ensure safe participation in its services, programs and activities.</p> <p><u>Confidentiality</u></p> <p>A comprehensive health record shall be maintained for each student enrolled in the district. The record shall include the results of required tests, measurements, screenings, regular and special examinations, and medical questionnaires.[17][24]</p> <p>In accordance with state and federal law, the district will keep confidential all student records of carriers, contact and infected persons. The district will disclose confidential information only to those district personnel who need the information to protect themselves and others from significant risk to health and safety or as required by the PA Department of Health. The district may disclose information from health records to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency when necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[25][26][27][28][29][30]</p> <p><u>Education</u></p> <p>The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop a program to educate parents/guardians, students and staff about the detection, treatment, transmission risk and prevention of communicable diseases. The program will also inform parents/guardians and staff about the communicable disease policies and guidelines of the district.</p> <p>Instruction regarding prevention of communicable and life-threatening diseases shall be provided by the schools in the educational program for all levels, in accordance with state regulations.[21]</p> <p>Parents/Guardians shall be informed of and be provided opportunities during school hours to review all curriculum materials used in instruction relative to communicable and life-threatening diseases, in accordance with Board policy.[21][22][23]</p> <p>In developing an education program, the Superintendent will refer to Chapter 27 of the regulations adopted by the Department of Health, entitled, “Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases,” 28 PA Code 27.1 et seq, and to any relevant guidelines issued by the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</p> <p><u>Evaluation</u></p> <p>The medical director will periodically report to the Superintendent regarding the effectiveness of these guidelines and will make recommendations, along with district counsel, for revision in response to developments in medical research and law.</p> <p><u>Infection Control</u></p> <p>Employees will treat all bodily fluids as hazardous and will follow standard</p>
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precautions to prevent exposure to bodily fluids.

The district will maintain reasonably accessible equipment and supplies for infection control.

All employees will be required to consistently follow infection control measures and use standard precautions in all settings and at all times, including school buses. Employees will notify the Superintendent or designee of all incidents of exposure to bodily fluids and when a student's health condition or behavior presents a reasonable risk of transmission and infection.

1. 24 P.S. 1303a
2. 28 PA Code 23.81 et seq
3. 28 PA Code 23.82
4. 22 PA Code 11.20
5. 28 PA Code 23.85
6. 28 PA Code 23.83
7. 28 PA Code 23.84
8. Pol. 200
9. Pol. 251
10. Pol. 255
11. 28 PA Code 27.77
12. Pol. 201
13. 28 PA Code 23.86
14. 28 PA Code 27.71
15. 28 PA Code 27.72
16. Pol. 204
17. Pol. 209
18. 28 PA Code 27.2
19. 28 PA Code 27.1
20. 28 PA Code 27.23
21. 22 PA Code 4.29
22. 22 PA Code 4.4
23. Pol. 105.1
24. 24 P.S. 1402
25. 24 P.S. 1409
26. 20 U.S.C. 1232g
27. 34 CFR Part 99
28. Pol. 113.4
29. Pol. 216
30. Pol. 805