

In accordance with Idaho law, the board is vested with authority to protect the health of its students and to exclude from school those students with contagious or infectious diseases who are diagnosed or suspected as having a contagious or infectious disease, or those who are not immune and have been exposed to a contagious or infectious disease. It is also the responsibility of the district to protect the rights of employees and students who may be infected with a communicable disease. Therefore, the board adopts this policy to implement district responsibilities in this area.

In addition to closing some or all schools within the district in response to an infectious or contagious disease outbreak, the board may take action to limit aspects of school programs or activities to prevent the spread of contagious or infectious disease. Such actions may include, for example, temporary suspension of extracurricular or co-curricular activities such as athletics or music programs. The board authorize the superintendent to implement appropriate procedures to address any contagious or infectious disease outbreak, in accordance with applicable law and district policy.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

A communicable disease is any illness or condition which is identified as such by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. With any communicable disease infection, the district will consult with South Central District Health regarding recommended guidelines specific to each disease concerning exclusion and treatment of contacts.

When an employee or student reports that he/she has contracted a communicable disease, the district will determine whether the employee or student poses a risk of harm to students and other staff members after consulting with South Central District Health and reviewing recommended guidelines, specific to the disease, concerning exclusion and treatment of contacts. In addition, the district will determine what precautions, if any, are necessary.

Each school year, the district will provide instruction to all building staff including custodial and food service staff in the employment of the most current version of Universal Precautions. Universal Precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) include established routines for handling body fluids and providing sanitary environments.

## **REPORTING OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES TO THE LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Pursuant to the Idaho Reportable Diseases Regulations, IDAPA 16.02.10, the district will file a report with South Central District Health in the event an employee or student is known, or reasonably suspected, to have a reportable communicable disease.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information regarding an employee's or student's medical status, including the presence of a communicable disease, shall be treated as confidential. No information known to the district or its employees regarding an employee's or student's medical status shall be divulged, directly or indirectly, to any other individuals or groups unless:

- The employee or student's parent/guardian gives prior approval for the disclosure; or
- Such disclosure is required by law.

**PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INFECTION**

The district will take reasonable precautions to ensure a safe and clean school environment as may be recommended by the CDC, South Central District Health, the Governor or local county or city authorities. Such precautions may include, but are not limited to: posting of signs in school facilities identifying symptoms to watch for, providing information to students, employees, patrons and families regarding steps that will be taken by the district in the event of an illness or outbreak, requiring the use of masks, and providing alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout school facilities. Specific procedures and requirements will be communicated pursuant to the district's applicable Health or State/National Emergency Plan.

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, the district may implement some or all of the following to limit the spread of infection.

**Telecommuting**

Telework for employees will be handled on a case-by-case basis. While not all positions will be eligible, all requests for temporary telecommuting should be submitted to the superintendent for consideration.

**Staying Home When Ill**

During the infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that students do not come to school and employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing symptoms associated with the applicable infectious disease outbreak. Examples of symptoms include, but are not limited to: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Currently, the CDC recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the flu remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. For some infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, the CDC additionally recommends staying at home for at least 10 days after symptoms first appeared and symptoms have improved.

For students or employees who are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from sick individuals and/or their health care provider. In general, the district would request medical information to confirm the need to be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to the infection, and to know that it is appropriate for such individuals to return to school or work. As noted above, all medical information received will be

deemed confidential.

### **Social Distancing Guidelines for Infectious Disease Outbreaks**

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, the district may implement some or all of the following social distancing guidelines at some or all of its facilities to minimize the spread of the disease among students and staff, taking into consideration the age of students at a particular school, building design and other factors.

- Cancellation of field trips, assemblies and other large gatherings;
- Cancellation or modification of classes where students are likely to be in very close contact;
- Increasing space between desks;
- Changes to cafeteria schedules and food service;
- Staggering arrival and/or dismissal times;
- Limiting non-essential visitors to school facilities; and
- Limitation of cross-school transfers for special programs (e.g. music, academic clubs, STEM centers, etc.)

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### **LEGAL REFERENCE:**

Idaho Code Sections

33-212- Authority to Close Schools to Prevent the Spread of Infectious Diseases

33-512(4) and (7) – Governance of Schools

33-1612 – Thorough System of Public Schools

IDAPA 16.02.10 – Idaho Reportable Diseases

34 C.F.R. Part 104 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities

Receiving Federal Financial Assistance

28 C.F.R. Part 35 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services

Additional information and resources regarding infectious and communicable disease outbreaks in schools can be found on the CDC’s website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

### **CROSS REFERENCE:**

Policy 562 – Exclusion for Communicable Diseases

**ADOPTED: September 21, 2021**

**REVISED:**