

HIV/AIDS POLICY

The Cambridge Public Schools is committed to having a safe and welcoming educational and working environment for its staff and students. The Cambridge Public Schools also strives to protect the health and safety of students and staff as well as other individuals visiting its schools. Additionally, the Cambridge Public Schools works with public health authorities to promote these goals. Consistent with this commitment, the following is the school district's policy with respect to addressing issues related to staff and students who are living with HIV/AIDS.

School Attendance and Participation in School Activities By Children Who Are Living With HIV/AIDS

Children living with HIV/AIDS who are residents of the City of Cambridge are entitled to the same rights and privileges related to attendance and participation in education within the Cambridge Public Schools as other children who are residents of the City of Cambridge, including without limitation, participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities, physical education classes, athletic programs, competitive sports, and recess and/or other physical activities. As the risk of HIV transmission in school is minimal, there is no reason to exclude or put conditions on a student living with HIV/AIDS. In accordance with the school district's process for the development of 504 Accommodation Plans for students, school staff will, if necessary, put in place reasonable accommodations for a student living with HIV/AIDS.

School staff shall always strive to maintain a respectful school climate and in accordance with the provisions of the Cambridge Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Policy Against Discrimination and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment will not allow physical or verbal harassment of any individual or group by another individual or group, including without limitation, taunts directed against a person living with HIV/AIDS, a person perceived as having HIV/AIDS, or a person associated with someone with HIV/AIDS.

Additionally, all school staff must consistently adhere to universal precautions for infection control guidelines in locker rooms and all play and athletic settings. Rulebooks will reflect these guidelines. First-aid kits must be on hand at every athletic event. Also, all physical education teachers and athletic program staff are expected to complete an approved first-aid and injury prevention course that includes implementation of infection control guidelines. Student orientation about safety on the playing field will include guidelines for utilizing universal precautions for infection control.

Employment of Staff Who Are Living With HIV/AIDS

The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of HIV/AIDS or association with another person with HIV/AIDS. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, an employee with HIV/AIDS is welcome to continue working as long as they are able to perform the essential functions of the position with reasonable accommodations, if necessary.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Students or staff are not required to disclose HIV/AIDS status. Additionally, HIV antibody testing is not required for any purpose.

The identity of a student or staff member with HIV/AIDS will not be disclosed without the express written consent of the individual or the express written consent of the individual's parent/guardian/caregiver if a student under the age of eighteen (18) except where disclosure is otherwise required by law.

If disclosure is made to the school district, the parent/guardian/caregiver or student (if eighteen (18) or older) or the staff member shall decide which school personnel are allowed to know of the HIV/AIDS status.

Any written information about an individual's HIV/AIDS status shall not be included in the student's educational records, routine school health records or other records accessible to a wide range of staff. HIV/AIDS information on a specific student shall be kept in a separate locked file available to school health staff on a need to know basis. Similarly, any written information about a staff member's HIV/AIDS status shall not be included in records accessible to a wide range of staff but maintained in a separate locked file available to school health staff on a need to know basis.

All employees have a duty to respect the confidentiality of an individual's medical information, whether such information pertains to a student or staff member. Inappropriate disclosure of such information, including without limitation, disclosure of, any knowledge or speculation concerning the HIV/AIDS status of a student or staff member, may subject the individual to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment as well as criminal prosecution and/or personal liability for a civil suit. Access to these confidential records is limited to school health staff, emergency medical personnel or those specified in an informed written consent or by court order.

Services to Meet the Needs of Children who have Family Members Living with HIV/AIDS

Students will have access to voluntary, confidential, age and developmentally appropriate counseling about matters related to HIV/AIDS.

School administrators will maintain confidential linkage and referral mechanisms to facilitate voluntary student access to appropriate HIV/AIDS counseling and testing programs, and to other HIV/AIDS-related services as needed.

Public information about resources in the community will be kept available for voluntary, confidential use.

Reduction of Risk of HIV Transmission for Students and Staff at School (Infection Control/Universal Precautions Procedures)

The risk of transmission of HIV in the school setting is extremely low when universal infection control guidelines are followed consistently. These universal precautions will protect

against illnesses spread through casual contact (such as the flu and colds) as well as those that are more difficult to acquire (such as Hepatitis B or HIV infection). In this way, schools create a safer school environment and promote better health for everyone.

All employees are required to consistently follow the universal precautions for infection control guidelines as detailed in the Cambridge Public Schools Emergency Management Plan Manual in all school settings and at all times, including on playgrounds and on school buses. Schools will operate according to the standards promulgated by the U.S. OSHA for the prevention of blood-borne infections. Equipment and supplies needed to apply the infection control guidelines will be maintained and kept reasonably accessible. Staff will receive professional development about standard universal precautions and follow these universal precautions with every student or adult.

Additionally, as set forth in the school district's Policy on Administration of Prescription Medications, schools will follow established procedures for administering medications and, as set forth in the school district's Emergency Management Plan Manual, each school will have a plan for managing and responding to medical emergencies at school as well as for communicating and managing communicable disease (e.g. measles or chickenpox) occurrences in the school setting.

Moreover, in accordance with school district policies, a school staff member is expected to alert the principal and school nurse if a student's health condition or behavior presents a reasonable risk of transmitting an infection. If a situation occurs at school in which a person might have been exposed to an infectious agent, such as an instance of blood-to-blood contact, school authorities shall counsel that person (or, if a minor, alert the student's parent/guardian/caregiver) to seek appropriate medical evaluation.

Quality and Effectiveness of HIV Prevention Education For Youth

Students will receive education about HIV transmission and prevention of transmission through the school curriculum.

The goals of HIV prevention education are to promote healthful living and discourage the behaviors that can put a young person at risk of acquiring HIV. The educational program will:

- be taught at every level, kindergarten through grade 12;
- use methods demonstrated by sound research to be effective;
- be consistent with community standards;
- follow content guidelines prepared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC);
- be aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks;
- be aligned with the National Health Education Standards;
- be aligned with the National Sexuality Education Standards;
- be appropriate to students' developmental levels, behaviors, and cultural backgrounds;
- build knowledge and skills from year to year;
- stress the benefits of delaying sexual activity, alcohol, and other drug use;
- include specific, clear & accurate information on all the ways to reduce the risk of HIV infection;

- address students' own concerns;
- teach skills of using prevention methods;
- include means for evaluation;
- be an integral part of a coordinated school health program (CSHP);
- be taught by well-prepared instructors with adequate support; and
- involve parents/guardians/caregivers and families as partners in education.

Parents/guardians/caregivers shall have opportunities to preview all HIV prevention curricula and materials, and be provided assistance to discuss HIV infection with their children. If a parent/guardian/caregiver submits a written request to a principal that a child not receive instruction in sexuality topics at school, the child shall be excused without penalty or stigma.

The school district will endeavor to cooperate with HIV prevention efforts in the community that address out-of-school youth and youth in situations that put them at high risk of acquiring HIV.

Staff Training

All school personnel will receive professional development about HIV transmission and prevention of transmission, guidance on infection control procedures, testing facts and local/state statutes, and confidentiality laws. Additionally, certain employees as determined by the Superintendent of Schools will also receive additional specialized training as appropriate to their positions and responsibilities to address and respond to various issues outlined in this policy.

Accountability

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for development and implementation of administrative guidelines consistent with this policy and ensure the inclusion of information regarding this policy in the school district's *Guide to Policies for Student and Families* and *Guide to Policies for Staff*. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating and responding to any reported violations of this policy.

Periodic Policy Review

The school district will review this policy at least every three years and make any amendments necessary.

Adopted: May 15, 2018