**Students**

**Communicable Diseases/Infectious Diseases**

**CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

Gothenburg Public Schools shall cooperate with county and state health department officials in developing procedures for the control of communicable diseases in the schools. All procedures shall conform to the regulations for communicable disease control set up by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers of Disease Control.

In general, a student with a communicable condition will be allowed to attend school in the student's usual class setting only after written approval has been secured from the student's physician stating that the disease is not in a communicable stage. Without such a written statement, a student with a communicable condition is subject to an emergency exclusion. The school reserves the right to consult with a second physician to secure another opinion if a second opinion is deemed necessary by school personnel.

In general, a district employee with a communicable condition will be allowed to work only after securing a physician's written statement indicating that the disease is not in a communicable stage. The school reserves the right to secure an independent second opinion if such is deemed necessary.

**Students' Communicable Conditions**

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 173 Chapter 3-1003 Symptoms of Communicable Disease: Exclusion from school:

Children showing any signs or symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease are required by law to be sent to their homes immediately, or as soon as safe and proper conveyance can be found.

Teachers are encouraged to observe each child carefully for signs of illness each time the child returns to school. This is particularly important when epidemic diseases are known to be present in the community.

The presence of one or more of the following signs or symptoms should make the staff member suspect a communicable disease:

- Fever, flushed face, headache, aches in muscles or joints, unexplained tiredness or listlessness, loss of appetite, stomach ache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, sore throat, nasal congestion or discharge, unexplained skin eruption, sore or inflamed eyes.
Infectious diseases can be classified as chronic or acute. Chronic infectious diseases are infectious diseases that are carried throughout the lifetime of the infected person. Acute infectious diseases are infectious diseases carried for a limited time by the infected person.

Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV/AIDS are chronic infectious diseases that are not commonly transmitted by casual contact. Chronic infectious diseases are diagnosed through medical testing.

In the event that a student, employee, or other frequent contact at Gothenburg Public School becomes infected with a chronic infectious disease, the superintendent shall make decisions about changes in the employment/education program of an employee/student on a case-by-case basis, relying on available scientific and medical advice.

The school will comply with regulations and enforce guidelines pertaining to training of all staff regarding blood borne pathogens, universal precautions, and safely handling of body fluids. Training will be consistent on an annual basis. Training will be conducted by the school nurse. The training will be job specific for employees.

The following are a list of communicable disease, but not limited to, spread by casual contact that a student or employee will be excluded from school:

- Measles (Rubeola)
- Fifth Disease
- Hepatitis A
- Streptococcal Infections (this also protects us against a known MRSA case)
- Three-Day Measles (Rubella)
- Impetigo
- Chickenpox
- Shingles
- Pink eye (Conjunctivitis)
- Mumps
- Scabies

According to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Chapter 3-004 Reporting regulation:

3-004.01 Suspected Contagious or Infectious Disease:

When a child is sent home because of a suspected contagious or infectious disease, the law requires the proper school authority, school board, or board of education to be notified without delay.

3-004.02 Suspected Reportable Disease: When a school nurse or an individual acting in the capacity of a school nurse identifies a case or suspected case of a reportable disease,
he or she must report that case to the local public health department or the DHHS Division of public health as provided in 173 NAC 1-007.04.

According to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Chapter 3-005 Duration of Exclusion Period:

Children excluded for a confirmed communicable disease should not be allowed to return to school until the minimum isolation period has elapsed, and all signs and symptoms of acute illness have disappeared. The period of exclusion should extend throughout the period when acute signs of illness are present, or until the student is fever free for 24hrs without the use of fever reducing medication.

Gothenburg Public Schools in collaboration with Gothenburg Family Practice, Gothenburg Memorial Hospital, and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services will comply with the Centers of Disease Control and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services minimum isolation period as shown in the table on Attachment 1, Contagious and Infectious Disease/Condition Chart, which is attached to 173 NAC 3.


A student may be readmitted with written permission from the school nurse or a medical doctor.

If a student has a reported communicable disease, Gothenburg Public Schools will comply with the following regulations as deemed necessary:

A) The school principal, the school nurse, and the Student Assistance Team will function as liaisons with the student's physician as necessary, and will coordinate the health management procedures within the school building.

B) The decision to exclude a student from school shall be made by the Superintendent, after consultation with the appropriate building principal. Decisions regarding the type of educational setting for students who are not excluded from classes will be based on the behavior, neurological development and physical condition of the student and the expected type of interaction within others in that setting. The Student Assistance Team, with the help of parents or guardians and the appropriate medical personnel, will develop educational plans for these students.

C) The privacy of the student and family must be protected, and knowledge that a student has a communicable condition should be confined to persons with a direct need to know. If it becomes necessary to inform others, these persons will be provided with information concerning necessary precautions, and they will be made aware of confidentiality requirements.
D) Students who present a high risk of disease transmission may be temporarily excluded from school by the administration after consultation with the Student Assistance Team, the student's physician, parents, and/or their representative, school nurse, or the school's physician. The school shall retain the authority to limit a student’s activities in school where such is necessary for the health and safety of the students or others.

E) The student might be considered at high risk if the student: exhibits behaviors that may spread the disease (e.g., biting, lacks toilet training or is incontinent) or has an open sore that cannot be concealed or hygienically covered, any of which could result in direct spreading of the condition or disease. The behavior, neurologic development, and physical condition of the student will be taken into consideration.

F) During the time a student is excluded from the classroom, an appropriate alternative or adjustment to the student's education will be provided. The Student Assistance Team will review long-term cases at least monthly, or more often if necessary.

**Immunization requirements to aid in the prevention of communicable diseases in the school setting.**

**According to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Regulation 3-008:**

Each student must be protected by immunization against the following diseases, unless otherwise exempted from this requirement under the provisions of 173- NAC 3-010:

- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Polio
- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis
- Haemophilius Influenza type B (Hib)
- Varicella
- Invasive pneumococcal disease

Evidence of protection against the previous diseases are required by law and required to be reported prior to enrollment. The school board will require presentation of an immunization history, which will include the name of the vaccine including the date of administration. A report will be submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services summarizing immunization status by November 15 of each year. The school nurse will be responsible for reporting immunization status to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.
According to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service: In compliance with the requirement of immunizations against the diseases listed above:

3-008.01B Students enrolling for the first time (kindergarten or 1st grade, depending on the school district’s entering grade), enrolling in 7th grade, and all transfer students from outside the state regardless of the grade they are entering are considered immunized if they have received:

* 3 doses DTaP, DTP, DT, or Td vaccine with at least 1 dose given no earlier than 4 days before 4 years of age;

* 3 doses of polio vaccine;

* 2 doses of MMR vaccine with the first dose given no earlier than 4 days before the first birthday and the 2 doses separated by at least 28 days;

* 3 doses of pediatric hepatitis B vaccine, or, if the alternate hepatitis B vaccination schedule is used, 2 doses of a licensed adult hepatitis B vaccine specified for adolescents 11-15 years of age; and

* 2 doses of varicella vaccine with the first dose given no earlier than 4 days before the first birthday and the 2 doses separated by at least 28 days.

Students enrolling in 7th grade must provide evidence of having 1 booster dose of a tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine, given on or after 7 years of age.

Refer to DHHS regulations, 173 NAC 3 for regulations regarding exemptions due to medical, religious, history of illness, or evidence of immunity with laboratory testing. Students are required to have immunizations completed by October 15, 2014 or students will be excluded from school until immunizations are completed.

Exceptions for exemptions are allowed based on:

1. Documented history of varicella disease from a parent or health care provider with the year of the infection. A clinical diagnosis of shingles.

2. A statement signed by a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner that the specified immunizations would be injurious to the student or any family member of the student.

3. A notarized affidavit signed by the legally authorized representative of the student stating that the immunization conflict with the recognized religious beliefs.

4. Written statement of the legally authorized guardian that states immunizations have been completed. This policy applies to students
enrolling following residence outside the state or the child’s parent is in the military. Proof of immunization is required to be given within 60 days.

Employees' Communicable Conditions

A) Any employee who contracts a communicable condition should report the same to the building principal who should, in turn, report to the Superintendent in a confidential manner. The Superintendent shall then consult with the employee and appropriate medical personnel to evaluate the medical and psychological condition of the employee. The Superintendent shall recommend reasonable accommodations so that the employee may continue in employment as long as the student is physically able to do so.

B) The privacy of the employee must be protected, and knowledge that an employee has a communicable condition should be confined to persons with a direct need to know. If it becomes necessary to inform others, these persons will be provided with information concerning necessary precautions and will be made aware of confidentiality requirements.

C) Employees who present a high risk of disease transmission will be temporarily excluded from work after consultation with appropriate medical authorities.

All school staff members are to follow the Universal Health Precautions at all times as recommended by the Centers of Disease Control. Staff will receive yearly training regarding universal precautions, utilization of PPE, and blood borne pathogens. Staff will comply with training and implemented regulations.

When it is documented that an infected student or employee poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of the school community or that the student’s conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, the provisions of Communicable Disease and Immunization, Physical Examinations, and Health Screenings Policies shall be implemented, providing for the exclusion of that student. Any person with an infectious disease will retain the rights of confidentiality and privacy, limited to individuals in a need-to-know position (administrators and board members). The community shall be informed that an infectious disease is present in the school system and that the person will be excluded if the situation warrants such action, based on medical and legal advice. Gothenburg Public Schools will comply with HIPPA regulations. Written consent from the individual if an adult or legal guardian will be required upon obtaining or releasing medical information.

The policy and regulations regarding communicable/infectious disease are based on present knowledge, laws, and recommendations presented by the Nebraska Department of Health. In the event of any updated information pertaining to communicable diseases and communicable disease control, necessary revisions may be required.

Date of Adoption: January 14, 2008
Date of Revision: December 8, 2014