

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School
Policy S13: Infectious Disease Policy
Adopted: September 17, 2020

- I. An "infectious disease" means an illness due to an infectious agent or its toxic products, which is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal.
- II. The School Leader or designee will develop and implement procedures related to the impact of infectious diseases on school system management and operations. Such procedures will be consistent with the requirements of the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-1-3-.03 and will require the following actions:
 - a. Annual provision to employees of information, education, or training related to infectious diseases, including transmission, the use of personal protective equipment as appropriate to tasks with potential exposure, risk reduction, and standard precautions, based on guidelines or recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
 - b. Making provisions for personal protective equipment (PPE) to be readily available and appropriate to task when the potential for exposure to infectious disease exists.
 - c. Immediate notification of the person, or if the person is a minor, to the parent or guardian, of the need to obtain an appropriate medical evaluation where there exists reasonable suspicion that an employee or student has an infectious disease.
 - d. Involvement of the following individuals in operational decisions concerning an employee or student determined to have an infectious disease.:
 - i. Superintendent,
 - ii. Governing Board Chair,
 - iii. School's designated licensed healthcare provider,
 - iv. State and/or local public health agency representatives,
 - v. and Any other necessary health care professionals.
 - e. The disclosure of health-related information only as permitted by state or federal law.
 - i. Medical information about a student will only be disclosed with consent of the parent or guardian (or student who is 18 years old) or as otherwise permitted by FERPA.
 - ii. Medical information about an employee will only be disclosed with the consent of the employee or when otherwise determined to be necessary and in accordance with state and federal law.

III. Prevention and Early Preparedness

- a. To help with preventing the spread of any infectious disease, the school will educate students, staff, and the community on social etiquette and disease prevention. The school will also encourage parents and community members to learn more about a possible pandemic infectious disease by accessing outside resources.
- b. We encourage parents, students, and staff to be aware of the symptoms of illness and not to report to school if they experience fever, along with any of the following symptoms:

- i. Cough
 - ii. SoreThroat
 - iii. Shortness of Breath
 - iv. Body Aches
 - v. Diarrhea and Vomiting
 - vi. Headaches
 - vii. Chills
- c. Strategies to prevent the spread of illness include:
- i. Keep children who are sick at home. Follow normal school guidelines on this. Students should not return to school until fever-free without taking fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
 - ii. If your child is absent due to flu-like symptoms or has been diagnosed with the flu or Coronavirus, please let the school know as soon as diagnosed. Tracking this will help the school, in cooperation with health officials, make decisions for the school's pandemic plan of action.
 - iii. Teachers and parents should teach children to wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. (Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself)
 - iv. Cleaning frequently touched surfaces at school and home with soap and water or a bleach solution often.
 - v. Teachers and parents should teach children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
 - vi. Practice "social distancing" – do not shake hands, hug, or touch other people in general, stay at least 6 feet away from people when possible.
- d. Early Preparedness
- i. Schools will implement the following preparedness steps if there is the potential for an outbreak or pandemic infectious disease:
 - 1. Educating teachers, students, and families on illness symptoms and prevention strategies.
 - 2. Implement an increased cleaning schedule to include frequent surface cleaning with a bleach solution and more frequent checks on soap and paper towel dispensers. This includes disinfecting buses daily.
 - 3. Frequent monitoring of websites with official health information and increased communication with local health officials to ensure the most current information is being used to make decisions. This especially includes monitoring confirmed cases of the infectious disease in or near our communities. If weekly reports of spread levels are not provided by state or local health officials, the school will communicate with local health departments to monitor spread levels and for recommendations for a plan of action.
 - 4. Begin preparing for potential school closing by creating distance learning packages.

5. Ensure communication avenues are well established for communicating whole school messages, as well as communication among students and teachers for continued learning.
6. Monitor absences more closely and request that parents contact the school to report symptoms of illnesses. All applicable laws will be followed when sharing information about student/staff illnesses or confirmed cases.