

Personnel

Employees with HIV, ARC and AIDS

The purpose of this policy is focused on the protection of school employees continued employment. Any staff member diagnosed as having HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), ARC (AIDS Related Complex) or AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is not prohibited from reporting for duty. However, if the employee evidences systems which are considered, according to most scientific information, to pose a risk of transmission to others, recommendations may be made for a more appropriate work assignment.

A milder form of AIDS is called ARC. People who are infected with HIV are diagnosed as having AIDS if they develop certain serious diseases or conditions. AIDS is the end stage of HIV infection.

The condition called AIDS cannot be spread from person to person. AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV. People who are infected with HIV, even if they have no symptoms of the illness and do not have AIDS, can spread HIV to others through blood-to-blood or intimate sexual contact, or from mother to child. HIV is not spread through the type of causal contact that occurs in the school setting.

The Board recognizes the need to protect individual rights and the health of persons infected with AIDS and the rights and health of those not infected. As an employer, the Board recognizes its obligation to provide not only an objectively safe environment for all employees, but also an environment where employees and students do not have fears for their health and safety.

In situations where there is a question about the existence of risk, the Superintendent or the employee may request review by an Advisory Panel. Employees diagnosed with AIDS will be treated as any worker with a life-threatening illness, such as heart disease or cancer.

Advisor Panel

Continued active employment will be based on the recommendation coming out of a meeting involving the employee, the employee's physician, the public school's medical advisor, the Superintendent or his/her designee, and a physician specializing in infectious diseases. The school physician shall act as the chairperson of the evaluation team.

Their recommendation will be evaluated periodically through meetings between the three physicians, who will make their judgments based on the medical needs of the employee and the best educational interests of the public school. As long as employees are able to meet acceptable performance standards, and medical evidence indicates that their

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condition is not a threat to themselves or others, employees shall be assured of continued employment.

Confidentiality

Throughout this process, confidentiality will be maintained at the highest level of security. Medical files and information are exempt from public disclosure. Special precautions should be taken to protect such information regarding employee's health condition in order to prevent instances of disclosure that may invade the personal privacy of employees. Only those administrators with a clear need to know should be informed of an employee's health condition.

Based upon the evaluation, the Superintendent may assign the employee to return to his/her usual place of employment unconditionally or to a work assignment under restrictive conditions or the Superintendent may seek to have the employee utilize sick leave or be placed on a leave of absence.

Federal and State laws also mandate, pursuant to the laws protecting disabled individuals, that those individuals not be discriminated against on the basis of their handicaps and that if it becomes necessary some reasonable accommodations be made to enable qualified individuals to continue to work.

HIV, ARC AIDS Education Program

The Board directs the administration, with the advice of the HIV, ARC, and AIDS Advisory Panel, to develop a program for educating persons regarding HIV, ARC, and AIDS. The program should provide a plan for making information about HIV, ARC, and AIDS available to students as part of the health curriculum. The program should include in-service training for teachers, administrators and non-teaching employees. The Board and administration will assist other public agencies in providing information about HIV, ARC, and AIDS to the public. In developing such programs, it is expected that information from sources such as the National Centers for Disease Control, the Connecticut Department of Health, and the Connecticut State Department of Education will be utilized. One of the purposes of the education program will be to help dispel fears based upon erroneous information or lack of information.

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