COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

I. Communicable Diseases:

Communicable diseases are illnesses that spread from one person to another. They are also called contagious or infectious diseases.

Communicable diseases are caused by germs and tiny bugs. The germs are so small that they can only be seen with a microscope, not with the naked eye. The germs and bugs are categorized as:

1. viruses (e.g., "colds," chicken pox, hepatitis A & B, HIV),
2. bacteria (e.g., "strep," tuberculosis), or
3. fungi (e.g., ringworm, thrush), and
4. Parasites (e.g., giardia, pinworms, scabies, head lice).

Illnesses caused by bacteria, fungi, and parasites always need medical evaluation and treatment. Many illnesses caused by viruses are mild and go away on their own, but some need medical evaluation and treatment.

Any employee or student with knowledge of a suspected or confirmed case of a communicable disease is responsible for reporting this information to the appropriate personnel. Exclusions from school may be required when it is deemed necessary to promote the safety and well-being of all students and employees. Decisions about how best to provide educational services to those students shall be made by the administration of the District, and the administration may consult with and seek the advice of available district and/or county health officials.

In dealing with communicable diseases, the District believes that:

a. Public education should be made available in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate to the individual needs of the student.

b. Public education should be provided in a safe and orderly environment.

c. Each student and employee should be treated with dignity and has a right to confidentiality.
Communicable diseases shall be evaluated on an individual basis considering whether the condition is life threatening, the degree of communicability, and whether the disease has been or should be confirmed with laboratory documentation.

A. **Placement of Students:** If a student is to be excluded from school because of a communicable disease, the student shall be allowed to continue on a home bound program until the student is able to return to school or until the end of the semester, whichever is later. No entry regarding a communicable disease shall be made on the student's cumulative record, health care, the computerized student data base, or other record maintained by the District.

B. **Placement of Employees:** No employee may be dismissed or have his contract not renewed merely as a result of having a communicable disease except as allowed by law. School personnel who are required to be absent from their work due to a communicable disease shall be subject to the sick leave policy of the school. Re-admittance to school and/or work may require a statement by a physician or other health professional stating that the individual is no longer infected and/or is no longer able to transmit the disease. No entry regarding a communicable disease shall be made in the employee's personnel file.

II. **Bloodborne Pathogens:** Body fluids of any person may contain infectious or contagious bacteria or viruses which may be spread from one person to another by accidental or careless handling of body fluids during sanitation work, custodial work, or the administration of emergency first aid. In accordance with the Bloodborne Pathogens Act, the Board shall promote an environment within which all employees and students are protected from contagion.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative regulations which shall include a control plan, vaccination procedures, the handling and disposal of body fluids, and exposure follow-up procedures in order to comply with the Bloodborne Pathogens Act. The District shall provide appropriate instruction in the handling of body fluids through in-service presentations or other means. The Superintendent shall also direct the identification of employees who may, as a result of their job duties, be in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Any employees so identified shall be offered Hepatitis B vaccinations at the District’s expense. The District shall also make personal protective equipment available to employees for use in handling and disposing of body fluids.