

No student shall be denied access to, nor shall an otherwise qualified individual be denied employment in the educational programs of Meriwether County Board of Education solely because he or she is infected with a communicable disease. A student or employee who is infected with a communicable disease will remain in his or her educational or employment setting unless he or she presents a significant risk of contagion as determined by the Board of Education after consultation with the student's or employee's physician, public health official knowledgeable about the disease and/or the Board of Education's physician if in the judgment of the Superintendent it is necessary to consult a private physician.

The Meriwether County Board of Education provides educational opportunities for its employees to become informed concerning transmission of HIV infection and procedures to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV infection as well as other communicable diseases, including precautions to be taken in handling bodily fluids and blood whenever necessary.

Whether or not an infected individual presents a significant risk of contagion shall be determined based upon reasonable medical judgment given the state of medical knowledge about:

1. The nature of the risk, i.e. how the disease is transmitted;
2. The duration of the risk, i.e. how long the carrier is infectious;
3. The severity of the risk, i.e. the degree of potential harm to third parties; and
4. The probability that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm.

Once the student's or employee's medical condition has been determined, the Superintendent shall consult with the student's or employee's physician, a public health official knowledgeable about the disease and/or a physician employed by the Board of Education at the option of the Board in order to determine whether reasonable accommodations will allow the student to perform in the classroom or other educational setting or the employee to meet the essential functions of his or her job. If an accommodation which does not impose undue financial hardship or administrative burdens can be made, then neither student nor employee shall be denied the right to participate in Board of Education programs or to be employed by the Board of Education.

In order that the Board of Education may have time to obtain a reasonable medical judgment concerning the student or employee who is infected by a contagious disease, the Superintendent is authorized to remove the infected student or employee from Board of Education programs or employment for a period not to exceed ten days during which time the Board of Education shall make a decision as to whether the student or employee can be accommodated and does not pose a significant risk to others. The student or employee shall be excluded only if the Board determines after consultation as provided above that the communicable disease is of such nature or at a stage that the individual should not be in an educational setting.

Neither the Board of Education nor its employees shall disclose medical information about a student or employee with HIV infection or other communicable disease without the consent of the employee or the student or his or her parent or guardian, whichever is applicable, or only as required by law or court order.

Definitions:

- a. Communicable disease--a disease that can be directly or indirectly transmitted from one person to another.
- b. HIV infection--an infection in which the human immuno-deficiency virus is present.

Handling blood and body fluids shall be in a manner consistent with the Center for Disease Control's Universal Precautions for Handling Blood and Body Fluids.

PEDICULOSIS (Lice)

Definition: Pediculosis is the infestation of the hair, skin or pubic area with adult lice, larvae or nits(eggs).

Student's, who have been positively identified with live lice, parents will be notified before the end of the school day. Individual school principals may use their discretion as to

whether the child should remain in school or go home as soon as live lice are identified. *(decision should be made in relation to the severity of the infestation, time of day and parent/guardian availability)* If the child must remain at the school for that day, he/she should be restricted from activities involving close contact (i.e. hugging) or sharing personal items (hats, clothing, brushes) with other children. If children are isolated within the school, they must not be put in ISS or any other area used for discipline.

Students who present with only nits will be allowed to remain in school. Parents will be notified before the end of the school day. Combing or a pediculocide that kills eggs should be used based on the health professional, parent judgment, and distance/location of the nits from the scalp (nits more than 1/4 inch from the scalp are often a sign of the past infestation and not an active infestation).

Upon return to school, the student should report to the school office to be checked prior to going to class. The child may return to class if there is evidence of progress in the removal of nits and/or treatment.

If head lice or nits are identified repeatedly and effective treatment is not obtained by the parent/guardian, a referral may be made to the Department of Family and Children Services.

NOTE:

Both the American Association of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses advocate that "no-nit" policies should be discontinued. "No-nit" policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to schools should be discontinued for the following reasons:

Many nits are more than 1/4 inch from the scalp. Such nits are usually not viable and very unlikely to hatch to becoming crawling lice, or may in fact be empty shells, also known as casings.

Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.

The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the student, families and communities far outweighs the risk associated with head lice.

*Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by nonmedical personnel.
CDC Sept 24, 2014*