

STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS FOLLOWING
EXPOSURE TO
INFECTIOUS COMMUNICABLE DISEASE IN THE CLASSROOM

Policy Regarding Notification of Parents Following Exposure to Infectious, Communicable Disease in the Schoolroom & Reporting of Such to the Health Department: Section 2508 of the Code of Regulations (CCR) reads, "It shall be the duty of anyone in charge of a public or private school, kindergarten, boarding school, or day care nursery to report at once to the local health officer the presence or suspected presence of any communicable disease." Section 2500 deals with the diseases to be reported and Sections 2502 and 2503 deals with reporting of outbreaks and unusual diseases, respectively, so that the district health officer can investigate if indicated.

The Public Health Department should be consulted before mass communicable disease notifications are sent to parents. It is critical that a diagnosis has been confirmed so that factual information can be distributed. Health Services should be contacted when communicable disease notifications are being considered and any statement issued by the school to a parent should be carefully edited. A factual, carefully worded, informative statement can be most valuable to parents, physicians and the Public Health Department.

Public schools, primarily their nurses, are responsible for reporting communicable disease to the local health officer. The school's responsibility for notifying the parents of children exposed to communicable diseases is based on several factors: First, is the disease likely to spread by school contact: second, is the disease serious enough to warrant investigation or prophylactic treatment by the student's private doctor or the health department; and third, is there an action the parents should or could be taking.

High-risk contacts for certain diseases such as bacterial meningitis are followed by the Public Health Department. The Health Department will direct the school to notify parents and determine if prophylaxis will be offered to students.

SECTION 6