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District Policy

8454 - MANAGEMENT OF PEDICULOSIS

Section: Operations
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The Board of Education recognizes the need to maintain a healthy learning environment for all children and staff members in the school district to maximize academic achievement. One way to maintain this healthy learning environment is to manage pediculosis, a condition of a person having head lice. Head lice are very small insects that have claws that cling to hair and spend their entire life cycle on the heads of people. Head lice do not spread any diseases and are not a sign of uncleanness nor do they pose any hazards to health. All social and economic groups can be affected by head lice. Because it is very difficult to totally prevent head lice infestations in schools where children come into close head-to-head contact with each other frequently, the Board of Education authorizes appropriate steps to manage pediculosis.

A student who is found to have active head lice will be sent home for treatment and not be permitted to attend school until there are no active lice in the student's hair.

Treatment will require verification by the nurse. School nurse will examine student upon return by parent/guardian to ensure treatment and the removal of all live and dead lice.

The presence of nits (the eggs of lice) may not prohibit a child from attending school. School nurse in consultation with administration may exclude a student with a current case of head lice for inadequate management by the parent/guardian. The nurse may examine heads of other students who may have had direct head to head contact with affected student. Class-wide or school-wide screenings will not be conducted. Chronic cases will be referred to his/her health care provider and/or Burlington County Health Department.

The Board recognizes parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice and school staff members will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families in managing pediculosis. The school nurse will provide information on management and treatment of pediculosis. The Board of Education's pediculosis information and this Policy will be provided to parents of children identified with active head lice or nits and be made available to all parents upon request. This information will include details about identifying, treating, and managing pediculosis.

If the school nurse determines a student has active head lice or nits, the parent shall be notified by the school nurse as soon as reasonably possible. The parent will be provided a copy of the district's pediculosis information and this Policy. The school nurse will advise the parent that prompt treatment of active head lice is in the best interest of their child and treatment shall be required before the student can return to school. The school nurse will determine to send the child home, the degree of the infestation, and the likelihood of the spread of head lice to other students. If the school nurse cannot contact the parent a letter from the school nurse informing the parent of the presence of active head lice will be sent home with the student. In the event the parent cannot be reached on the day it is determined their child has active head lice; the parent will be required to contact the school nurse the next school day to review the Board Policy, the pediculosis information, and treatment options.

The following action will be taken to prevent the spread of head lice in district schools:

1. When a single case of active head lice has been identified by the school nurse, parents of children in a class or on a team may be sent a Head Lice Alert Notice, the school district's Pediculosis Information, and this Policy at the discretion of the Principal or designee and the school nurse. Parents may request information regarding head lice from the school nurse. The school nurse will perform a head check of any student if requested by the parent.
 - a. The information provided to parents will clearly notify parents that treatment should only be performed on their child if active head lice or nits are found on their child's scalp or in their hair and treatment should not be applied as a preventative measure. This notification will inform parents they are expected to notify the school nurse if they find active head lice or nits on their child's scalp or in their hair. The school nurse will perform a head check of any student if requested by the parent.
 - b. The school nurse will perform head checks of all students in a classroom where there are three or more active head lice cases or nits in the same classroom within a two week period.
2. Privacy of students and families will be maintained at all times. Through this approach, thoughtful, confidential, and evidence-based care will be exercised by school personnel.

Moreover, academic performance will be maximized and unnecessary absences due to exclusion of students with head lice will be minimized.

Each school in the district will make available to parents the district's Management of Pediculosis Policy.

All school staff members will maintain a sympathetic attitude and will not stigmatize and/or blame families who experience difficulty with control measures. All school staff members will act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community regarding issues of head lice.

Each school in the district will educate and encourage children and parents to learn about head lice in an attempt to remove any stigma or to prevent any harassment, intimidation, and bullying associated with this issue. Any instances of harassment, intimidation, and bullying shall be reported and investigated in accordance with the provisions of the district's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy.

A student excluded from school for reasons outlined in this Policy shall be re-admitted only upon the examination and approval of the school nurse.

Cases of active head lice will be recorded by the school nurse in each school for the purpose of tracking incident rates and mandatory reporting of outbreaks will be done according to the New Jersey Department of Health criteria for reporting outbreaks.

Adopted: 23 February 2017

Revised: 24 August 2023

	