



Agenda

Policy Development and Review Committee

Wednesday, September 10, 2014

6:00 pm

Board Chambers

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
June 11, 2014
- 4. Future Policy Topics**
- 5. Policy Review:**
 - Briefing note Head Lice
 - Policy review
- 6. Next Meeting**
October 8, 2014
- 7. Adjournment**



**Halifax Regional School Board
Policy Development and Review Committee
Minutes - Draft
June 11, 2014
6:00 Pm**

Meeting was held this date in the Board Chambers,
33 Spectacle Lake, Dartmouth, NS.

PRESENT: Bridget Boutilier Dave Wright
Nancy Jakeman Christy Linders
Cindy Littlefair Melinda Daye
Steve Warburton Gin Yee

Chris Abraham, Student Advisor
Tristan Maxwell, Student Advisor

REGRETS: Kirk Arsenault
Denise Bell, Regional Education Officer
Tracy O’Kroneg, Acting-Director, Human Resource Services
Tracey Jones-Grant, Coordinator, Diversity Management

STAFF: Elwin LeRoux, Superintendent
Gary Adams, Senior Staff Advisor
Selena Henderson, Corporate Secretary
Terri Thompson, Director, Financial Services
Danielle McNeil-Hessian, Director, School Administration
Ron Heiman, Director, Operations Services
Doug Hadley, Coordinator, Communications
Alison Leverman, Director, Program
Donna Gillespie, Consultant, Library Services
Vicki Palmeto, Assistant to the Corporate Secretary

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order 6:07 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded (Jakeman/Daye) that the Committee amend the agenda to move Student Advisor Policy prior to Learning Resource Policy.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Jakeman/Daye) that the Committee approve the amended agenda.

(CARRIED)

3. Approval of Minutes

May 14 , 2014

It was moved and seconded (Linders/Boutilier) that the minutes/business arising from the minutes of the May 14, 2014, Policy Development and Review Committee meetings be approved as amended.

(CARRIED)

4. Future Policy Topics

5. Policy Review:

• Student Advisor Policy

Selena Henderson, Corporate Secretary, reviewed the draft Student Advisor Policy with the Policy Development and Review Committee. The Committee asked questions and suggested revisions.

It was moved and seconded (Boutilier/Jakeman) that the Policy Development and Review Committee refer back to staff the Student Advisor Policy for further revisions.

(CARRIED)

• Learning Resources Policy

Alison Leverman, Director, Program, reviewed the draft Learning Resources Policy and Procedures with the Policy Development and Review Committee. The Committee asked questions and suggested revisions.

It was moved and seconded (Wright/Warburton) to move beyond 8:00 pm.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Daye/Wright) that the Policy Development and Review Committee recommend that the Learning Resources Policy refer back to staff the Learning Resources Policy for further revisions.

(CARRIED)

- **Policy Status List**

The Committee reviewed and discussed the Policy Status list.

It was moved and seconded (Boutilier/Warburton) that the Policy Development and Review Committee direct staff to review the current site selection guidelines of the Department of Education and Early Childhood development and make a recommendation on whether or not the Halifax Regional School Board requires its own policy.

(CARRIED)

Next Meeting

September 10, 2014

6. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded (Boutilier/Littlefair) that the meeting be adjourned.

(CARRIED)

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

DRAFT

Head Lice Policies

Issue: The purpose of this briefing note is to provide information to the Board members on the Board's policy on Head Lice its relationship with documents from public health and as it compares to the policies of other school boards in Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada.

Key Messages:

- Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice) is a very common condition that can affect anyone, regardless of socio-economic status or level of personal cleanliness.
- There is no evidence that no-nit policies are effective in preventing the spread of head lice. Only live lice can cause an infestation. They do not spread diseases in humans and do not pose a significant health hazard for the infested person. However, it is recognized that they can do substantial harm through social stigmatization and unnecessary absence from school, which impacts the student's learning.
- There is significant potential for incorrect diagnosis, which is concerning given the potential harms.
- The Canadian Pediatric Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics and Public Health Services of Nova Scotia do not support no-nit policies. Public Health Services does not support mass screenings for nits in schools.
- In 2011 the DOEEDC requested school boards to rescind policies that are not evidence-based.
- The Halifax Regional School Board policy on Head Lice, revised June 2011, does not require students to be nit-free to be present in school. Students who are suspected of having live lice are sent home for treatment with parent(s)/guardian(s) and may return to school after the first treatment as outlined by Public Health. Schools are responsible for sending a notice home to all parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in that class when a student in the same class has a confirmed case of head lice. Checking for head lice is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardians(s). Confidentiality is paramount.
- Examination of other school board policies indicates that policies vary slightly in their approach to managing head lice in schools. Most school boards in Nova Scotia do not require students to be nit free to attend school.

Background:

The following school Boards in Nova Scotia **do not have a no-nit policy** on Head Lice:

Tri-County Regional School Board

This board requires that affected students are excluded from school until all live lice have been removed. As with the HRSB, schools provide information in the form of Public Health's Treatment Pamphlet *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice* to every family. The education of the student continues to be the priority.

Annapolis Valley Regional School Board

This board's policy is comparable to that of HRSB. Students may be permitted to return to school following confirmation of effective treatment. This board acknowledges the Department of Health and Wellness position that there is no evidence to support that a no-nit practice is effective in preventing the spread of head lice. They also recognize that families with continuing/recurring challenges with head lice should be supported by schools and help to ensure that they are not isolated or discriminated against. Repeated infestations that adversely affect learning and the capability of students to behave in an orderly manner may be considered disruptive behavior under the AVRSB Student Code of Behaviour.

Chignecto-Central Regional School Board

This board's policy is consistent with the NS Department of Health and Wellness position on head lice and minimizes time missed from school due to head lice. Students who are suspected of having head lice are sent home for treatment with parent(s)/guardian(s) and may return to school after the first treatment as outlined in *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice* is completed. Students with nits may continue attending school. Notices are sent home to parents/guardians of students in the same class where there has been a confirmed case and schools provide appropriate support/advice/information.

The following school boards in Nova Scotia vary slightly in their position regarding a nit-free policy:

South Shore Regional School Board

Students identified as having lice may return to school once they have completed their initial treatment and do not have to be completely nit-free before they are allowed to return to school. However, their procedures also state that if *after two treatments and a period of two weeks after the second treatment lice are still present; it may be recommended that the student remain home until the head lice are eliminated.*

Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board

This board's procedures state that the parent/guardian is required to keep the child at home until the problem is cleared. If a returning child is not free of lice they are not readmitted to class. The parent/guardian is contacted and the child is sent home as soon as possible. If the problem is determined to be wide-spread within the school, principals in this board may wish to have teams of parent volunteers trained by the Public Health Nurse to assist with monitoring and checking students for lice, with the assurance of confidentiality.

Straight Regional School Board

This board does not currently have a policy on Head Lice.

Investigations of other school boards in Canada resulted in the following information:

Halton District School Board

Halton District School Board in Manitoba supports a no-nit approach to children in school with head lice. This board requires that a child's head is free from live lice, eggs and nits prior to the child returning to class. They have specific and rigorous procedures in place that involve collaboration with a "Screening

Agency". Each suspected case of head lice is referred to the screening agency for investigation. This screening agency, upon positive confirmation of a case of head lice, conducts a rapid inspection of all classmates and siblings. All students with lice are sent home and are not permitted to return until they have been rechecked and have written confirmation by the screening agency or medical practitioner indicating that the child is lice and nit free.

Lakehead Public Schools

Lakehead Public Schools in Manitoba supports a no-nit policy. If nits are found on a student the student is sent home and not permitted to return until they have been treated effectively and all nits are removed. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to "nit-pick". Someone at the school checks to ensure the student is nit-free before being allowed to return.

English Language School Board Prince Edward Island

This school board does not support a no-nit policy. Students with a confirmed infestation of head lice are sent home for recommended treatment and may return after the first treatment. They acknowledge that the presence of nits does not necessarily indicate an active infestation. Parents/guardians are notified of any infestations and provided with information from the Canadian Paediatric Society. This board's policy allows for the principal to designate resource person(s) who are available and trained (and who have the necessary Criminal Records Check and vulnerable sector check) to perform head lice checks in the school. Training occurs through Health PEI-Public Health Nursing.

Peel District School Board

The Peel District School Board in Ontario supports a no-nit policy on head lice. Students are not allowed to return to school until all nits are removed, which is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

English and French Montreal

The Quebec Ministry of Health recognizes that excluding students from school due to head lice can cause "stigmatization and bullying". School Boards in Quebec, including both English and French Montreal, are required to follow the guidelines of the Quebec Ministry of Health, as outlined in the Intervention Guide *Prevention and control of pediculosis (head lice) in schools and child care centers*. Upon detection of a case of head lice the school is to provide information to parents/guardians and teaching staff that includes general information on the disease, how it spreads, how to examine the head and treatment, control and prevention methods. If children's heads are being checked at school the school must have signed consent and permission from the parent/guardian to do so. Students identified with live lice are sent home for treatment (not necessarily immediately, they may wait until end of day). They may return immediately following the first treatment. They do not have to be nit-free before returning to school. If a person shows active infestation (live lice) after the second treatment they may be referred to a health professional.

New Brunswick

According to the School Exclusion Guidelines for the province of New Brunswick, exclusion from school because of head lice is not required.

West Vancouver School District

This school board supports a consultative process which meets the needs of individual communities and must include involvement of the Parents' Advisory Council, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and school staff. They do not support a no-nit policy, nor do they support mass screening by Public Health Nurses or others. Checks are to be carried out at home. Upon the report and confirmation of head lice

in a school, verbal notification is given as soon as possible and written notification where and when appropriate that includes general information about head lice and treatment. Upon notification parents may choose to temporarily withdraw their child from school for immediate treatment but their policy procedures state that “no child may be prohibited from attending or participating in school because of head lice”. Children with confirmed cases may remain with their class until they are picked up at the end of the day. Treatment is to take place in a timely manner, in accordance with the protocol of Vancouver Coastal Health/BC Ministry of Health.

HEAD LICE POLICY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 PRINCIPLES**
- 2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK**
- 3.0 AUTHORIZATION**

1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The Halifax Regional School Board acknowledges that head lice are a common condition that can affect anyone.
- 1.2 The confidentiality and dignity of students with head lice will be respected.
- 1.3 The Halifax Regional School Board's objective is to minimize time missed from school as a result of head lice.
- 1.4 Checking for head lice is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s).

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring the management of head lice in schools is in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - 2.1.1 Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, *Guidelines for Treatment of Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice)*
 - 2.1.2 Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice*

3.0 AUTHORIZATION

- 3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

HEAD LICE

PROCEDURES

CONTENTS

- 1.0 PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 2.0 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 3.0 PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)' RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 4.0 POLICY REVIEW**

1.0 PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 The principal shall:

1.1.1 Notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspicion that the student has head lice;

1.1.1.1 Students who are suspected of having nits may remain at school.

1.1.1.2 Students who are suspected of having live lice will be sent home for treatment with parent(s)/guardian(s).

1.1.2 Recommend to parent(s)/guardian(s) that they examine the student for the presence of head lice;

1.1.3 Send home Public Health's treatment pamphlet, *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice*, with the student in a sealed envelope;

1.1.4 Notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that a student with head lice, may return to school after the first treatment outlined by Public Health, *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice*, is completed;

1.1.5 Recommend to parent(s)/guardian(s) that anyone living or spending time in their household be checked for head lice;

1.1.6 Send a notice home to all parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in that class when a student in the same class has a confirmed case of head lice;

1.1.7 Advise school staff that student confidentiality is to be maintained.

2.0 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 A staff member who suspects that a student may have head lice shall notify the school principal.

3.0 PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)' RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall:
 - 3.1.1 Check their child for head lice on a regular basis;
 - 3.1.2 Notify the school if their child has head lice;
 - 3.1.3 Check other family members or others spending time in the house of children identified as having head lice;
 - 3.1.4 Provide recommended head lice treatment to a child identified as having head lice as outlined by Public Health, *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice*, and complete first treatment prior to their child returning to school;
 - 3.1.5 Contact the nearest Public Health office if head lice are still present after the second treatment.

4.0 POLICY REVIEW

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years.