

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

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**SUBJECT: REVIEW AND UPDATE OF STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY
RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROTOCOLS**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
PLAN: SAFE, HEALTHY & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) remains committed to the health, safety, and wellness of its employees, parents, community stakeholders, and most importantly its students. The recent cases of measles in Florida started with four cases reported on the state's disease surveillance website. Six students from Manatee Bay Elementary School in Broward County tested positive for the disease, which can be incredibly dangerous for students, especially young children. Outside of Broward County, Polk County recently reported four cases over the weekend, bringing the total in Florida to 10 cases. Florida's outbreak is the largest in the U.S. right now. These incidents serve as a stark reminder of the obligation that M-DCPS has in ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its students, as well as ensuring a safe and healthy working environment for its employees who, after work, have to safely return home to their children and families.

The increased number of measles infections seen in recent weeks has been thought to be reflective of a rise in global measles cases and a growing global threat from the disease according to a recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC) health alert. Last month, more than a dozen measles cases had been reported across the U.S. since the beginning of the year, including cases identified in Philadelphia, New Jersey, Delaware, Georgia, Missouri, Washington, D.C. and Washington state. Back in the early 2000s, measles was considered eradicated in the U.S. because of the effectiveness and high coverage of the vaccine. However, for those who don't have the vaccine, measles is very contagious and exposure to the illness will likely result in sickness. Measles most commonly reenters the U.S. from foreign travel but can linger if the vaccination rate is not high enough.

Although there remains increased debate around the issue of vaccinations, M-DCPS continues to fully comply with all state required policies and health related procedures. Presently, Florida falls short of the national 95% vaccination goal with only 91.7% of the state's kindergartners immunized with the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine. Florida allows students to opt out of required vaccinations with medical or religious exemptions.

Measles, which is identified by fever, cough and a rash that starts near the hairline and spreads, often can be treated at home with over-the-counter medication. However, it does bring serious health risks. For people without immunity, 1 in 5 will be hospitalized, 1 in 20 will develop pneumonia (the most common way measles kills young kids), 1 in 1,000 will develop encephalitis (infection of the brain, sometimes causing permanent brain damage), and 1 to 3 in 1,000 will die.

The CDC reported that as of Friday there have been at least 35 measles cases in 15 states in 2024 — most related to international travel.

In addition to complying with state provisions governing health and related matters, M-DCPS must fully comply with provisions outlined in the Parents' Bill of Rights created under Chapter 1014, F.S. which ultimately declares that education and health care related decisions reside with parents. It must also protect the privacy of educational and health related records as set forth in Section 1002.22, F.S., as well as the privacy interests of all students. In doing so, however, M-DCPS must appropriately and effectively balance parental rights, protecting the health and safety of students and employees, and fulfilling its educational mission. A review of School Board policy and state requirements, as well as district emergency and related procedures for responding to a measles or contagious disease outbreak in schools would assist M-DCPS in maintaining this balance.

This item therefore seeks to direct the Superintendent to review in consultation with the General Counsel, School Board policies and state requirements, as well as district emergency and related procedures for responding to a measles or contagious disease outbreak in schools; where appropriate and/or required, initiate rulemaking procedures to amend School Board policies to ensure compliance with all applicable state statutes and rules, including but not limited to the Parental Bill of Rights created under Chapter 1014, F.S. and protect the privacy of educational records as set forth in Section 1002.22, F.S., as well as the privacy interest of all students; and update district emergency response procedures that govern both a response to a measles or contagious disease outbreak in schools and ensure continued provisions for instruction and student learning; as well as appropriate coordination and collaboration with required state and local public health agencies; and provide an update to the Board on the above steps taken as well as any additional relevant information in a written update by March 30, 2024.

This item has been reviewed by the Office of General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. STEVE GALLON III: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. Review, in consultation with the General Counsel, School Board policies and state requirements, as well as district emergency and related procedures for responding to a measles or contagious disease outbreak in schools;
2. where appropriate and/or required, initiate rulemaking procedures to amend School Board policies to ensure compliance with all applicable state statutes and rules, including but not limited to the Parental Bill of Rights created under Chapter 1014, F.S. and protect the privacy of educational records as set forth in Section 1002.22, F.S., as well as the privacy interest of all students;
3. update district emergency response procedures that govern both a response to a measles or contagious disease outbreak in schools and ensure continued provisions for instruction and student learning, as well as appropriate coordination and collaboration with required state and local public health agencies; and
4. provide an update to the Board on the above steps taken as well as any additional relevant information in a written update by March 30, 2024.