



School Year 2017-2018

Dear Parent(s):

In the United States, during the cool months, influenza is a typical occurrence and can be quite severe. Flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus and the symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Muscle pain or body aches.

Influenza can affect all age groups. Rates of infection are particularly high among children. Rates of serious illness and death are usually highest in older persons. We feel that it is an appropriate time to review good health practices to protect against flu.

The best way to prevent the spread of flu is to keep children home from school if they exhibit symptoms that could suggest flu:

- A temperature over 99.5 degrees. **Temperature should remain normal for a period of 24 hours before the child returns to school.**
- Sore, red throat, earache or swollen glands.
- Many communicable illnesses begin with coughing and runny nose and are most contagious in the first days.
- Symptoms that involve the whole body such as muscle pain or body aches.
- Please keep students not feeling well at home. At times, parents send students to school in the hope that they will feel better. This exposes others to illness and rarely do they feel better.

There are several ways in which you can protect yourself and your student from becoming ill with the flu. Please reinforce these healthy habits with your student:

- Teach good hand washing, especially before eating and always after using the bathroom. Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach good cough and sneeze hygiene. Use tissue or cough into the inside of the elbow. Wash hands after sneezing or coughing. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least 3 feet away from people who are sick.
- Consider vaccinating all family members with seasonal influenza vaccine. Health experts suggest vaccination as a method of reducing likelihood of being infected with flu virus.

Encourage your student to take care of their needs and respect the needs of others by following these guidelines. If you have questions or concerns about the spread of infection, please feel free to contact the nurse at school.

District 25 School Nurses