

January 31, 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The peak of flu season has arrived. This letter is to provide you with reminders about flu prevention and precautions. It is important to take steps to help prevent the spread of contagious illnesses to other students and staff as well as aid in caring for those who become ill. We hope this letter provides information you find helpful.

- Flu viruses spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with flu. Teach your child good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. This includes covering coughs and sneezes with tissues, coughing and sneezing into the inside of the elbow, and discarding used tissues.
- Handwashing is one of the most important steps you can take to get rid of germs and avoid spreading them to others. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Keep sick children at home. Do not return your child to school until they have fully recovered, with or without a fever. Other flu symptoms may include headache, body aches, chills, fatigue, cough, or sore throat. Those with a fever should stay at home until they are fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication. The 24-hour rule also applies to those with vomiting or diarrhea.
- Promptly pick up your child if the school calls because he/she became ill at school.
- Stay away from others if you are sick and avoid contact with others who are ill.
- Seek medical care if needed/symptoms worsen. Be sure to call the provider's office ahead of time to tell them the symptoms and receive directions on being seen quickly and on prevention measures the office may have implemented.
- Routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces may help prevent the spread of flu. Please check your cleaning products for recommendations.
- It is not too late to get a flu vaccination. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend annual flu immunization for most people, ages 6 months and up.
- Flu prevention information is available on the Virginia Department of Health website at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/influenza-flu-in-virginia/influenza-prevention-protectyourself-and-others-from-getting-the-flu/> It is also available in a variety of languages on the CDC website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/resources/index.html>

We appreciate your help in slowing the spread of contagious illnesses and keeping our school community safe and healthy. If you have additional questions or concerns about the flu, please call your health care provider. The local health department may also have information on the availability of vaccines.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Kizner, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools