

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The peak of the cold and flu season is upon us and the WSD has been experiencing a noticeable increase in illness. We have seen many cases of colds, flu, strep throat, and the stomach flu. The custodians have spent more time on wiping desks and other hard surfaces, and now we are enlisting your help. To prevent widespread flu in the school, we recommend that your child stay home from school if he/she experiences flu or cold symptoms. To decide whether or not to send your child to school, please consider the following guidelines:

**Consider keeping your child at home** for an extra day of rest if he/she has any of the following:

- Very stuffy or runny nose and/or cough
- Mild sore throat (no fever, no known exposure to strep)
- Headache
- Mild stomach ache

**DEFINITELY keep your child at home** for treatment and observation with these symptoms:

- Fever (greater than 100 degrees by mouth)
- Vomiting (even once)
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- General malaise or feelings of fatigue, discomfort, weakness or muscle aches
- Congested (wet) or croupy cough
- Lots of nasal congestion with frequent blowing of nose

**To help prevent the flu and other colds**, teach your children good hygiene habits:

- Wash hands frequently
- Do not touch eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, Coughing or sneezing into their bent elbow, not their hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Colds are the most contagious during the first 48 hours. **A child who has a fever should remain at home until “fever free” for a minimum of 24 hours.** A child who has started antibiotics needs to be on the medication for 24 hours before being able to return to school. Often when a child awakes with vague complaints (the way colds and flu begin) it is wise to observe your child at home for an hour or two before deciding to send him/her to school. Your child should be physically able to participate in all school activities on return to school. Keeping a sick child at home will minimize the spread of infections and viruses in the classroom. Thank you in advance for helping make the rest of this year at school as healthy as possible.

**\*\*If your child is diagnosed with influenza by a physician, please call me at 636-327-3928 and press 2 for the nursing clinic.**

Thank you!

SMS School Nurse

Melanie Wilson, BSN, RN, NCSN