

School Letterhead

Date

Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that several students and staff at the [insert name] School have become ill with influenza-like illness. This increase represents an outbreak of influenza in our school. After consultation with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), we would like to inform you of current recommendations for decreasing the spread of influenza.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Maine CDC recommend that schools and families focus on early identification and exclusion of ill students and staff.

- A student or staff person who develops a fever of 100 degrees or above with either cough or sore throat, should remain at home.
- A student or staff person with these symptoms should remain at home until he/she is fever-free for a full 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication.
- Well students or staff with risk factors for severe disease (e.g., chronic illness, pregnancy) should check with their health care provider regarding use of antiviral medication.

The Federal and Maine CDC do not generally recommend school closure to prevent the spread of influenza. However, schools may decide to close if they are not able to maintain normal functioning due to absenteeism.

We encourage all families and staff to focus on effective steps you can take to keep healthy.

- Get vaccinated with influenza vaccine – it's not too late!
- Stay home if you are ill.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, or into a tissue. Throw this tissue away.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, but especially after coughing and sneezing. Alcohol-based hand gels can also be used.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes. Germs can be spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid contact with ill persons.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the school, your healthcare provider, or the Maine CDC 1-800-821-5821. Resources on influenza for parents are also available at: <http://www.maineflu.gov> and <https://www.cdc.gov/flu>.

Respectfully,