

Dear Parents:

Several students at Sundown Elementary have been reported with influenza or influenza-like illness. Please review the following information to protect the health of your child and your family.

Influenza is caused by viruses that are spread from person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people. The symptoms may include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people with influenza also have vomiting and/or diarrhea. Most people infected with influenza will have a mild illness lasting 3 to 5 days.

Certain groups of people are at higher risk for severe illness when infected with influenza:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old;
- Adults 65 years of age and older;
- Pregnant women;
- Persons with certain health conditions (such as asthma; diabetes);

People in these high-risk groups should contact their physician immediately if influenza symptoms develop to consider treatment with antiviral medication. Students and staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home and not attend classes or participate in other group activities for at least 24 hours after fever resolves without the use of fever-reducing medications.

There are important actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza.

All people are encouraged to take these steps:

- Get a flu shot every year. Vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If no tissue is available, cough in your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the School Nurse (Mrs. Haggerton) at 229-3021 extension 212

