

Pike Road Patriot Parents,

Flu season is here, and we are starting to see a few cases of the flu. We have not seen a significant rise in numbers, but that does not mean we should not stay vigilant. As a district, we have sanitization foggers available for use in the classrooms, and encourage extra cleaning measures in the classroom this time of year. We also encourage our learners to wash hands or use hand sanitizer often, and cover their cough. I wanted to share some reminders on how you can help prevent transmission of influenza as we ramp up in the beginning of the flu season; remember, flu season extends from October through the end of March. The following is guidance from the CDC outlining what each of us can do to help stop the spread, as well as information to help you decide when to seek emergency care. These websites are extensive, and full of excellent information, please use the links for additional information.

As always, remember our district exclusion criteria:

Students will be required to check out and may not return to school for at least **24 hours after cessation of symptoms** for:

- Vomiting with or without fever
- Diarrhea with or without fever
- Fever of 100 or above **without medication** (if fever reducers have been used, and the child would be febrile without them, they should stay at home).

Sincerely,

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<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/fluguideforparents.pdf>

Here are some important excerpts from this site:

What are some of the other ways I can protect my child against the flu?

In addition to getting vaccinated, you and your children can take everyday steps to help prevent the spread of germs. These include: Stay away from people who are sick. If your child is sick with flu-like illness, try to keep him or her in a separate room from others in the household, if possible. **CDC recommends that your sick child stay home for at least 24 hours after his or her fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever reducing medicine.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after it has been used. *Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.* Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way. Clean and disinfect hard surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs, including bathroom surfaces, kitchen counters and toys for children. Clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label. These everyday steps are a good way to reduce your chances of getting sick. However, a yearly flu vaccine is the best protection against flu illness.

What if my child seems very sick?

Even previously healthy children can get very sick from the flu. Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids. If your child is 5 years or older and does not have other health problems and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, **consult your doctor as needed for:**

Fast breathing or trouble breathing
Bluish or gray skin color
Not drinking enough fluids (not going to the bathroom or not making as much urine as they normally do)
Severe or persistent vomiting
Not waking up or not interacting
Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/guidance.htm>

Here are some important excerpts from this site:

- Teach students, parents, and staff the signs and symptoms of flu, emergency warning signs, and high risk groups.
 - Those who get flu-like symptoms at school should go home and stay home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine. Those who have emergency warning signs should get immediate medical care. See [The Flu: What To Do If You Get Sick](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/takingcare.htm) (https://www.cdc.gov/flu/takingcare.htm).
 - Those who get flu-like symptoms and are at high risk of severe flu illness should ask a health care professional if they should be examined. See [People at High Risk of Developing Flu-Related Complications](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm) (https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm).
- Separate sick students and staff from others until they can be picked up to go home.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/cleaning.htm>

Here are some important excerpts from this site:

The timing of flu can vary from season to season. In the United States, seasonal flu activity most commonly peaks between December and March, but flu viruses can cause illness from early October to late May. **Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughs and sneezes of infected people. Less often, a person also might get the flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes, or nose.**

Most studies have shown that the flu virus can live and potentially infect a person for up to 48 hours after being deposited on a surface. However, it is not necessary to close schools to clean or disinfect every surface in the building to slow the spread of flu. Also, if students and staff are dismissed because the school cannot function normally (e.g., high absenteeism during a flu outbreak), it is not necessary to do extra cleaning and disinfecting.

Flu viruses are relatively fragile, so standard cleaning and disinfecting practices are sufficient to remove or kill them. Special cleaning and disinfecting processes, including wiping down walls and ceilings, frequently using room air deodorizers, and fumigating, are not necessary or recommended. These processes can irritate eyes, noses, throats, and skin; aggravate asthma; and cause other serious side effects.