

## FROM THE DISTRICT NURSE/SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

### GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

Students need to be in school to be successful in classes; however, we certainly encourage students to remain at home when they are sick. The patterns children develop regarding health and illness often carry on into later school years as well as into adulthood and the work world. We consider school your child's "job", and attendance is very important for success.

Below are some suggested parameters for parents/guardians to use when deciding if a child should be at home or school.

1. **TEMPERATURE:** The child's temperature should be below 100 degrees F (37.8 degrees C) without the assistance of medication to reduce fever (like Tylenol or ibuprofen) before returning to school. If a child has a temperature of 100 degrees F or over, it usually indicates an infection of some nature. We will contact the parent/guardian if we are aware that a child has an elevated temperature and ask that they be taken home.
2. **COLDS (Upper Respiratory Infection):** A virus usually causes upper respiratory infections. Healthy children may have between 6 and 9 viral infections each year. We recognize that no one feels good when they have a "cold", yet viruses tend to hang on for as long as three weeks. It is difficult to be successful in school when frequent absences occur. We encourage children to get extra rest at home and drink plenty of fluids. If, however, the upper respiratory infection is accompanied by persistent cough or runny nose that interferes with learning, the student should stay home or will be sent home.
3. **HEADACHES:** We encourage students to remain in school with headaches. If a child has frequent headaches, we encourage parents/guardians to contact their child's health care provider. Parents/guardians may wish to have their child receive an over-the-counter pain reliever at school. The Health Assistant at each of the schools can provide the appropriate forms and procedures.
4. **STOMACHACHES:** For stomachaches, we encourage students to remain in school **unless** the pain or discomfort is accompanied by a temperature greater than 100 degrees F, vomiting, diarrhea, or if the student is too ill to participate in school activities. Children who are anxious or feeling stress can experience stomachaches. For these students, it is important to stay in school to find and deal with the source of the anxiety. Although only a small portion of children who have recurrent stomachaches have a physical problem, recurrent stomachaches may need to be evaluated by a health care provider.

5. RASHES: A rash may indicate an allergic reaction or an infection. Parents/guardians should contact a health care provider if a rash is “itchy”, is raw or weepy, or is spreading. The school will contact parents/guardians if a rash is observed, and we encourage you to have any rash evaluated by a health care provider.
6. EYES: Students with red eyes and drainage can come to school unless there is a fever present, behavior change, or unable to avoid touching eyes.
7. SORE THROAT: Students should stay home if there is a fever present or if the sore throat is persistent. Otherwise, students are encouraged to stay in class. If a student is diagnosed with strep throat, he/she must receive antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
8. EARACHE: Students should stay home if an earache is accompanied by fever or drainage. We encourage parents/guardians to have a child evaluated by a health care provider.

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