

## **Opening of School Reminders: Respiratory viruses and communicable diseases.**

As you may know already, Strep, Flu, RSV, the common cold, and COVID-19 have been making the rounds early this season, and the Springfield School District is not immune to their effects. We feel it is important that we review some simple precautions that can be taken to limit yours and others' risk of being exposed to many of these illnesses.

**Important: The following recommendations are based on longstanding guidance from local, state, and federal health agencies. / We ask that you consult your own health care provider regarding specific treatment and timelines for return to activities and school when sick.**

As with most common school-aged bacterial infections and respiratory viruses, preventing exposure is the biggest key to safeguarding oneself from catching them.

- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Wash your hands often – Best practice is to hum the “Happy Birthday” song while washing to insure an effective washing.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes – into a tissue or utilizing a bent elbow rather than your hands
- Do not share drinks or food with individuals that appear sick or have been exposed
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect surfaces at home – **Our custodial staff is doing this on an ongoing basis at the schools with hospital grade cleansers and disinfectants.**
- And most importantly, stay home when you are sick. Students that present at school as noticeably sick may be sent home by the school nurse.
  - Additionally, in the case of Strep throat and other bacterial infections, most doctors recommend that students should be on an antibiotic treatment for 24-48 hours before returning to normal activities. IMPORTANT! Some antibiotic treatments may require a longer period of waiting before the risk of spreading the illness is eliminated. **Please consult your physician for information specific to your child's treatment.**

We would also like to take a moment to remind you of symptoms that should be considered in keeping your child home.

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more within the past 24 hours (without Tylenol or other anti-fever medication).
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Persistent cough or runny nose accompanied by body aches.
- Non-activity related body aches and fatigue
- And, other symptoms that when present would necessitate a trip to the doctor for relief.

***As always, please remind your child about frequent hand washing and covering of coughs and sneezes. These simple actions are the most effective means of preventing the spread of most respiratory virus and communicable diseases.***