

TO: All Principals

THRU: Brian Schultz, Chief Academic Officer

FROM: Cotrane Penn, Executive Director, Student Services
Monica Adamian, Coordinated School Health Specialist (contact: 908-343-6269)

DATE: January 24, 2018

SUBJECT: Flu and Cold Season Reminders

ACTION: Share with staff and families

This is a reminder that the cold and flu season is here. We encourage parents to have their children immunized against the flu. Although it does not eliminate the risk, flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu and can reduce symptoms.

Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Some people — such as older people, young children and people with certain health conditions — are at high risk for serious flu complications. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year. Seasonal influenza vaccine must be changed each year as the viruses naturally change over time. The effectiveness of the vaccine varies from year to year depending on risk groups and the match between the vaccine virus used to produce the vaccine and the circulating viruses that season.

To avoid catching the flu, get vaccinated each year and practice good hand hygiene. To avoid giving the flu to others, stay home when you are sick, cough or sneeze into tissues and discard them properly, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water.

Flu Symptoms may include:

- A 100°F or higher fever or feeling feverish (not everyone with the flu has a fever)
- A cough and/or sore throat
- A runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches and/or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

Additional recommendations to avoid illness include:

- Encourage staff and students to employ good hand washing before eating and throughout the school day.
- Avoid sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Disinfect frequently touched areas.
- Students and staff should remain at home if they are not feeling well, have a fever, vomiting or diarrhea.

(source: CDC.gov)