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September 18, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In this age of COVID-19, it is extremely important that we monitor school absences in order to effectively identify possible COVID symptoms that may need further follow-up. We ask that if your student is absent because of illness you contact the school nurse or the front office prior to the student's return in order to screen for symptoms possibly associated with COVID-19. We believe this is one of the measures we can take to help us keep the school community safe and healthy.

I also want you to know the protocol that we are using to identify students who need to go home from school and the documentation needed before they can return. This protocol has been adjusted twice since the school year began and is the work of the health department and the medical director of the City School District.

Any student with a fever greater than or equal to 100 F, OR with one of several symptoms, including shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, headache, fatigue, nasal congestion or runny nose, loss of taste or smell, muscle or body aches, poor appetite, or rash, will be sent home immediately and advised to contact their pediatrician.

In the age of COVID, we cannot allow children to stay in the classroom with any of these symptoms. Often, these symptoms are not COVID related, but there is no way to determine that in the school setting. In general, return to class will require being seen by the pediatrician and, often, COVID testing. Although this may seem extreme, it is necessary in order to do all we can to maintain a school that is COVID-free.

I strongly encourage you to complete the Daily Health and Wellness Check that you received in the mail at the beginning of school. It is important to run through this checklist every day. If your child has had any of the listed symptoms OR exposure to someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days, please keep your child home, and contact the nurse's office as well as your pediatrician. Another copy of the Daily Health and Wellness Check is included with this letter.

If your child develops any of these symptoms and is sent or kept home, return to school will require one of three sets of documentation:

1. Negative COVID test and a letter from your child's medical provider stating that the student has been fever free, without fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol) for 24 hours. This letter should also state the student may return to school once symptoms have improved.

OR

2. Letter from child's medical provider stating that symptoms were accounted for by a chronic medical condition unrelated to COVID 19. (It is recommended that COVID testing be considered during an initial episode of symptoms.)

OR

3. Written documentation, preferably from child's medical provider, documenting symptom based criteria ** including:

- At least 72 hours without fever, and without fever reducing medications
- Respiratory and presenting symptoms have improved

AND

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

** This final option is a last resort; it is preferable to have the student evaluated by his/her medical provider, so that the need for COVID testing can be determined. **

If your child has a positive COVID test, he or she will be out of school for at least 10 days at the discretion of the Monroe County Health Department. Return to school will require:

1. One negative COVID test documented by the medical provider

AND

2. Documentation of symptom based criteria (see above)

AND

3. Department of Health release from isolation

Documentation should be reviewed in advance with the school nurse to insure its adequacy before returning your child to school.

Thank you in advance for helping us to maintain a safe and healthy school environment during this challenging time. If you have any questions about the procedures outlined above, please call Sr. Marlene at 458-3786.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Marlene". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Sr. Marlene Pape RN MS
School Nurse