

Student Illness News from the School Nurse

9/23/09

We have noticed a rise in student illness in our district within the past week, specifically at Sierra Ridge Middle School. So far we have not seen an increased number of student absences yet at Pinewood. The following information about influenza is provided as a helpful resource for families.

- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever and have stopped taking medication for fever or flu symptoms. **This may require students to stay home for at least 3-5 days.** Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Most classrooms have soap and water, however if they do not, we will be using hand sanitizers as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Please contact the school if you do not wish for your child to use hand sanitizers in the absence of soap and water.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
- **Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue.** If a tissue is not available, we encourage you to have them sneeze into the elbow, arm or sleeve areas. Make sure your children wash their hands after sneezing to remove the germs.
- **Consider getting your child vaccinated against seasonal and H1N1 influenza.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has noted that young people are more susceptible to flu.