

Dear MVCSD Community,

The annual flu season is upon us with increasing numbers of illnesses across the state. We have had a number of confirmed cases of influenza as well as other respiratory infections and viral gastritis (vomiting and diarrhea). The school district follows guidelines established by the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to monitor and reduce the spread of illness. We ask that you familiarize yourself and comply with these practices to help maintain a healthy community.

There can be confusion about what the “flu” really means.

- Sometimes flu is used to describe vomiting and/or diarrhea (or the stomach flu)
- Sometimes it is used to describe the common cold and
- Sometimes it is used to describe a viral respiratory infection caused by the influenza virus

The best protection against influenza is the annual flu vaccine. If you or your family have not had the vaccine this year it is recommended all people over 6 months old be vaccinated. It is NOT too late to be vaccinated. The influenza vaccine does not protect against the stomach flu or colds. For the young, the elderly and those with medical conditions, influenza can be a very serious disease and may require hospitalization.

We ask that our employees, family members and students monitor your health closely and stay home if you feel ill.

If your child feels unwell:

- Check the temperature before taking any fever-reducing medication
- If the temperature is 100.0 or above (before using fever-reducing medicine) please stay home.
- Keep your child home until s/he has had no fever for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medicines.
- Keep the school informed by contacting the school office. If your child has a specific diagnosis please contact your school nurse via the phone or email.

The most effective measures to reduce the spread of any infectious illness depends on social responsibility from each individual. This includes:

- Practicing good personal hygiene by washing hands thoroughly and frequently or using hand sanitizer especially after coughing or sneezing, before eating, and after being in public places or using the bathroom.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth (T-zone)
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- If no tissue is available cough or sneeze into your arm or sleeve.
- If you have a fever stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- If you are vomiting or have diarrhea, stay home until symptoms have resolved.
- Keep your immune system strong by practicing good health habits which include getting plenty of sleep, being physically active, managing your stress, drinking plenty of fluids and eating nutritious foods.

The school makes tissues and hand sanitizer available in all classrooms and offices. Teachers monitor students in the classroom and will send students who appear to be ill to the school nurse to be assessed and sent home if appropriate.

The school nurses monitor absenteeism and health trends and will update the community. The school nurses are always available to answer your questions and address your concerns. If you need assistance to obtain a flu vaccine or to purchase a thermometer please contact one of the school nurses at:

Jenna Wear
Elementary School
319-895-6251
JWear@mvcasd.org

Linda See
Nurse Middle and High School Nurse
319-895-6254 or 319-895-8843
LSee@mvcasd.org