

MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 1

Castle Hill - Chapman - Mapleton - Presque Isle - Westfield

Health Office

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Seasonal Influenza (flu) illness is rapidly spreading throughout the United States, including the New England area. Our local area is also seeing this trend in the general community as well.

The influenza virus is easily spread from person to person. As February vacation is upon us and many will be traveling, I would like to remind you of the simple steps you can take to decrease the spread of germs.

Good hand-washing is an easy and effective way to decrease the spread of illnesses among students, family and friends. Here are a few things to remember:

- It is important to wash your hands frequently throughout the day, using warm soapy water.
- Be sure to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds. Singing the "Happy Birthday" song two times is a good way to be sure you are scrubbing your hands long enough.
- After rinsing off the soapy water, dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel. Use the paper towel to shut the water off, especially in public places.

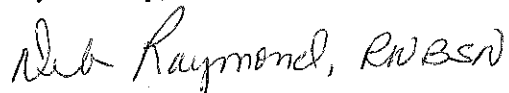
Another helpful way to decrease the spread of germs is by **covering your cough**. Coughing or sneezing into your upper sleeve instead of your hands will help decrease the spread of germs.

You could also use a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze, throw the tissue away and then wash your hands.

If your child is complaining of a cough and/or a sore throat and has an elevated temperature, please keep your child home from school. Your child may return to school once they have been **fever-free for 24 hours without** the use of a fever reducing medication such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Ibuprofen.

There are times when it is appropriate for a child to go home even if an elevated temperature is not present but they are experiencing other symptoms. And please be aware that, with the flu as described above, your child may need a day or two at home to recover even after their fever or other symptoms are no longer present.

Stay Healthy,



Deb Raymond, RN BSN
Health Services Director