



Warren County Public Schools

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OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT

January 29, 2020

Dear Parent/Caregiver and Staff:

As you may be aware, influenza season has arrived in the area. We have been notified that a number of children have become sick with influenza or influenza-like illnesses in Warren County Public Schools. We want you to know the steps you can take to prevent and control this disease.

Influenza, or the flu, is a contagious respiratory disease caused by influenza viruses that can cause mild to severe illness. Flu viruses usually spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Sometimes people might become infected by touching something, such as a surface or object, with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

Please see the attached information regarding preventative measures. For further information the following websites are recommended by the Health Department.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/influenza-flu-in-virginia/>

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call your child's doctor, the Warren County Health Department (540) 635-3159 or WCPS Special Services Department (540) 635-2725.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hirsch Ed.S.
Director, Special Services

The Health Department recommends the following measures to prevent the spread of influenza in the school:

- **Encourage good hygienic practices**
 - o Wash hands with soap and water often, especially after being around someone sick.
 - o Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing or use your upper sleeve, but do not use your hands.
 - o Dispose of facial tissues that contain nasal secretions after each use. Wash hands afterwards.
 - o Avoid touching the eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - o Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, toys, etc. as recommended.

- **Reduce the spread of illness**
 - o Individuals should stay home from school, work, and errands when sick.
 - o Students or staff who are sick should remain home until they are fever-free for a full 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
 - o Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- **Talk to your healthcare provider about flu vaccination**
 - o The single best way to protect you and your family against flu is to get vaccinated. All persons aged 6 months and older are recommended to get vaccinated each year.
 - o Flu vaccination is usually 40%-60% effective in preventing the flu in healthy persons. Even if some people who are vaccinated get the flu, vaccination can still offer some protection by reducing the severity or duration of illness.
 - o Ideally, people should get a flu vaccine before flu viruses begin spreading in their area. This is because it takes about two weeks after vaccination to develop protection against the flu. Receiving flu vaccine later in the season can still provide important protection because flu viruses can continue to circulate as late as May.

- **Antiviral medications**
 - o These can be used to treat or prevent the flu. Talk with your healthcare provider to get more information.