

## NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

It is an honor and a privilege to work with your child(ren) at The Academy for Teaching and Learning. A healthy student is a happy student, and we strive to give our students a bright future.

Cooler weather brings more sickness (in general). I am including, in this letter, some tips to help your family stay well during this busy time of the year!

### HEAD LICE EDUCATION

Head lice is common among school-aged children. Although, it is most common in children aged 3 – 11, it can affect anyone of any race or social status. It can occur at home, at school, or in the community. It is spread through direct head-to-head contact (usually during sleepovers, contact sports, and during play or when taking selfies).

I would encourage you to inspect your child **at least weekly** throughout the school year for the presence of head lice. If you think your child has head lice, it's important to talk to your doctor right away to discuss the best treatment. There are over-the-counter treatment options available, but recent data shows that some head lice may be resistant to these medications. No matter the treatment, you **MUST check the hair regularly and remove ALL nits (eggs) from the hair**. Most times, the treatment will kill the louse (bug), but *will not kill* the egg. Eggs will then hatch within a week to 10 days and the problem continues.

For additional information, please feel free to contact the school nurse.

### IS IT A COLD OR THE FLU?

It is the season for colds and influenza, but how can you tell the difference?

With a **COLD** – you may experience mild aches, a stuffy nose, a cough, sore throat, sneezing, a slight headache, and maybe a little fever.

With the **FLU** – most commonly, you will experience severe aches, a dry, hacking cough, watery drainage from the nose, sometimes a severe headache, a sore throat, and high fever.

*VIRUSES are not treated with antibiotics.* Usually, after a few days, your body will recover from a virus such as a cold or the flu. The best option is to get a FLU SHOT every year to decrease the risk of getting the flu.

If you think you may have the flu, it is important to see your doctor as early as possible for treatment options. You should stay at home, drink plenty of fluids, rest, and use over-the-counter pain and cold remedies.

Sometimes you will have secondary infections from a cold or the flu, such as sinus infections, ear infections, bronchitis, asthma flares, or pneumonia.

### HELP PREVENT SPREADING GERMS

- Avoid close contact with others.
- Use tissues or the inside of your elbow to cover your cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often (especially after coughing, sneezing, or using the restroom).
- Do not eat or drink after others. Do not share utensils.
- Avoid touching your face (many germs enter the body through the eyes, nose, and mouth).
- Stay at home when you are sick.

### CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)

Conjunctivitis is fairly common, especially, in the school setting. It is important to know that all forms of conjunctivitis *are not contagious*. Sometimes, people with seasonal allergies will have red, itchy, watery eyes. And, sometimes, sinus congestion will back up and clog tear ducts causing redness and mucous-like drainage from the eyes.

Symptoms of pink eye include redness, itching, yellow-green drainage that may cause the eye to be matted (glued) shut, swelling around the eye, and pain (especially light-sensitivity). Your doctor may prescribe antibiotic eye drops if you are diagnosed with pink eye.

Per DHEC regulations, *schools do not exclude* students for pink eye unless the child presents with severe symptoms or underlying illness.