

How do we handle illness and communicable disease in the Dieringer School District?

The registered nurse or health tech will call a parent if their student is ill enough to be sent home. Symptoms which require a student be at home are:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Severe cough
- Red, swollen eye not due to allergies, especially with discharge or crusting
- Rash of unknown origin

We will also call a parent if a student sustains more than a minor injury at school or if a student is deemed to be very uncomfortable with other symptoms (stomach ache, sore throat, etc).

Our nurse, Terry Woodall, uses the [Infectious Disease Control Guide](#), published by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Dieringer School District Policy to determine when it is necessary to notify parents via letter regarding a communicable illness/disease. In the event of an outbreak, the district works closely with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to determine the next steps taken in regard to exclusion of students, family notification, and additional disinfection for surfaces needed, and possible school closures.

All schools are required to report student absences equal or greater than 10% of the student population, due to illness, to the health department. The health department will then determine if further steps need to be taken.

The Dieringer School District will use our SchoolMessenger (automated phone calling and e-mail) system to notify all families in the district if information needs to be sent out quickly; for example, if schools need to close because of a disaster or communicable disease.

What about H1N1 (swine) flu?

Should we experience an outbreak of H1N1 flu with increasing numbers of students coming to the health room with flu-like symptoms, ill children will be separated from well children. Students who need to come to the health room to take medication, etc, will continue to do so while ill students will be cared for in the office conference room until they can be picked up by their parent. Please keep ill children home for 24 hours after symptoms have resolved without the use of fever reducing medication such as Tylenol or ibuprofen.

We are teaching students to cover their coughs and sneezes, to wash their hands frequently with soap and warm water, and to use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Staff are doing the same and modeling this for their students. Custodial staff are continuing to clean surfaces which are likely to be touched by multiple students, and teachers have spray bottles of disinfectant to clean surfaces in their classrooms.

To minimize transmission of the flu virus:

-Use a tissue to cover a cough or sneeze, or cough/sneeze into fabric on your arm. If a tissue is used, throw it away and wash your hands.

-Wash hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the restroom and before eating. Sing 'The ABC Song' - which lasts 20 seconds.

-Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth while out in public. Germs spread this way.

-Ask your health care provider about getting a flu shot. Get the H1N1 flu shot when it becomes available.

-Stay home when you are sick. Keep your children home when they are sick.