



ST. ANTHONY
— DE PADUA —
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

February 3, 2020

Dear St. Anthony Families:

Because of our current attendance rate, we have consulted the St. Joseph County Health Department, the Department of Education, and the Catholic Schools Office. Under the direction of the Catholic Schools Office, it was decided that we will close tomorrow, Tuesday, (February 4) and Wednesday, (February 5). We will make up these days on February 17 and March 27, which were planned snow make-up days.

We are receiving a high volume of reports that students are experiencing viral and cold symptoms. This letter is being sent to inform you of the possibility that your child may have been exposed to these symptoms and to provide you with information and guidance. We offer the following for your consideration:

Influenza is a respiratory disease caused by influenza viruses. Influenza viruses cause an infection of the respiratory tract, which includes the upper airway and lungs. Symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, chills, muscle aches and headaches. Vomiting, diarrhea, and nausea may occur in children but should not be confused with symptoms related to stomach or gastrointestinal illnesses. Influenza viruses are spread mainly by droplets when people with flu cough or sneeze. Influenza viruses are released into the air and can be inhaled by others. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something contaminated with influenza virus and then touching their eyes, mouth or nose. A person can spread the influenza one day before symptoms develop until seven days after symptoms appear.

Prevention/Care:

The best protection is an annual flu vaccination before flu season starts. Each year the vaccine contains the types of flu virus predicted to cause illness in the coming year. Therefore, it is important to be vaccinated each year. The vaccine takes 14 days for the full protective effect to occur.

- **Cover:** Teach students to cough or sneeze into one's elbow or upper sleeve or use a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Immediately discard the used tissue in the wastebasket.
- **Clean:** Encourage frequent hand washing, particularly after coughing or sneezing. While hand washing is preferable, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will also work if water is not available. The school is ensuring that disinfection of common surfaces is completed. This might be a great time for parents to wash backpacks, coats, lunch bags, etc.
- **Contain:** Per our school policy, a child with signs of illness should not attend school or social activities, until symptom free for 24 hours without the use of over-the-counter medications.

Please remember to do your part in preventing the spread of germs, by keeping your child home when symptomatic. Children found to be symptomatic at school will be sent home. Your child may attend school, unless he or she develops any of the listed symptoms: **Fever of 100 or higher, cough or other respiratory symptoms, headache, sore throat, chills, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or unexplained rash.**

If this should occur, we recommend that you consult your family healthcare provider to receive the appropriate treatment. If you have any questions about this issue please contact Karen Bogol at kbogol@stasb.org or 574-233-7169 or our school nurse, Maureen VerVaet at maureen.vervaet@sjrnc.com or 574-904-0233.

Sincerely,
Karen Bogol, Principal