

MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the Superintendent

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December 7, 2022

Dear RSU 9 Families, Staff, and Community,

This letter is to inform you that numerous students and staff in RSU 9 have become ill with influenza-like illness. This increase represents an outbreak (15% or more) of influenza-like illnesses in the following schools:

- Academy Hill School
- Cape Cod Hill School
- Cascade Brook School
- Mt. Blue Middle School

After consultation with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), Maine CDC will monitor the schools and once we have had three days of fewer than 15% of staff and students absent due to illness, we will be released from outbreak status.

We would like to remind you of current recommendations for decreasing the spread of influenza-like illnesses. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Maine CDC recommend that schools and families focus on early identification and exclusion of ill students and staff from school or work to help prevent the spread.

- A student or staff person who develops a fever of 100.4 degrees or above with either cough or sore throat, should remain at home.
- A student or staff person with these symptoms should remain at home until he/she is fever-free for a total of 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Students or staff not exhibiting symptoms but with risk factors for severe disease (e.g., chronic illness, pregnancy) should check with their healthcare provider regarding the use of antiviral medication.

The U.S. and Maine CDC do not generally recommend school closure to prevent the spread of influenza-like illnesses. However, schools may decide to close if they are not able to maintain normal functioning due to absenteeism. This would be the last resort in RSU 9, as days missed by an individual school must be made up at a later date.

We encourage all families and staff to focus on effective steps you can take to keep healthy.

- Get vaccinated with the influenza vaccine – it's not too late!
- Stay home if you are ill.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, or into a tissue. Throw this tissue away.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after coughing and sneezing. Alcohol-based hand gels can also be used.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes. Germs can be spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid contact with ill persons.
- Please check out this one-pager to review [common influenza symptoms](#).
- Call your healthcare provider to ask if testing for influenza and/or Covid is recommended.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the school, your healthcare provider, or the Maine CDC 1-800-821-5821. Resources on influenza for parents are also available at: <http://www.maine flu.gov> and <https://www.cdc.gov/flu>.

Sincerely,

RSU 9 Nursing Staff and Central Office