

# Smart Strategies to Reduce Illness

## At School

### Encourage students and staff to re-commit to self-health practices

- Wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your face, your nose, your mouth, your food with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Keep your distance – 6 feet is safe if someone is coughing, sneezing or sniffing.
- Allow time for staff and teachers to get vaccinated against flu, covid and other boosters.

### Allow staff, teachers, volunteers and students to stay home or go home if they don't feel well

Educate parents, staff, teachers and volunteers that the days of “toughing it out” are gone. Staying home when sick significantly reduces the risk of school outbreaks that can be disruptive to effective classroom learning, events, and after-school life.

CDC and SCDH recommend the following when/if someone becomes sick:

- If you aren't sure what you have and continue to worsen, reach out to your doctor. Here are a few helpful hints:
- Note your symptoms – loss of taste/smell usually indicates COVID-19, wheezing could be RSV, chills/fever/body aches typically point to flu.
- Remember, there are windows of time for treatment – 3 days for flu, 5 days for COVID-19, so don't delay seeking treatment if you think you have either of these.
- As a first step, take a COVID-19 home test or reach out to your district's HRA for testing. If you are negative, talk to your doctor about the possibility of treatment for flu. If positive, stay home for 5 days (10 if symptoms are severe) and isolate from other family members if possible. Then, wear a mask out for another 5 days OR continue to stay home until you test negative on two consecutive home COVID test kits over a 48-hour period.
- Again, your district HRAs are equipped to help families and staff navigate this process.

### Continue good practices to reduce the spread of germs

- Keep your classrooms and other school facilities well ventilated.
- Provide tissues, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, and no-touch trash cans. By providing germ containing and killing products, you are encouraging their use.
- Promote a culture of less sharing/more cleaning.
- Routinely clean all commonly used and shared objects.