

# Lice Protocol



This protocol should be followed in grades K-12 as follows:

1. If a student is identified as having nits and/or lice during the school day, the parent will be called and informed. The parent will be given instructions on treating lice and will be encouraged to call their pediatrician for treatment options. It will be requested of parents to pick their child up. If the parent declines, the child will be returned to class.
2. If and when a student is treated for lice the nurse should be provided with this information. The nurse will check all treated students upon return to school. A follow-up call will be made to the parent with suggestions for further treatment or just for support, as needed.
3. The nurses will check all siblings of the student with lice.
4. Letters will be sent home from the school principal to parents of all students in a grade level in which a case of lice has been identified. Letters will be sent only once in a 4 week period.
5. The nurses will be resources to assist parents when dealing with lice. The nurses can provide support and instruction in the proper treatment of lice. *An informational brochure will be provided as a resource.*
6. This protocol will be distributed to all parents and followed by the nurses. Before the start of each school year this protocol will be sent to parents in an e-blast and will be available on the district's web site with the informational handout developed by the nurses. In addition, a hard copy of the protocol will be available for parents at Back to School Night. Mid-year another reminder will be sent to parents.
7. While lice is not a public health issue, it carries a high level of anxiety and misunderstanding. The nurses are committed to respecting the confidentiality of our students, and as such will not report individual cases of lice to anyone who does not need to know. As classroom teachers do not have to provide any intervention or assessment for a student with lice, the nurses will not inform teachers when a student has lice for confidentiality purposes.

Due to developmental levels of the students, and overall differences in the structure of the educational process in grade 7 through high school, we do not have the same expectation that every case of lice will be reported to the school nurse. For any cases that are reported to the nurses, the same protocol as above will be followed.

This protocol is based on recommendations from the CDC, The American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses. These organizations support evidence based best practice that eliminates unnecessary school absences, missed classroom time, disregard of confidentiality, and undue anxiety among school staff and parents.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reminds us in their 2015 updated Clinical Report on head lice that "head lice are not a health hazard or a sign of poor hygiene and are not responsible for the spread of any diseases." Research has shown that head lice are not routinely spread in the school setting and parental vigilance is key to controlling the spread of lice.