

April 5, 2013

Dear Parents,

Arlington Heights District 25 recently changed its lice management procedure. The new procedure reflects the latest information provided by prominent national health organizations. The updated procedures will be effective as of April 5, 2013.

What are the changes?

If it is confirmed that a child, while at school, has nits and/or head lice, the parents will be notified immediately. The child will *not* be excluded from class, but will be allowed to complete the school day. It will be the parent's responsibility to choose the treatment that best meets the needs of the child and the family. The school nurse will follow up to ensure the child is receiving appropriate treatment for head lice. A "lice letter" will *not* be sent to the entire class; however, the child will not be able to return to class until free from live lice.

Why did the District change the lice management procedures?

Arlington Heights School District 25 changed its procedures in order to reflect standard practice as recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses.

Why would these medical organizations make these recommendations?

- Although lice are unpleasant, they do not cause disease and are not dangerous to the child or others. Students with lice are not sick and lice are not easily transmitted from one person to another.
- To protect the privacy of the child and family, a letter will not be sent to the entire class. By the time live lice are discovered, the child has usually had them for a few weeks. According to the CDC, it takes approximately seven days for a louse to hatch from an egg or nit and it can live for up to 30 days on a scalp. Many people can be asymptomatic for 4-6 weeks.
- School is not a high-risk area for getting lice. Studies have shown that the majority of lice cases occur in situations where children play closely or live together, especially where direct head-to-head contact occurs.

What will the school do if a case of lice is found or reported?

- The parent will be confidentially informed and provided with treatment information. The teacher will also be informed and the child will not use any shared headphones, helmets, hats, or clothing.
- A parent of a child who has head lice will be encouraged to talk to the parents of the children with whom their child frequently plays.
- If a parent reports that treatment for lice is being received, and no lice/nits are found, the school nurse will recheck the child in one week.
- If a child at an elementary school has lice, the school nurse will check siblings and close friends for lice. Lice checks at the middle schools will be at the discretion of the nurse and administrators. The school nurse and administrators will determine when it is necessary to check an entire class. This, however, will not be a frequent occurrence.
- The school nurse will check children with lice prior to re-admittance to school and again one week later to make sure there are no live lice.
- A student will be excluded from school until a treatment is completed and there is no evidence of live lice.

It is best practice for parents to regularly check their children for head lice. If you have any questions regarding the changes to the District's head lice management procedures or treatment of head lice, please check the following websites:

National Organization of School Nurses: www.nasn.org

Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>

American Association of Pediatrics: <http://tinyurl.com/AmerAssocPeds>

You may also contact your school's nurse or Aimee LeBlanc, Director of Special Services.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sarah Jerome
Superintendent of Schools
Arlington Heights District 25