

RILEY ELEMENTARY

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL



December 21, 2016

This week's theme: Lice

Dear Families,

For the last couple of School Community Council meetings, there has been a great deal of concern expressed over the issue of lice. This letter is meant to alleviate some of your worries, describe district policy about lice, and tell you what we as a school are doing about the issue.

First, lice has **not** been more of an issue this year than in previous years. It is something that seems to escalate when students have coats and hats that they are bringing to school because of cold weather. We recognize the worry that the issue of lice causes. It is a nuisance and can be an expense. At the same time, it does not reflect an epidemic at our school. So we want to be calm and measured in our response to it.

Second, we have decided to help students understand how they can work to prevent the spread of lice here at school. This month, we have scheduled several assemblies by grade level. We have read stories to children to help them understand the idea of lice. We have given them suggestions on healthy practices such as not sharing hats and not laying on the floor.

District policy dictates that we do not conduct lice checks of all students in the school. Research shows that this has little to no impact on a lice situation in a school. If a lice situation is reported by teachers, we check this out. Students who have live lice are sent home to take care of the problem. Notes are then sent home with all students of the affected class, so parents can watch at home. In fact, this is best way to prevent the spread of lice—for parents to keep close eye on their children's heads to ensure that they have not been afflicted with lice.

When children have "nits" or the eggs of lice, they are still permitted to attend school. Parents should comb these nits out because they can (but not always) hatch into live lice.

While lice are a nuisance, they do not pose a health hazard.

Please let us know if you have any other additional concerns or questions. Feel free to respond in the space below and return this to school as feedback.

Sincerely,

James Martin, Principal



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