

Date {     }

Dear {Staff},

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with steps to protect you, your family, and the school community from the risks of getting and spreading communicable diseases. You no doubt have heard about the ongoing outbreaks of Ebola virus disease in several West African countries (currently Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Ebola virus is a severe, often fatal, viral disease in humans. Although there were recently cases of Ebola virus disease identified in the United States, there have been no cases of Ebola diagnosed in Maryland and **the general risk of acquiring Ebola in Maryland continues to be extremely low.**

Currently, response efforts are focused on:

- 1.) Dissemination of accurate information to both students and their families;
- 2.) Procedures for early recognition and isolation of students and staff who recently traveled to affected areas and develop symptoms;
- 3.) Immediate notification and consultation with public health authorities regarding student and staff recognized with recent travel and symptoms actions to protect public health are taken, as appropriate.

MSDE and DHMH have provided the following recommendations for our school:

If you have recently traveled to an Ebola affected area:

- Monitor your health for 21 days if you were in an area with an Ebola outbreak.
- Seek medical care immediately if you develop fever (temperature of 100.4°F/ 38°C) and any of the following symptoms: headache, muscle pain, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, or unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Tell your doctor about your recent travel and your symptoms before you go to the office or emergency room. Advance notice will help your doctor care for you and protect other people who may be in the office.
- Inform your school of your symptoms and recent travel history.

Even if you have not traveled, please remember to:

- **Stay at home when you are sick.** This is important to prevent disease transmission in schools. You should not leave home except to seek medical care. This means avoiding normal activities, including school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (temperature of 100.4°F/ 38°C), without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- **Wash your hands often**, cover your cough/sneezes with your elbow or tissue, and keep your hands away from your face.
- Get your family **vaccinated against the flu.**
- **Speak with your health care provider** regarding any needed medical attention and/or treatment necessary for symptoms.

If you have general questions about Ebola virus disease or recommendations for recent travelers, contact your local health department or visit the following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/what-need-to-know-ebola.pdf>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/qa.html>

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/ebola-inbound-infographic>