**<<Date>>**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

During the past 24 hours **<<school>>** has experienced a high number of absences due to a gastrointestinal illness. Because of this, we are sending this informational letter to all families with children at the school.

Most illnesses of this nature are spread from person to person. So the key message of this letter is to continue to reinforce good handwashing among all family members. Good handwashing should consist of using good scrubbing or friction for 20 seconds. Hands should be dried completely after washing. If using a hand towel for drying, the towel should be changed at least every day. If possible, paper towels may be best, especially during this time of increased illness.

The school will be taking the following actions to stop the transmission of illness:

* Temporarily stop using self-service foods for school breakfast/lunch (students will not serve themselves), and restricting sharing of food in the classroom
* Redouble our efforts to promote handwashing prior to every snack or meal
* Increased cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces

These recommendations have been decided upon after consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health.

If your child has become ill with any gastrointestinal type illness (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain) and you have not already alerted the school, please contact the school at **<<phone>>** and provide as much information as possible regarding the illness. We request your child not return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

For additional information regarding gastrointestinal illness:

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-5414 or 1-877-676-5414.

Thank you for your help in controlling this sudden onset of illness.

Sincerely,