[Date Here]

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

A case of head lice has been reported in your child’s school. Head lice are commonly found on the scalp, eyelashes, and eyebrows. Lice deposit tiny gray or white eggs (nits) on a hair shaft about 3-4 mm from the scalp. The adult lice cannot survive more than 48 hours off the human scalp, and the nits cannot hatch if beyond ¼ inch from the base of the hair shaft. Head-lice do not spread disease, but infection may occur related to scratching and irritation of the scalp. Infestation is not related to poor hygiene; rather, it is a common occurrence in every socioeconomic group.

Itching of the skin or scalp is produced by sensitivity reaction to head louse bites. Your child may complain of a tickling feeling or something moving in the hair. Your child may be irritable and not able to sleep because head-lice are most active in the dark. They may develop sores on the head because of scratching which may become infected by bacteria found on the child’s skin.

Spread of head-lice usually occurs by direct head-to-head contact with an already infested individual’s hair especially during play at school, home, sports activities, slumber parties, playground, and camp. Head-lice can also be spread through sharing of clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, and/or sports uniforms, and articles such as combs, brushes, hair ribbons, barrettes, towels, and stuffed animals that are worn or used recently by an affected individual. They can also be spread by lying on a bed, couch, pillow, or carpet that is used recently by an affected individual.

You are being informed so that you can examine your child’s scalp and hair, and any household members carefully for head lice and/or nits. The most common “first-line” pediculicides (medicines that kill lice) are topical and over the counter. If you find lice and need to treat your child, **please read and follow the instructions on the box carefully.** Some over-the-counter treatments require a second treatment a week or so later. Prescription pediculicides may be required if first-line treatments fail. Within a household, all affected individuals should be treated simultaneously to avoid re-infestations.

Individuals with active head lice identified at school should be allowed to remain in the classroom until the end of the school day. Individuals diagnosed with head lice infestation should present to school nurse/staff a note from parent/guardian that verifies the individual was treated upon return.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact the school nurse at: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) at (312) 746-6015.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Principal] [School Nurse]