[Date Here]

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Today, a bed bug was found on your child or in your child’s belongings. While this does not mean that the bed bug was brought to school by your child, it is important to your child’s health and the school community that you inspect your home for signs of bed bugs. Below is information about bed bugs and a step-by-step guide on what you can do next in your home to help you with your inspection.

**Background Information**

1. Adult bed bugs are about 5-7mm long and reddish-brown, with oval, flattened bodies. They can be mistaken for ticks or cockroaches. Immature bed bugs are smaller and lighter in color.
2. Bed bugs do not fly, but can move rapidly over floors, walls, ceilings, and other surfaces.
3. Unlike head lice, they do not live on people. However, they can hitchhike in backpacks, clothing, luggage, books, etc.
4. Bed bugs are mainly active at night. During the day, they hide close to where people sleep.
5. A common concern with bed bugs is whether they transmit disease. Although they can carry agents that can cause disease, transmission to humans is considered unlikely.

**What should you do?**

1. At this time your child does not need to be excluded from school. When they do attend school, please store your child’s recently cleaned laundry in sealable bags before they are put on in the morning. Inspect backpacks and lunch bags daily for bed bugs. When at home, keep personal items that are coming with your child to school in sealed bags to prevent infestation.
2. If bitten use good hand hygiene to prevent itching and secondary infection. Do not scratch the affected area. Instead, apply antiseptic cream or lotion and take antihistamine to alleviate symptoms.
3. Remove any clutter from your home. Highly cluttered homes and bedrooms provide bed bugs with numerous places to hide.
4. Use a vacuum to clean away any debris. It makes it easier to determine if the bed bugs are dead or alive. Make sure that the infested vacuum bag is thrown away outside of the building.
5. Put infested clothing in a hot dryer to kill bed bugs and their eggs. Heat can also be used to kill bed bugs in furniture and carpeting by using a steamer.
6. Cover your mattresses/box springs with encasements (ensure the zipper closes completely). Encasements are intended to seal your mattress/box spring so that no bed bugs can infest your mattress, and any bed bugs currently infesting your mattress can't bite or escape from the encasement.
7. Consider consultation with a licensed pest management company to eradicate bed bugs from your home.
8. To address a bed bug infestation in your apartment, call 311 about the City of Chicago Bed Bug Ordinance. It is the responsibility of building owners to eradicate bed bug infestation.

Remember—anyone can get bed bugs! Bed bugs are not an indicator of good or poor hygiene. If you have questions regarding this information, please reach out to your school nurse.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Principal] [School Nurse]