

ESCANABA AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

United with you to ensure every student's success – today and tomorrow!



Julie Cass, BSN, RN

School Nurse

500 S. Lincoln Road

Escanaba, MI 49829

Phone: 906-786-6521 ext. 1212 Fax: 906-789-5594

Email: jcass@eskymos.com

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Dear Parent(s) or Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that confirmed cases of pertussis (whooping cough) have been diagnosed in several Escanaba School buildings. General information regarding pertussis is available at the following:

<http://www.aimtoolkit.org/adolescents/special/CouldBeMoreThanCough3.pdf>

Please make note of the following:

1. **Please do not send your child to school with a significant or prolonged cough until they have been evaluated by a healthcare provider.**
2. Children with chronic health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, cardiac problems, immunodeficiencies, etc. are at increased risk of complications from pertussis. If you have a child with one of these conditions and they are having symptoms, please contact their healthcare provider and let him/her know that your child may have been exposed to pertussis.
3. The incubation period (time from exposure to development of symptoms) of pertussis is quite long (anywhere from 7 to 10 days, with a range of 4–21 days). Therefore, your child may not show symptoms until 1-3 weeks from now.
4. Pertussis is most contagious when symptoms first develop. Since the disease initially resembles a common cold, please be careful not to expose high risk individuals (especially young infants) to your child even if it appears to be a minor upper respiratory infection.
5. Reinforce coughing and sneezing into a tissue or into an elbow/upper sleeve as well as good handwashing.
6. Pertussis can cause prolonged symptoms. The child usually has 1 to 2 weeks of common cold symptoms, followed by approximately 2 to 4 weeks of severe coughing, though the coughing spells can sometimes last even longer. The last stage consists of another several weeks of recovery with gradual improvement of symptoms. In some children, the recovery period may last for months.
7. Contact your healthcare provider, the Public Health Department at (906)786-4111, or myself with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Julie Cass, RN, School Nurse