Dear Parent/Guardian:

Head lice were found in your child’s school today. Parents of students found with head lice have been notified. The students have been excluded from school. However, since head lice can spread rapidly, we request that you inspect your child’s hair and scalp. If you find head lice, do not panic. Millions of children contract head lice each year. Students play in very close contact with each other. A simple exchange of hats, clothing, brushes, combs, pillows and other personal articles can result in the spread of head lice from one child to another. Lice can be easily and effectively treated. Your health care provider may prescribe a shampoo or product to kill lice. By following your health care provider’s instructions and the steps below, you can more effectively detect and prevent head lice in a family member.

1. **INSPECT**

   **Examine Head:** Carefully examine hair and scalps of all family members for lice and their eggs (nits). Lice are small grayish-tan, wingless insects. Lice cannot fly. They do move very quickly which make them difficult to find in a child’s hair. Thorough search of the entire scalp is necessary to reveal either lice or the eggs that attach to the hair.

   **Detect Nits:** Nits are firmly attached to the hair shafts, and cannot be washed out or brushed out of the hair like dandruff. Removal of all nits is necessary to prevent hatching of eggs not killed by treatment.

2. **TREAT**

   **Use a Pediculicide:** Once head lice are found; your health care provider may prescribe a medicine called a pediculicide in the form of a shampoo or cream rinse. You may also purchase certain non-prescription shampoos from your pharmacist. Follow the instructions for use of these pediculicides carefully, being sure not to expose other skin surfaces to these chemicals.

   **Use a Nit Comb:** After shampooing hair, the nits may be removed with a special nit comb or by hand. *The Child must be brought to the office by an adult for a head check before readmission.*

3. **CLEAN ENVIRONMENT**

   **Wash:** Lice are easily spread from one person to another. Make sure persons with head lice do not share articles (combs, brushes, towels, hats, scarves, pillows, stuffed animals) that have come in contact with heads, necks or shoulders. Use hot water to wash lice-exposed clothes, towels and bed linens. Soak combs and brushes in hot water for 15 minutes. Dry clean hats and clothing that cannot be washed (or seal in a plastic bag for at least two weeks).

   **Vacuum:** Vacuum carpets, upholstery, pillows, and mattresses which may have been exposed to persons with head lice.

**Parents:** Be on the lookout for signs and symptoms indicating that your child has contracted head lice. The most common symptom is intense itching on the back of the neck and head. If you observe your child scratching excessively in this area, check his/her head for nits and lice. If head lice or nits are found, contact your health care provider.

**NOTE:** *Your assistance in this effort to control the head lice problem in your child’s school is necessary. Please notify the school if you discover head lice in your child’s hair.*