**Worthington Schools Bed Bug Protocol**

**(Based upon recommendations from the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force)**

If a bed bug is found on a student, it may indicate that the student has bed bugs at home. However, bed bugs can crawl onto or off of a person (or their belongings) at any time, so it is also possible that the bed bug was brought to school by someone else therefore identification of the household with bed bugs may be impossible. .

**If a suspected bed bug is found on a student** **or a student’s belongings:**

* The student should be discreetly removed from the classroom so that the school nurse or a qualified individual can examine the student’s clothing and other belongings.
* Any bugs found should be removed and collected for identification. Try to keep the specimens as intact as possible, do not squish the bug; put it in a zip lock baggie or loosely between pieces of transparent tape.
* The Principal, School Nurse or any other qualified person should call Facility Services for identification.

**If the bug was positively identified as a bed bug:**

* The school principal or nurse or qualified individual should contact the student’s parents or guardian to inform them of the bed bug presence on their child. Parents should be encouraged to seek home inspection from a licensed company who treats bed bugs professionally.
* The Principal or Steve Ruckman should arrange for an inspection of the classroom/building by a licensed agency used for inspecting and treating bed bugs.
* If the presence of bed bugs is found in the classroom/building the principal or school nurse may consider notifying the affected class or classes via informational letter or email (sample letter provided by Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force).
* Students **should not be excluded from school** due to bed bugs, and schools should not be closed due to bed bug presence. Scientific evidence does not show that bed bugs spread disease and infestation of a school building is unlikely.
* Ongoing pest management that includes the use of pesticides indoors should be overseen by the school principal or designee (custodian) and must conform to the school’s integrated pest management plan.

**What can I do to eliminate bed bugs from my classroom?**

* Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school in the can be sealed in plastic containers (tied trash bags, XL Ziploc bags) to prevent bed bugs from hitchhiking.
* Hard surfaces can be cleaned with standard cleaning products.
* If bed bugs have been found repeatedly in a particular classroom, have the room inspected by a pest management professional or other trained staff.

**What if one of my students has an infestation at home?**

When a student is dealing with an infestation at home, it is important to be sensitive to their problem. Although bed bugs have nothing to do with cleanliness or socioeconomic status, there is still a stigma that can come with having bed bugs. As a result, parents may be hesitant to admit to having bed bugs, and students may not want others to know they have an infestation at home. Students living in an infested home may also feel anxious or tired during the school day. Schools should work with the parents of any student living in an infested home to develop strategies for preventing the further spread of bed bugs.

* Encourage family’s of the infested home to be inspected and treated if necessary by licensed professionals. Home remedies and do-it-yourself treatments are usually insufficient and could cause negative health effects or produce potential hazards in the home.
* In an infested home, parents should store their child’s freshly laundered clothing in sealed plastic bags until they are put on in the morning. This prevents bed bugs from hiding in the clothing and being carried to school. Clothes should be dried for at least 30 minutes on high setting.
* Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can also be inspected daily by the parents and stored in sealed plastic containers at home to prevent bed bugs from getting into them.
* Continue to use these measures until successful treatment of the home has been verified.

For additional information refer to: <http://www.centralohiobedbugs.org/>