[SAMPLE NOTIFICATION LETTER: NOROVIRUS]

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Some students or staff at <name of school> are sick with vomiting and diarrhea. During this time of year, many illnesses are going around and one of the most common causes of sickness is norovirus. Fortunately, people with norovirus usually recover quickly with rest and hydration. There are actions you can take to help limit the spread of the illness, even if your child is not experiencing symptoms.

**The two most important things you can do:**

* **Make sure your child washes their hands properly.**
* **Keep your child at home if they are sick.**

**What is norovirus?**

Norovirus is a virus that spreads quickly from person-to-person in closed environments and group settings. It’s sometimes called the “stomach flu” but it’s not related to influenza (flu). Most people with norovirus get better within 1-3 days. There is no specific medicine to treat norovirus but it’s important to drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration.

Symptoms include:

* abrupt onset of diarrhea
* vomiting
* nausea
* stomach cramping
* sometimes fever

**How does norovirus spread?**

* Direct contact with someone who is sick, for example, sharing food.
* Touching a contaminated surface (like faucets, toys or doorknobs) and then touching your mouth.
* Eating food or drinking food and liquids contaminated with the virus.

**How can parents and guardians help prevent norovirus from spreading?**

* If your child is sick, keep them home from school or child care for 24-48 hours after vomiting and diarrhea have stopped.
* Make sure members of your household wash their hands often, especially after using the bathroom, cleaning, changing diapers, or before making or eating food.
* Ensure everyone is washing their hands properly: Cover all parts of hands with soap, rub lathered hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds, and thoroughly rinse with water.
* Do not share food or drinks with others if you have vomiting or diarrhea.
* Clean and disinfect surfaces and areas when someone vomits or has diarrhea. Use a mix of   
  ¼ cup household bleach and one gallon of water as a disinfectant.
* Immediately remove and machine wash and dry any clothing or linens soiled by vomit or diarrhea.

For more resources, please visit [www.healthvermont.gov/norovirus](http://www.healthvermont.gov/norovirus).