

Dear Parents:

The \_\_\_\_\_ (district name) will begin an asthma education program to reach everyone throughout our schools during the coming school year. While this is required under a new policy, it is part of our school's ongoing efforts to provide a safe educational environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

Asthma is a chronic illness that is a growing problem in America. In a classroom of 30 students, two are likely to have asthma.<sup>1</sup> Asthma can be life-threatening; it causes breathing problems called asthma "attacks" or "episodes" that range from mild to serious.

\_\_\_\_\_ (district name) is providing asthma education that will help minimize asthma episodes among students. We are also working to prepare all students and staff to respond to asthma emergencies, should they occur.

The new education program will include the following:

**Staff education**—All staff will learn the basics of asthma, managing asthma, and responding to asthma episodes.

**Student education**—All students will learn the basics of asthma, how it can affect their schoolmates, how to recognize signs of an asthma episode, and how/when to seek help. All students diagnosed with asthma will participate in focused asthma education programs. Elementary students will participate in the American Lung Association's *Open Airways For Schools*; middle and high school students will participate in the Asthma & Allergy Foundation's *Power Breathing*. Parents of these students will receive further information about these specific programs.

**Parent education**—The \_\_\_\_\_ (name) PTA will present the American Lung Association's Asthma 101 during its next monthly meeting. Our faculty and staff will talk to you individually and as a group throughout the year, to highlight asthma management issues as needed.

Thank you for your support of our asthma education program throughout the school district. Please contact us if you have any specific questions.

Sincerely,

<sup>1</sup> Akinbami LJ, Scheendorf, KC. Trends in childhood asthma: prevalence, health care utilization, and mortality. *Pediatrics*, 2002; 110(2):315-322.