**Iowa Park CISD Bed Bug Information for Parents**

Bed bugs are small, flattened, parasitic insects that feed on the blood of people or sometimes animals. They are reddish-brown, wingless, and can range from the size of a pinhead to an apple seed. They tend to hide during the day and they come out at night. Bed bugs can live for several months without a meal. Bed bugs do not jump or fly. Bed bugs are typically found in mattresses, luggage, clothing, bedding, furniture and crevices. Schools are not a typical location for bed bugs to live. However, bed bugs can be spread from student to student at school when they are brought to school on a student’s clothing or belongings. Here are steps that you can take to help prevent the spread of bed bugs:

* Limit items that your child takes to school and home from school.
* Keep backpack and other belongings that your child takes to school away from bedrooms/sleeping areas.
* Routinely inspect your child’s belongings that they bring home from school.
* If the school has sent home a letter reporting that a bed bug or bed bugs have been found in your child’s classroom, place your child’s belongings in a sealed plastic container every day when they come home from school.
* Place your child’s backpack and jacket in the dryer on high heat once a week for at least 30 minutes.
* If you do find a suspected bed bug in your home, place it in a zip top bag so that it can be identified. Contact a pest management professional as soon as possible. If it is determined that you do have bed bugs in your home, please contact the School Nurse or Principal as soon as possible so that proper measures can be taken at school to prevent further spread of bed bugs to other students.
* Once a bed bug infestation has occurred in your home, it is necessary to seek treatment by a pest control professional. Household cleaning products will not kill bed bugs. Other insect sprays usually do not kill bed bugs. Insecticides used by a licensed pest control professional are usually the most effective method of eliminating bed bugs.
* If you do have bed bugs in your home, other ways to help eliminate bed bugs in addition to seeking treatment from a pest control professional are: thoroughly vacuum including areas close to baseboards, furniture, walls, and other possible areas that bed bugs could be hiding. Eliminate clutter in the home. Use protective covers on mattress and box springs. Place clean clothing in a sealed storage box or sealed trash bag.