

September 2, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are writing to update you about the flu. The Novel H1N1 flu (swine flu) causes illness that is similar to regular seasonal flu. Just like seasonal flu, most people who get Novel H1N1 (swine flu) will recover after a few days. We are seeing students with flu-like symptoms in our schools. Some may have the Novel H1N1 flu (swine flu). The Novel H1N1 flu (swine flu) is common in communities across our state and nation.

We are working with the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to slow the spread of flu. Some of the things that we are doing to prevent the spread of flu include:

- Teaching students and staff to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, throw tissue away immediately after use, if tissue is not available, use your upper sleeve.
- Reminding students and staff to wash their hands frequently. Soap, running water and hand sanitizer are available.
- School nurses will screen ill students for symptoms of the flu.
- Sending students and staff home if they have a fever and flu-like symptoms. Students with Influenza-Like Illnesses will not be sent home on the school bus.
- Cleaning surfaces that are touched frequently.
- Staying home from work, school and errands if you are sick.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Slowing the spread of flu is a team effort. We need your help:

- Check your child for symptoms of the flu daily. Keep your child at home if he or she has a fever of 100°F or higher with a cough or sore throat. Other flu symptoms are *fever* with a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea. Children with the flu will need to stay home and not participate in co-curricular activities (sports, band, drama, cheerleading, etc.) for 24 hours until the fever is gone for 24 hours without taking medicines to reduce the fever. This usually takes at least 3 to 5 days.
- Practice frequent hand washing and covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze at home. These healthy habits will help prevent the spread of flu.
- Vaccinations for seasonal flu and the Novel H1N1 flu (swine flu) are expected to be available soon. Talk with your health care provider about getting your family vaccinated against the flu.

Children under 5 years old and people with asthma, diabetes, immune system disorders, neuromuscular disease or who are pregnant are at high risk of becoming very ill if they get the flu. Check with your health care provider right away if someone in your household has flu symptoms and are in a high-risk group. Early treatment with antiviral medications may help lessen symptoms.

We are doing everything we can to keep our schools healthy and operating normally. Only keep your child home if he or she is ill. We will send an update when new information is available. If you have questions about this letter please call 738-7224.

We appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Childs
Principal