

September 30, 2009

Dear Parents,

“Welcome back!” With continued media attention about seasonal, H1N1 (swine) flu, and vaccines, we would like to keep you informed of changes as they may occur.

We anticipate a possible surge in influenza-like-illness to start earlier than usual since the children have returned to the classrooms. It is our hope illnesses will be nothing worse than we experienced last spring. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the County Public Health Department, we will not notify parents of individual cases that occur in schools. Assume it is present, and please remind your children to use excellent hand hygiene, good respiratory etiquette, dispose of used tissues promptly, and not share personal or food items to protect themselves.

Should the virus pattern change and become a more severe problem, we will keep in close contact with our school physician and the County Public Health Department and advise you if we need to take more stringent control measures. For now, if your child has influenza-like-illness with fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, muscle or body aches, tiredness, or vomiting and diarrhea, please do not send your child to school. Call your physician’s office to discuss whether your child needs to be seen. Keep your child home and away from other people until all symptoms are completely gone without the need to take fever-reducing medicines for a full 24 hours.

Respiratory illnesses are spread through the air when one coughs and sneezes. Therefore if a child becomes ill during the school day, the child will be separated from other children and provided a facemask to reduce the spread of infection. Parents must pick up their child if notified that their child is exhibiting these symptoms.

This is a good time to schedule a seasonal flu vaccine, and, while there, to discuss with your physician whether your child should get H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. Please check our district’s website at www.fortplain.org frequently, as we will post updates on H1N1 there. Check your younger children’s backpack for news and updates that may be sent home as well. While we do not anticipate prolonged school closure, we strongly recommend that you make plans now in the event this situation should arise in the future. “Let’s all have a healthy and safe school year.”

Sincerely,

Frederick Hauck
Safety Management Officer