

April 30, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today school leaders across Illinois received information from the State Health Department informing us about the H1N1 (Swine Flu) in our country and the State of Illinois in particular. You likely know from reports in the media that some confirmed cases have been made in the Chicago area. With the mobility of our present society, the likelihood of the disease spreading is concerning to all of us. Therefore, the district will be **closely monitoring** the situation and **working in cooperation with the Greene County Health Department** to respond with preventative measures.

I wish to emphasize that no suspected or confirmed cases exist in Greene County at present and that we are asking for your support. Please discuss this with your children and encourage them to follow the suggestions outlined by the State Health Department which follows this message. In closing, donations of boxes of tissues and plastic pump bottles of sanitizer are welcomed and appreciated as we work to provide these to all of our classrooms over the weeks ahead. If you do wish to make such a donation, please have your child turn the gift in to their homeroom teacher of the office. Thanks in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Pressler, Ph.D.
Carrollton CUSD #1

Recommendations for Infection Control in School Settings

Parents should be advised to keep their children home if they become sick with flu-like symptoms and to notify their school principal of the child's absence. Parents should contact their health care providers if their children have symptoms consistent with influenza.

Schools play a vital role in the process to prevent disease within their communities. Because there is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine influenza, it is important to emphasize the importance of everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Students, parents and faculty should take these everyday steps to protect their health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve if you do not have a tissue.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care.

In children, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed Interim Guidance for Non-pharmaceutical Community Mitigation in Response to Human Infections with Swine Influenza Virus. These recommendations are based on current information and are subject to change based on ongoing surveillance and continuous risk assessment and can be viewed at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/mitigation.htm>.

Additional information can be viewed on the Illinois Department of Public Health's Web site <http://www.idph.state.il.us/>.