

Sept. 1, 2009

Dear Parent,

As you may know, the flu virus can spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are starting this school year by taking steps to reduce the spread of flu, whether the regular flu or the H1N1 virus, also known as the swine flu. We want to keep our students and families healthy and our schools open and functioning normally during this flu season. **But we need your help to do this.**

Our school district is working closely with Public Health Seattle King County and the Washington Department of Health to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available. For now, we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual.

Here are some of the things that we are doing at school that you also can do to help:

- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself. If you would like to bring an alcohol-based hand rub to school for student use, make sure it is 60 percent alcohol and does not have a scent or flavor. Students in kindergarten through second grade must be supervised when using these products.
- **Teach your children** to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues and wash their hands afterwards. They should cover up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.

Here's what to do if your child does become sick with flu symptoms:

- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home*. Children who exhibit flu symptoms at school will go to the health room so they can be kept separate from other students until you are able to pick up your child.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.

**If the flu becomes more severe**, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread such as:

- conducting active fever and flu symptom screening of students and staff,
- making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips, and
- dismissing students from school for at least 7 days if they become sick.

For more information, see the attached flyer and visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. For more information about flu in our community and what our school district is doing, updates will be posted on [the District Web site](#). We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,

Tina Livingston

Principal