

Dear Parent,

As many of you are aware, there has been much media coverage and global concern in regards to the spread of the H1N1 virus, commonly known as the swine flu. At the time of writing, Springs Valley Schools has had 1 reported (not confirmed) student case of the H1N1 virus. We do anticipate cases of this virus affecting our community and school throughout the year and are taking precautions to help reduce the spread of this and other communicable diseases. This virus is certainly one of concern for all involved. However, early reports have indicated the severe cases for H1N1 has been lower than other types of flu we are confronted with annually. Our current precautions as prescribed by the Center for Disease Control include:

- Providing good hygiene information to students and staff
- Send sick students and staff home
- Clean surfaces and items that are likely to have frequent hand contact
- Move students/staff to separate room if they become sick
- Have personal Protective Equipment for Nurse and others caring for those that are sick
- Encourage early medical intervention for those that are sick and at a higher risk for complications due to other medical issues
- Stay in regular communication with local public health officials

We are coordinating efforts with the Indiana Department of Education, the Orange County/Indiana Health Departments and the Center for Disease Control to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning our students and school.

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 as they arrive at school,
- making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart, postponing class trips, and
- dismissing students from school for at least 7 days if they become sick.

We are currently making every effort to be proactive in combating the spread of flu by implementing the preventative action steps prescribed by the CDC. Here are a few things you 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.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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*.

Thank you in advance for your help in sharing this information with your children and complying with the above recommendations. It is our goal to keep you informed as additional information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Todd Pritchett
Superintendent

For more information, go to www.flu.gov