

August 28, 2009

Health Reminders to Parents

We want to congratulate you all on a successful start of the 2009-2010 school year! FISD is well on the way to hitting our projected enrollment of 34,133 students. More than 33,400 students were enrolled on the first day of school, representing growth of more than 10 percent.

With the beginning of a school year comes the need for reminders regarding good health habits and prevention of illness. We are sure you are aware of the continued interest regarding swine flu. You are probably also aware that the Centers for Disease Control issued modified recommendations to school districts regarding this health concern. As we look toward flu season, the priorities will be, as always, to practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette, to maintain good cleaning protocols, to watch for early signs of illness and to keep staff and students who are sick at home.

Please help us keep your students healthy by following these recommendations:

Stay home when sick – Those with flu-like symptoms/illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if using antiviral drugs.

Reinforce good hand-washing and coughing/sneezing procedures – We will continue to teach and emphasize frequent hand washing with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing (and use of hand sanitizers when not available), covering noses and mouths (with a tissue/shirt sleeve/elbow), and throwing away the tissue after it has been used. We will also remind students not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Early treatment of illness – People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with flu-like symptoms/illness should speak with their health-care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medication is very important for people at high risk. These groups include those who are pregnant, and those who have asthma or diabetes, compromised immune systems or neuromuscular disease.

We will continue routine cleanings of our campuses, which include those areas touched often by many hands, such as door knobs, water fountains, etc. Influenza viruses can survive on hard surfaces up to 24 hours. If students become ill at school we will isolate them, as always, until their parents can pick them up

Please know that we have been involved in many meetings regarding swine flu and will continue to work with our local health departments to monitor the issue on the local level as needed. Together, we can make sure our students are safe, healthy and in school.

We will also communicate periodic health reminders as needed. For instance, this is also the time of year we remind you to alert your school and your physician if your child develops a suspicious skin irritation and to also be watchful of cuts and abrasions and keep them clean and protected as appropriate to help in the prevention/spread of staph infection. Students should not share towels, razors, soap, and other personal items. For more information regarding staph or flu visit the Texas Department of State Health Services website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/> Updates from FISD and ongoing health related information and notices can be found at <http://www.friscoisd.org/departments/HealthServices/>

Sincerely,
FISD Officials