

H1N1 FLU INFORMATION

There has been much information in the news about the potential risks of H1N1. Since it is a type of influenza, or flu, the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) apply to any flu virus circulating during the 2009-2010 school year.

As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in Greenfield-Central Community Schools. Please know that we want to keep our schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this time of concern.

We are working closely with the Indiana Department of Education and the Hancock County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and coordinate strategies to help keep students healthy. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

We have asked our support staff to take extra time to disinfect door knobs, light switches, desks and table tops, computer mice and keyboards, telephone handsets, school bus seats, and anything else that students may touch on a regular basis. Teachers will continue to encourage students to wash their hands regularly, especially before eating food.

We will continue to learn all we can to keep our school environment a healthy environment in the days and weeks ahead. **We welcome your help in our efforts to accomplish this.**

- **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. **Encourage them to cover 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 or greater), cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are identified as sick while at school will be sent home.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, without using fever-reducing medication. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.

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

- Screening students for fever and flu symptoms, and
- Making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips.

If we should need to close school or cancel classes for H1N1, it is likely that we will need to schedule make-up days. In order to be prepared, we encourage families to make plans early for child care should it become necessary to close school. Please understand that closing school may initiate other unavoidable consequences, such as moving the date of commencement, delaying summer school, altering family vacation plans, and postponing or canceling athletic competitions.

For more information, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. Marsha Chambers, School Corporation Nurse, can be reached at 477-4601 for any questions. We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.