

August 25, 2009

Dear FCPS Families:

The 2009-2010 school year is off to a great start! We have many exciting programs up and running in our schools, including several new offerings for students. I've been able to visit many of our schools already, and I'm impressed with the learning and growth I see throughout our school district. I hope your children are enjoying school and I thank you for entrusting us their education.

As you know, there have been some cases of the H1N1 virus in the Fayette County community. At schools throughout our district we have seen sporadic cases of students or staff who have come down with flu-like illnesses. We are in close communication with the Lexington Fayette County Health Department, and have been monitoring attendance in our schools on a daily basis and meeting with health department officials weekly. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

We want to assure you that our district and health department are following national guidelines and are working together to keep our kids and staff healthy and keep our schools open. Just like the regular flu, H1N1 can be easily spread from person to person. Working together, we can take steps to reduce the spread of flu in our community and in our schools.

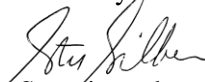
It is important to recognize the signs and symptoms of the flu, which include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea. Please help us:

- Teach 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 children not to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues, or the crook of their arm or sleeve instead of their hand.
- Stop the spread of flu by keeping 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.

At school, we are encouraging more frequent hand-washing, discouraging the use of community instructional items like pencils or art supplies, increasing our cleaning regimens and providing separate waiting areas for sick children who are waiting for a parent to pick them up from school. It is also a good idea for families of children at higher risk of complications from flu (such as those with asthma, diabetes, or other chronic conditions) to touch base with your doctor to see if they want you to take further steps on a case by case basis.

For more information about flu in our community please visit www.lexingtonhealthdepartment.org, or call the Flu Hotline at 288-7529. If the flu becomes more severe or prevalent in our community, we may take additional steps in concert with the health department. Just like during a normal flu season, we have been advised by the health department that there is not a need to alert families to every instance of flu in a school. But we are committed to keeping you informed and up-to-date if additional action is warranted.

Sincerely,


Superintendent

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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701 East Main Street, Lexington, Kentucky 40502 • Phone: 859.381.4100 • www.fcps.net