

October 26, 2009

Dear Parents:

As many of you know, we had several cases of swine flu confirmed late last week and over the weekend. The cases I am aware of are in the middle school and elementary schools. Dr. Paula Dygert called me Friday evening to tell me about the cases she dealt with and to discuss what might need to be done.

She told me that the symptoms she has been dealing with include a headache, sore throat, cough (tightness in the chest) and a fever (which could be low grade). It usually starts with the headache and the onset is very quick. There are instances where students have been vomiting and have had diarrhea. The incubation period is between 24 hours and 7 days.

We have about 142 students absent in the school today, (48 in the middle school, 50 in the high school and 44 in the elementary school) but others have gone home during the course of the day.

Dr. Dygert's recommendation is for students to stay home if they have any of the symptoms listed above. We are still going by the Public Health Department's recommendation of staying home until the fever is gone for at least 24 hours without taking any medication.

I met with Public Health last Monday and we have developed plans for a swine flu shot clinic in the school in mid-November but nothing is definite because Public Health does not know when the vaccinations will become available.

I am asking parents to please contact me if their child(ren) is diagnosed, so that I have all of the information necessary to make informed decisions at 639-8229 or 639-3665.

I will keep you informed.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Briggs
Superintendent of Schools

Several Other Things You Can Do:

- 1) Teach your children to wash their hands often with soap and water. Have them practice washing for 20 seconds because that is longer than it seems.
- 2) Teach your children not to share personal items, drinks or food.
- 3) Teach your children to cover a cough or sneeze with tissues, throw the tissue away, and wash their hands.
- 4) Teach children to cough or sneeze into an elbow when a tissue isn't available.
- 5) Keep children home with a fever.
- 6) Keep children home at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever, without fever-reducing drugs like Tylenol or Motrin.
- 7) Do not send children to school if they are sick.