



NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
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DR. R. STEVEN WHATLEY
Superintendent

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Dear Parents:

Many of you have heard news reports about cases of flu in our community, state, and country. Because your child's health and safety is a concern for us, we want to share some basic information with you about flu, how we are responding and what you can do as well.

There are two types of flu currently in the news—Novel H1N1 flu, first called Swine flu, and seasonal flu. The symptoms of H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are the same, and may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea.

We will inform you of any significant increases in numbers of absences related to flulike illnesses in your child's school. We will not inform you of each incident of illness that shows up in school.

As we work together to prevent the spread of flu and other illnesses in our schools, there are everyday actions you can take to stay healthy. Please encourage your children to follow these simple steps.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or if no tissue is available, cover your coughs or sneezes with your elbow, arm or sleeve.
- Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, food, and eating utensils.
- Encourage hand washing, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If your child gets sick, please keep him or her home from school and limit contact with others to keep them from being infected. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home. This is a good opportunity to plan ahead for your childcare needs, if this should occur.
- If your child is diagnosed with flu, the Centers for Disease Control recommends that your child not return to school until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

In the event that your child needs to stay home from school as a result of the flu, please know that he or she will have the opportunity to make up any work missed. Our school district's policy regarding makeup work can be found in your child's agenda.

As a precautionary measure, we have implemented recommended cleaning procedures. For your information, we have posted on our website, www.newtoncountyschools.org, brochures and links to additional websites concerning flu. As more information for our community becomes available, we will in turn make it available to students, parents, and employees. Thank you for your continued support of our students and schools.

Sincerely,

Dr. R. Steven Whatley
Superintendent