

May 4, 2009

To: All Principals

From: Julie M. Janssen, Ed.D

Re: H1N1 Influenza

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified numerous confirmed cases of H1N1 (swine) influenza in the United States. Although there have been no identified cases in Pinellas County, we have taken steps to prepare and respond to this health emergency.

Under my direction, the District Safety & Security Council (DSSC) will be coordinating our efforts. The DSSC is communicating with federal, state and county officials at CDC, US DOE, FL DOE and the Pinellas County Departments of Health and Emergency Management. They will conduct frequent conference calls which will be followed by an e-mail to you to keep you apprised of this ever changing situation. If you have any questions regarding H1N1 Influenza please contact **Ted Pafundi, DSSC Chair** or **Carol Madura, Emergency Management Coordinator** at madurac@pcsb.org. Information can also be found on our web site under ***Swine Flu Information***.

Pinellas County Schools will respond to this emergency based upon consultation with the Pinellas County Departments of Emergency Management and Health. Based upon our conversation with those agencies, and CDC and US DOE recommendations, the following guidelines have been established for this health emergency:

1. Sick people (students, faculty and staff) should stay home.
2. Students and staff may wear medical masks as long as they are not disruptive to the educational process.
3. Frequent hand washing and the use of hand sanitizers' should be encouraged. Caution should be exercised when using dispensers that contain more than 60% alcohol.
4. School leaders who suspect that a student or staff member may be ill with H1N1 must follow the recommended isolation guidelines. (appendix A) Contact your school nurse or the Health Services Department for guidance.
5. If there is a confirmed case of H1N1 influenza among students or staff, the school may be closed. The length of time will be determined in consultation with the department of health. In addition extra-curricular activities may also be cancelled or postponed.
6. Any decision to close schools will be based upon consultation with the Pinellas County Health Department and current CDC and DOE Recommendations.
7. When schools re-open, commonly touched surfaces such as stairway railings, elevator buttons and door handles must be cleaned by wiping them down with detergent-based cleaners or EPA registered disinfectants that are usually used in the school setting. These products should be used according to directions on the product label. Additional, extensive cleaning of schools by

wiping down floors and walls prior to reopening is not necessary as it is unknown whether this would be helpful in decreasing the spread of influenza.

8. If students are dismissed from schools, they should be encouraged not to re-congregate outside of school in large numbers.
9. Travel to areas with confirmed cases of H1N1 will be restricted (appendix B). This includes athletic competitions, extra-curricular and curricular events, field trips and staff training. Please note that this lists changes daily so please check the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/swineflu.
10. Large group events such as graduation, prom, grad night activities are permitted pending additional guidance from federal, state and local officials.
11. All field trip and requests for travel must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Superintendent. Such approval is subject to change during this health emergency.
12. All questions regarding H1N1 Influenza should be referred to Ted Pafundi, DSSC Chair at 588-6282 or Carol Madura, Emergency Management Coordinator at 588-6131.

In the coming days, we will be providing you with notices to parents and staff and the procedures to be followed in the event you have a confirmed or suspect case on H1N1 Influenza. This information will assist you in keeping your school community informed of this situation.

I ask that you communicate to your school community so that they:

1. **Become aware of the facts.** Encourage everyone to visit the CDC's new web site at www.cdc.gov/swineflu, which provides excellent guidance on avoiding influenza and on how to care for a sick person at home.
2. **Practice good health hygiene.** Disease transmission can be significantly reduced by taking the following actions:
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
 - Practice good "cough etiquette" by coughing or sneezing into a tissue, or into your elbow instead of into your hands.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.

This is an evolving situation and recommendations may change as more information becomes available. We will continue to provide guidance as the situation changes.

Thanks in advance for your patience and for your help in spreading the message about the importance of prevention and containment.

Appendix A

What are the symptoms of H1N1 (swine) flu in humans?

The symptoms of swine flu in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal influenza and include fever (over 100 degrees), coughing, sore throat, lethargy, lack of appetite.

Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. When a student exhibits symptoms that might be the flu, the following steps should occur:

Students

If a student presents with these symptoms:

- 1- the parent should be contacted and directed to pick the child up from school as soon as possible, and evaluated by a physician/healthcare provider
- 2- student should be isolated from others (but still under visual supervision) until the parent arrives
- 3- have the student wear a face-mask (or cover their mouth and nose with a tissue) while they are waiting, to reduce the spread of any germs
- 4- ideally, student should be able to lie down on a cot and rest
- 5- if parent is delayed, student should be offered fluids (water)

Staff

If a staff member presents with these symptoms:

- 1- the staff member should not return to the classroom, and leave school grounds as soon as possible, and be evaluated by a physician/healthcare provider
- 2- if staff member feels too ill to drive themselves, should be isolated from others until the transportation arrives
- 3- have the staff member wear a face-mask (or cover their mouth and nose with a tissue) while they are waiting, to reduce the spread of any germs

APPENDIX B

U.S. Human Cases of H1N1 Flu Infection
(As of May 4, 2009, 11:00 AM ET)

States	# of laboratory confirmed cases	Deaths
Alabama	4	
Arizona	17	
California	30	
Colorado	7	
Connecticut	2	
Delaware	20	
Florida	5	
Idaho	1	
Illinois	8	
Indiana	3	
Iowa	1	
Kansas	2	
Kentucky*	1	
Louisiana	14	
Maryland	4	
Massachusetts	6	
Michigan	2	
Minnesota	1	
Missouri	1	
Nebraska	1	
Nevada	1	
New Hampshire	1	
New Jersey	7	
New Mexico	1	
New York	73	
North Carolina	1	
Ohio	3	
Oregon	3	
Pennsylvania	1	
Rhode Island	1	
South Carolina	15	
Tennessee	1	
Texas	41	1
Utah	1	
Virginia	3	
Wisconsin	3	
TOTAL (36)	286 cases	1 death