

May 1, 2009

Dear Fulton County Schools Community:

Information has been shared with many of you regarding the national and international occurrences of influenza A H1N1 (swine flu). At the time of that communication, no cases had been confirmed in Georgia. The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention confirmed one case in Troup County yesterday. It involved a woman who was visiting the area from another state.

I want to reassure you that our school system is monitoring all developments and any change to the migration of this illness. School system leaders met yesterday to reaffirm our plans should the illness somehow affect our community.

This letter is to share how our system will handle the possibility of H1N1 flu infection. Should a case be medically suspected in one of our schools, the school system will decide, in collaboration with the local health authorities, whether to cancel extracurricular and afterschool activities, and if necessary, close schools. We recognize and understand that closing schools would be a burden to many families. However, we would rather be safe than potentially expose students or staff to this illness. Closing schools and cancelling activities is one way that the spread of illness can be contained since they involve such large gatherings of people where close contact occurs.

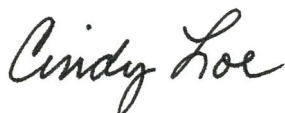
If we are advised to cancel activities or close schools, the news will be communicated through the same communication channels we use when handling any emergency closing, such as a snow day. We will alert all television and radio news stations and will post the announcement to our web site. We also will ask schools to share the news through any method they currently use to communicate with you, such as calling trees, email messages, web site postings, etc.

In addition, because printed communication, such as this letter, takes time and expense to distribute, we will use our web site as well as our new Twitter account (FultonCoSchools) to share updates. Twitter (www.Twitter.com) is a free social networking web site that allows short blasts of information to be shared with individuals who sign up to receive the updates. You can sign up for this free service on our web site, www.fultonschools.org.

Many parents and staff members are understandably concerned about the possibility of this illness or other communicable diseases entering our schools. We continue to stress that frequent hand-washing with hot water and soap, using tissues for sneezing or coughing (and then properly disposing them) and keeping sick children at home, regardless of the illness type, are some of our best weapons against combating the spread of illnesses.

As a reminder, this letter is intended only to share how we will operate in the event of a medically suspected case of influenza A H1N1. All schools currently remain open and will operate on normal schedules unless we are advised to do otherwise by health officials.

Sincerely,



Cindy Loe, Ph.D.
Superintendent

The Fulton County Office of Emergency Preparedness has shared a hotline number for residents to call with questions about swine flu. The hotline is 404-730-5363.