



Cold Spring Harbor Central School District

*The Francis Roberts Community Center
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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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Dear Parent/ Guardian:

The Center for Disease Control, along with the NYS and Suffolk County Departments of Health, have been updating school personnel regarding the anticipated resurgence of the H1N1 virus with the onset of the school year. They have provided guidance toward helping districts to reduce the spread of H1N1, which at this time, is following the same pattern of symptoms and recovery that was seen this past spring.

It is important that, as a community, we all take personal responsibility in preventing the spread of this virus. Toward that goal, the following is a list of actions that we will implement with the start of school:

- **Students are urged to stay home when sick.** Those exhibiting flu-like symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, runny or stuffy nose, body aches /headache, vomiting and/or diarrhea) should not come to school. Students should stay home at the onset of symptoms and remain at home *until they are free of fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing drugs* (i.e. ibuprofen and acetaminophen). In an effort to reduce any student anxiety about missing school, we will no longer be providing incentives in the form of "perfect attendance" awards. In addition, school work will be made available for the students to continue their studies at home.
- **Please encourage "respiratory etiquette" and good hand hygiene.** Please remind children to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing and/or coughing. Students are being encouraged to cough or sneeze into their arm (Dracula style) in order to avoid transmission of germs on to the hands, and also to wash their hands frequently for about 20 seconds (the time that it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). Please reinforce the habit of hand washing with soap and water. H1N1 is spread from person to person in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes so it is important that one not only cover the mouth but also keep one's hands away from the face. Hand sanitizers will also continue to be placed in many areas throughout the schools.
- **Sick children will be kept separate if they become ill at school.** The CDC has recommended that sick individuals use a disposable face mask to contain the spread of the flu while arrangements are being made for them to be picked up. Students will be educated regarding the purpose and use of masks in order that they are not surprised or upset when requested to wear one. Nurses and other individuals who are attending to sick students will also use personal protective equipment, as warranted.

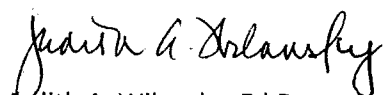
- **Institute regular “cleaning for health” procedures.** Common areas will be cleaned throughout the day with more frequency. *Please be apprised that the schools naturally disinfect each evening as the virus cannot live outside of a host for more than approximately eight hours.*
- **The following conditions are considered to add “higher risk” from complications from the flu and parents are encouraged to consult family physicians regarding healthcare in the following instances: pregnancy, diabetes, respiratory illness such as asthma or COPD, pulmonary disease, neuromuscular disease and morbid obesity.** It is noted that those who are at high risk from flu complications will benefit from early treatment with antiviral medicines; therefore, consultation with a physician is strongly recommended.

At this point, the 2009 H1N1 flu has been most prevalent in people between the ages of 5 and 24 years old and the majority of those affected experience relatively mild symptoms and a full recovery. We, as a school community, are being asked to make every effort to do our best to contain the spread of H1N1 by partnering with parents. The CDC recommends that, if possible, one parent should assume the role of primary care giver in order to minimize contact in the household and prevent the spread of the flu within the household. At this time, it is not recommended for siblings of sick students to remain home as well; however, please be vigilant regarding the onset of any symptoms in siblings. As you may know, a vaccine is being developed and is expected to be available for children at some point in October. Please contact your pediatrician regarding dispensation of the H1N1 vaccine. Also, the Suffolk County Department of Health will be providing information regarding the dispensation of the vaccine. We will keep you informed when these points of dispensation have been confirmed. ***If you have any questions or concerns regarding who will be eligible for the vaccination, you should contact your health care provider.*** Please be advised that the H1N1 vaccine is different than the seasonal flu vaccine which will also be available this year.

At this time, federal, state and local health agencies are prepared to closely monitor the incidence and outcomes of H1N1 and will continue to provide ongoing guidance regarding the status of this illness. I will keep you apprised of any changes in our practices as we work to minimize the impact of H1N1 on our school community. For further information, please consult the New York State Education website, www.nysed.gov or the Center for Disease Control, www.flu.gov.

I wish you and your family a healthy beginning to the school year!

Sincerely,



Judith A. Wilansky, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools