



St. Mary's County Public Schools

DR. MICHAEL J. MARTIRANO
Superintendent of Schools

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September 4, 2009

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s), Teachers, Staff, and Community Members:

As you may know, the H1N1 flu has been circulating throughout the United States since April 2009. St. Mary's County Public Schools and the St. Mary's County Health Department will be providing the H1N1 vaccine in the public schools as soon as it is available.

In a continuing effort to monitor the status of St. Mary's County students, our school nurses and health care providers have identified several students that have flu-like symptoms that are compatible with H1N1 virus symptoms. At this time state and local health officials have advised us that students can and should continue to come to school as long as they do not have any flu-like symptoms. Those symptoms include: a fever greater than 100°F., sore throat, cough, muscle aches, headaches, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. If a child has a fever or any of these symptoms it is important that he /she does not attend school. If a student comes to school with flu-like symptoms, parents will be asked to pick them up from school. The student will need to stay at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. As with any illness, contacting one's primary care provider for further instructions or treatments is important. In addition, we ask that you notify the school nurse with the child's diagnosis.

The safety and well being of students is our top priority. Good health, frequent hand washing, and covering coughs are essential to ensure effective learning and reduce the spread of disease. St. Mary's County Public Schools will continue to encourage these healthy habits, as well as frequent cleaning and disinfecting in specific areas within the schools and having available hand sanitizers for students and staff use. Please remind and help your child to learn these healthy habits.

The steps we have taken to prepare for the H1N1 will be helpful to prepare for the flu season. We appreciate your help in partnering with us regarding this important health issue. I will continue to provide updated information periodically as we continue to monitor the H1N1 virus. Please contact St. Mary's County Health Department at 301-475-4330, Trish Wince, Supervisor of Health Services for the St. Mary's County Public Schools, at 301-475-5511 option 2, or your child's school nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools